

Facilities for workers at construction workplaces

Purpose

This guidance note summarises the facilities for workers on construction worksites that are required by the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012.

Throughout this guidance note, 'PCBU' stands for a 'person conducting a business or undertaking', the primary duty holder under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*.

Overview

A PCBU must (as far as is reasonably practicable) ensure the layout of the workplace is maintained to allow people to enter, exit and move about without risk, both in normal working conditions and in an emergency (regulation 40).

You must consider the nature of the works, the size and location of the workplace, and the number and composition of workers, to ensure (as far as is reasonably practicable):

- there are adequate facilities for workers, including toilets, drinking water, washing facilities and eating facilities (regulation 41)
- there is adequate access to facilities for administering first aid (regulation 42).

You can find further detailed guidance in the following codes of practice. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for the codes listed here:

- Construction Work (CPI04)
- Managing the Work Environment and Facilities (CPI24)
- First Aid in the Workplace (CPI08).

Entry and exit

The means of entering and leaving a workplace must be safe, both in normal working conditions and in an emergency.

- Aisles and walkways should be at least 600mm wide, and kept free of building material or obstructions at all times.
- Open sides of any entrance and exit where a worker could fall from one level to another must be protected with edge protection.
- You should consider separate entrances and exits where mobile plant is entering and exiting, to reduce the risk of anyone being hit by the moving plant.
- Emergency routes must be easily identified, kept free of obstructions, and have emergency lighting, directional signs and exit points marked. Emergency lighting systems must have a back-up system with sufficient capacity in event of a power failure.
- Temporary emergency exits should be clearly marked.

When installing temporary stairways, consider how these might be used during an emergency. You may need to include double-width stairways.

Toilet facilities

You must (as far as reasonably practicable) provide your workers with adequate toilet facilities.

Condition of toilets

Toilets on the work site must:

- be easily accessed by workers
- be in good working order, safe and clean
- have an adequate supply of toilet paper for each toilet cubicle
- have hand washing facilities
- have a rubbish bin
- for female workers, have a hygienic means to dispose of sanitary items.

Number of toilets

One unisex toilet may be provided in workplaces with both male and female workers, where:

- the total number of people who normally work at the workplace is 10 or less, or
- there are two or less workers of one gender.

For all other construction workplaces, separate toilets should be provided using the ratios provided in section 3.3 of the Managing the Work Environment and Facilities Code of Practice (go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'CPI24').

Mobile, temporary or remote workplaces

If your workers do their work away from a base location or at outdoor sites (for example, they are a gardener, driver or courier), they must still have access to other toilets. This might be public toilets or toilets at a client's premises. In these cases, tell your workers where the toilets are located.

Portable toilets

Where it is not reasonably practicable to provide access to permanent toilets (for example, you're doing short-term works in a remote area), use portable toilets:

- locate them in a secure place with safe access
- install them so they don't fall over or become unstable
- service them regularly to keep them clean.

Washing facilities

Hand washing

You must provide hand washing facilities so workers can maintain a good standard of personal hygiene. For example, they may need to wash their hands before and after eating meals, and after using the toilet, handling chemicals or handling greasy machinery.

Hand washing facilities should:

- be easily accessed by workers at all times in the workplace, in eating area and near toilets
- be supplied with soap
- have clean running water.

Mobile, temporary or remote work

If work is done in a location where there are no hand washing facilities, your workers should have access to alternative hand hygiene facilities, such as a water container with soap and paper towel or hand wipes.

Dining facilities

You should provide your workers with access to hygienic facilities for eating their meals and storing food. What these facilities are will depend on your type of workplace; for example, it could be a shared facility such as a dedicated meal area.

Dedicated dining room

A dedicated dining room should be provided if:

- 10 or more workers usually eat at the same time
- there is a risk of substances or work processes contaminating food.

It should protect workers from the weather; and be separate from work processes, toilet facilities and any hazards (including noise, heat and atmospheric contaminants).

It should be supplied with:

- an adequate number of tables and seats
- a sink with water
- an appliance to boil water
- an appliance to re-heat food
- clean storage, including a fridge
- vermin-proof rubbish bins

Outdoor work

You should provide your outdoor workers with access to shelter for eating their meals and taking breaks, and to protect them in adverse weather conditions.

This might be a shed, caravan or portable shade canopy. In some situations, vehicles or public facilities may provide appropriate short-term shelter.

First aid facilities

Do a risk assessment to help determine if you need first aid facilities at the workplace. A clean, quiet area within the workplace that offers privacy to an injured or ill person may be suitable and practicable for some workplaces.

Your risk assessment must consider:

- the nature of the work done at your workplace
- the size and location of the workplace
- the number and composition of workers at the workplace.

First aid room

A first aid room is recommended for:

- any low risk workplace with 200 workers or more
- any high risk workplace with 100 workers or more.

The location and size of the room should allow easy access and movement of injured people who may need to be supported or moved by stretcher or wheelchair.

While the room should suit the hazards that are specific to your workplace, the following items should be provided:

- a first aid kit appropriate for the workplace
- hygienic hand cleanser and disposable towels
- a cupboard for storage
- a container with a disposable liner for soiled waste
- a sharps container
- a chair, table or desk
- a bowl or bucket (minimum 2 litres)
- the names and contact details of your first aiders and emergency numbers.

Other first aid

All workplaces must have:

- a first aid kit that is appropriate for the workplace
- someone who is suitably trained in first aid, or have access to someone who is suitably trained in first aid at the workplace.

For more information contact

Phone: 1300 366 322 (within Tasmania)
(03) 6166 4600 (outside Tasmania)

Email: wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au

Web: www.worksafe.tas.gov.au

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