

Order Picker Fall Protection Harness and Lanyard Inspection

1.0 Objective & Intent

The objective of this SOP is to establish a standardized inspection protocol for fall protection harnesses and lanyards used by order picker operators. This procedure ensures that all personal fall arrest systems (PFAS) are free from defects, damage, or wear that could compromise their integrity during a fall event. Compliance with WorkSafeBC OHS Regulation Part 11 (Fall Protection) is mandatory to prevent serious injury or death from falls while operating elevated order pickers.

2.0 Operational Scope

This procedure applies to all maintenance personnel, warehouse operators, and any employee required to use a fall protection harness and lanyard while operating or servicing order pickers within the cabinet and millwork manufacturing facility. It covers all full-body harnesses and shock-absorbing lanyards assigned to order picker operations, including those used for order picking, stock retrieval, and equipment maintenance at heights exceeding 3 meters (10 feet).

3.0 Hazard Identification & Mandatory PPE

- Fall from height: Risk of serious injury or death if harness or lanyard fails during use.
- Cut or abrasion damage: Webbing can be compromised by sharp edges on racking or equipment.
- Chemical degradation: Exposure to oils, solvents, or cleaning agents can weaken synthetic fibers.
- UV degradation: Prolonged sunlight exposure can reduce strength of nylon or polyester webbing.
- Heat or weld spatter: Burns or melting of webbing from nearby hot work.
- Mandatory PPE: CSA-approved full-body harness with dorsal D-ring, shock-absorbing lanyard with double-leg attachment, and safety glasses during inspection.

4.0 Required Safety Equipment & Tools

- CSA-approved full-body harness (current standard, not expired)
- Shock-absorbing lanyard with double-leg attachment (or single-leg with anchor strap)
- Inspection checklist or log sheet (paper or digital via SafeDesk)
- Bright flashlight for detailed webbing inspection
- Magnifying glass for examining stitching and hardware
- Clean, dry cloth for wiping dirt or debris
- Calibrated measuring tape or ruler for checking lanyard length

5.0 Step-by-Step Safety Procedure

1. Verify that the harness and lanyard are within their manufacturer-specified service life and have not exceeded the expiration date printed on the label. Remove from service any equipment that is past its expiration or has unknown history.
2. Lay the harness flat on a clean, dry surface in a well-lit area. Visually inspect all webbing for cuts, fraying, abrasion, broken fibers, or discoloration. Pay special attention to areas near buckles, D-rings, and adjustment points.

3. Run your fingers along the entire length of the webbing to feel for hidden cuts, embedded debris, or stiffness that may indicate chemical or heat damage. Repeat for all straps including leg, shoulder, and chest straps.
4. Inspect all metal hardware (D-rings, buckles, adjusters, and snap hooks) for cracks, distortion, corrosion, sharp edges, or signs of deformation. Ensure all moving parts operate freely and lock correctly. Verify that no hardware is bent or cracked.
5. Examine all stitching on the harness, particularly at load-bearing points such as D-ring attachments and buckle webbing loops. Look for pulled, cut, or broken threads. Any stitching that is damaged or missing requires immediate removal from service.
6. Inspect the shock-absorbing lanyard by checking the outer jacket for cuts, abrasion, or fraying. Verify that the inner energy-absorbing element is not exposed, stretched, or damaged. Ensure the lanyard length does not exceed the manufacturer's specification (typically 1.8 meters or 6 feet).
7. Check all snap hooks and carabiners on the lanyard for proper gate operation, spring tension, and locking mechanism function. Ensure the gate closes fully and does not stick. Verify that the gate is not bent or damaged.
8. Inspect the lanyard's attachment points (D-rings) for wear, deformation, or corrosion. Ensure the lanyard is free of knots, kinks, or twists that could reduce its strength. Confirm that the lanyard's label is legible and matches the harness manufacturer's compatibility requirements.
9. Document the inspection results on the approved checklist or digital log (SafeDesk). Record the date, inspector name, equipment serial number, and any defects found. If defects are identified, tag the equipment as 'DO NOT USE' and remove it from service immediately for repair or replacement.
10. Store the inspected harness and lanyard in a clean, dry, and well-ventilated area away from direct sunlight, chemicals, and sharp objects. Ensure they are hung or stored in a manner that prevents kinking or crushing of the webbing.

Regulatory Disclaimer: This document is a generic safety template provided for educational and informational purposes only. It does not constitute professional engineering, legal, or regulatory compliance advice. The end-user assumes all liability for validating all safety protocols against specific machinery manufacturer manuals and local occupational health and safety regulations (e.g., WorkSafeBC, CSA standards) before deployment.