



June HR Highlights

Workplace Safety

By law, every employee of the Commonwealth of Virginia is afforded the right to have “a place of employment that is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees”, and every agency is required to comply with occupational safety and health standards.

However, having a safe, hazard-free work environment does not guarantee your personal workplace safety. You might say, “Why is that?” One of the main reasons (and there are many) is sometimes we forget to take responsibility for our own personal safety.

Many of us will choose not to use a stairway handrail, use a chair instead of a ladder, or scoot across the floor in an office chair instead of getting up and walking over to get something; the list goes on and on. Why do we do these things? It’s because it’s faster and easier, and we think we are so special that nothing terrible will happen.

Unfortunately, bad things do happen. Slips, trips, and falls on stairways are among the most common workplace accidents resulting in serious injuries yearly. Falls from using chairs instead of a ladder or work platform to reach or place items overhead frequently result in serious injuries continuously from year to year. In the Fiscal year 2022, 211 Commonwealth of Virginia employees suffered injuries resulting from chair accidents.

Your own personal workplace safety is the business and responsibility of every employee. Each employee is responsible for understanding and practicing appropriate personal workplace safety behaviors and following all rules and procedures. All the best Personal Protective Equipment, training, rules, guards, procedures, and policies will not protect you from harm if you choose not to follow them.

You should take sensible care of your health and safety no matter where or what you do. This is particularly true in the workplace, where your actions can affect both your own safety and that of others. Working with your safety manager or supervisor is essential, ensuring you receive the proper training for your job, and understanding and following your agency’s health and safety policies.



Nobody knows your job or responsibilities better than you do – if you think a job or task is unsafe, stop the work and talk with your safety manager or supervisor.

We all go to work every day expecting not to be injured. You have a right to a safe work environment as an employee, but your employer is not the only one responsible for your workplace safety – you are, too. By accepting your personal safety responsibilities, you are making our workplace safer for you and your co-workers.

This year don't let your summer trip be from a stair or chair. Stay safe, everyone!!