Policy Name: Ladder Safety

Policy Applies to: All Associates, contractors, temporary associates, and vendors

Prepared by	**Effective Date**
Risk Management Department	August 24th, 2026

Purpose

The purpose of this safety policy and procedure is to establish guidelines for the safe use of ladders throughout PODS. Ladders are used when associates need to move up or down between two different levels. Slips, trips, and falls are significant contributors to PODS' accidents. Slips, trips, and falls can occur when wrong ladder selection is made and when improper climbing techniques and/or defective ladders are used.

At PODS, the appropriate ladder will be used for the corresponding job and defective ladders will not be used. When hazards exist that cannot be eliminated, then engineering practices, administrative practices, safe work practices, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and proper training regarding ladders will be implemented. These measures will be implemented to minimize those hazards to ensure the safety of associates and the public.

This safety policy and procedure is established in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Standards for General Industry (OSHA) (29 CFR 1910.25-27).

Responsibilities

Territory Managers (TM): TMs are responsible for ensuring that adequate funds are available and budgeted for the purchase of ladders in their areas. TMs will obtain and coordinate the required training for the affected associates. TMs will also ensure compliance with this safety policy and procedure through their auditing process.

Managers/Supervisors: Managers/Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all ladders (fixed and portable) are regularly inspected and properly maintained. They will also be responsible for tagging ladders in need of repair and removing defected ladders from service for repair or destruction. Managers/Supervisors will audit for compliance with this safety policy and procedure during their facility audits.

Associates: Associates shall comply with all applicable guidelines contained in this safety policy and procedure. Associates are also responsible for reporting immediately suspected unsafe conditions or ladders to their Manager/Supervisor. Associates are to inspect ladders before using and are to keep ladders clean and in good condition.

Safety: Safety will provide prompt assistance to managers/unit heads, supervisors, or others as applicable on any matter concerning this safety policy and procedure. Safety will also work with local Managers/Supervisors to ensure that all newly purchased ladders comply with this safety policy and procedure and current safety regulations.

Training

Ladder safety training shall be done upon initial employment and/or job assignment. Refresher training shall be provided to associates at the discretion of their supervisor. Associates using the ladders shall be trained in:

- The proper use of the ladders
- What kind of ladder to use
- How to set up ladders
- Ladder inspection
- Proper maintenance

Ladder Hazards & Safe Use

Ladder Hazards: There are inherent hazards associated with ladder use. Typical ladder hazards include:

- Insufficient surface resistance on ladder rungs and steps
- Ladder structural failure
- Ladders tipping sideways, backwards, or slipping out at the bottom
- Ladder spreaders not fully opened and locked, causing the ladder to "walk", twist or close when a load is applied to the ladder
- Using metal ladders around electricity
- Using deteriorated ladders
- Using fixed ladders without cages or fall protection

Safe Ladder Use: Associates should follow certain rules when placing, ascending, and descending ladders which include:

- Hold on with both hands when going up or down. If material must be handled, raise or lower it with a rope either before going down or after climbing to the desired level.
- Always face the ladder when ascending or descending.
- Never slide down a ladder.
- Be sure shoes are not greasy, muddy, or slippery before climbing.
- Do not climb higher than the third rung from the top on straight or extension ladder, or the second tread from the top on stepladders.
- Carry tools on a tool belt not in the hand.
- Never lean too far to the sides. Keep your belt buckle within the side rails.
- Use a 4 to 1 ratio when leaning a single or extension ladder. (place a 12-foot ladder so that the bottom is 3 feet away from the object the ladder is leaning against.)
- Inspect ladder for defects before using.
- Never use a defective ladder. Tag or mark it so that it will be repaired or destroyed.
- Never splice or lash a short ladder together.
- Never use makeshift ladders, such as cleats fastened across a single rail.
- Be sure that a stepladder is fully open, and the metal spreader locked before starting to climb.
- Keep ladders clean and free from dirt and grease.
- Never use ladders during a strong wind except in an emergency and then only when they are securely fastened.
- Never leave placed ladders unattended.
- Never use ladders as guys, braces, or skids, or for any other purpose other than their intended purposes.
- Never attempt to adjust a ladder while a user is standing on the ladder.
- Never jump from a ladder. Always dismount from the bottom rung.

Ladder Safety Devices

Safety devices are available for both portable and fixed ladders to prevent a climber from falling. Safety devices for portable ladders include slip-resistant bases, safety tops, and any other device to increase the ladder stability. A portable ladder positioned at a location where it may be tipped over by work activities shall be securely fastened at the bottom and top. Safety devices for fixed ladders include cages (which enclose the stairwell) or a restraint belt attached to a sliding fixture anchored to the ladder.

Ladder Inspection

Associates will inspect each ladder prior to using it. Ladders that are weak, improperly repaired, damaged, have missing rungs, or appear unsafe shall be removed from the area for repair or disposal. Before discarding a wood ladder, cut it up so no one can use it again. Additionally, portable ladders must always be maintained in good condition and inspected frequently. Metal ladders and metal parts on wood ladders should be corrosion-resistant and kept free from nicks. Tag any ladders that have developed defects (See Lock-out/Tag-out policy) and remove from service for repair or disposal.

For portable wood ladders, all wood parts shall be free from sharp edges and splinters; sound and free from accepted visual inspection from shake, wane, compression failures, decay, or other irregularities.

For portable metal ladders, the design shall be without structural defects or accident hazards such as sharp edges, burrs, etc. The selected metal shall be of sufficient strength to meet the test requirements and shall be protected against corrosion. For fixed ladders, all wood parts shall meet the criteria of wood ladders. All metal parts shall meet the criteria of metal ladders.

An inspection program should be set up at each location to ensure all ladders are inspected once every three months. A competent person (a person who is trained) should conduct the inspection. The attached Ladder Inspection Checklist will be used to document this inspection.

The OSHA ladder standards do not require manufacturers to label ladders with instructions and warnings. Manufacturers of ladders attached the labels to provide information for safe use.

Oversight and Monitoring: Requirements and performance under this procedure are closely monitored by the Human Resources Department, Business Unit Leaders, Safety Manager or Risk Management.

Questions/ Comments: Any questions or comments surrounding this policy should be forwarded to the Safety Department Management.