

Building (Safety) Regulations, 1968¹

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 3 of the Factories Ordinance, the Minister of Labour, Employment and Welfare has made the following regulations:-

1. (1) These regulations may be cited as Building (Safety) Regulations, 1968.

(2) These regulations shall come into force after twenty-one days from the day in which they are laid before the House of Representatives in accordance with the provisions of subsection (3) of section 3 of the Factories Ordinance, which date shall be notified by the Minister of Labour, Employment and Welfare by notice in the Government Gazette.

2. In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires -

"building comprises constructions of all types, whatever the constituent materials, and includes any permanent structure as well as any temporary structure which comes within the meaning of a scaffold as hereinafter defined;

"mason" means a person licensed by the Director of Public Works to exercise the trade of mason in terms of section 84 of the Code of Police Laws.

"scaffold" means any temporary structure on or from which persons work in connection with an operation to which these regulations apply, and any temporary structure which enables persons to obtain access to or which enables materials to be taken to any place at which such work is performed, and includes any working platform, gangway, run, ladder or step-ladder (other than an independent ladder or step-ladder which does not form part of such a structure) together with any guard-rail, toe-board or other safe guards and all fixings, but does not include a lifting appliance or a structure used merely to support such an appliance or to support other machinery or plant.

3. These Regulations shall apply to the following operations where undertaken by way of trade or business or for the purpose of any industrial or commercial undertaking or by or on behalf of the Government namely, the construction, structural alteration, painting, decoration, repair or maintenance of a building or any other structure (including repainting, redecoration and external cleaning of the building or structure), the demolition of a building or structure, the preparation for, and laying the foundation of, an intended building or structure, the quarrying for building stone, and to machinery or plant used in such operations.

¹ This is the text of the Building (Safety) Regulations, 1968, which are being republished in this format for the convenience of readers and are not to be regarded as the official text thereof. The text includes all amendments to date.

4. It shall be the duty of every contractor or other employer of workmen who is undertaking any of the operations to which these regulations apply to comply with the requirements prescribed by these regulations.
5. All operations involving construction, structural alteration or demolition of a building, or the preparation for, or laying the foundation of, an intended building shall be performed under the general supervision and control of a mason who shall personally superintend the following operations:-
 - (a) construction of arches and arched ceilings;
 - (b) roofing, whether in stone or in reinforced concrete;
 - (c) mounting or alteration of scaffolding;
 - (d) construction of staircases;
 - (e) placing of joists in position;
 - (f) excavation work which is likely to require shoring;
 - (g) erection or installation of lifting appliances.
6. Sufficient safe means of access and egress shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, be provided and maintained to and from every place at which any person has at any time to perform any work and every such place shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, be made and kept safe for any person working there.
7. Where work cannot safely be done on or from the ground or from part of a building, or other permanent structure, there shall be provided and maintained either scaffolds or, where appropriate, ladders or other means of support, each of which shall be suitable and sufficient for the purpose:

Provided that, for the purpose of this regulation, a wall which is less than two feet wide shall not be deemed to be a permanent structure.

8. (1) No scaffold shall be erected or be substantially added to or altered or be dismantled except under the immediate supervision of a mason and, so far as possible, by competent workmen possessing adequate experience of such work.
 - (2) All material for any scaffold shall be inspected by a mason on each occasion before being made use of.
9. (1) Every scaffold and every part thereof shall be of good construction, of suitable and sound material and of adequate strength for the purpose for which it is used.
 - (2) Sufficient material shall be provided for and shall be used in the construction of scaffolds.

- (3) Timber used for scaffolds shall not be painted or treated in any way in such a manner that defects might not be easily seen.
 - (4) Metal parts used for scaffolds shall be free from corrosion or other patent defects which might effect materially their strength.
10. (1) Every working platform from which a person is liable to fall a distance of more than 6 feet 6 inches shall:-
- (a) if used as a footing only and not for the deposit of any material, be at least 25 inches wide;
 - (b) if used for the deposit of material, be at least 34 inches wide and have a clear passageway between one side of the working platform and the deposited material adequate in width for the passage of persons, which passageway shall in no case be less than 17 inches wide;
 - (c) if used for the passage of materials, afford a clear passageway adequate in width for the passage of the materials without removal of the guard-rails and toe-boards, which passageway shall in no case be less than 25 inches wide;
 - (d) if used for the support of any higher platform, be at least 42 inches wide;
 - (e) if used to dress or roughly shape stone, be at least 51 inches wide;
 - (f) if used for the support of any higher platform and is one upon which stone is dressed or roughly shaped, be at least 59 inches wide;
- and, in every case, it shall be of sufficient width to afford adequate working space at every part of it.
- (2) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (4) of this regulation, the following working platforms shall be at least 17 inches wide:-
- (a) a platform of a ladder scaffold or a platform supported directly by folding trestles or folding step ladders or a platform under a roof used for work on or in the vicinity of the roof, being a platform which is supported by or suspended from roof members or the roof, where in any such case the work thereon is of light nature and of short duration in any one position and a platform less than 25 or 34 inches wide (as the case may be) can be used with safety; and
 - (b) a platform which is used for work in connection with cylindrical or spherical metal structures.
- (3) Where work at the face of a building or other structure is done from a working platform to which this regulation applies, the space between such face and the working platform shall be as small as practicable, provided that,

where workmen sit at the edge of the platform to work, such space may be up to a maximum of 12 inches.

- (4) The provisions of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this regulation shall not apply to a working platform to which this regulation applies where it is impracticable, by reason of limitations of space, to provide a platform of the width required by the said paragraphs, provided that, in any such case, the platform shall be as wide as is reasonably practicable.
11. (1) Every side of a working platform or working place, being a side thereof from which a person is liable to fall a distance of more than 6 feet 6 inches, shall, subject to the provisions of paragraphs (3) to (6) of this regulation be provided with a suitable guard-rail or guard-rails of adequate strength to a height of between 3 feet and 3 feet 9 inches above the platform or place and above any raised standing place on the platform, and with toe-boards or other barriers up to a sufficient height which shall in no case be less than 6 inches, such guard-rails and toe-boards or other barriers shall be so placed as to prevent as far as possible the fall of persons, materials or articles from such platform or place.
 - (2) The outward movement of guard-rails and toe-boards or other barriers shall (unless they are so designed and used as to prevent such movement) be prevented by placing them on the inside of the uprights or by other equally effective means.
 - (3) Where guard-rails are required to be provided, the distance between any toe-boards or other barrier and the lowest guard-rail above it shall not exceed 30 inches.
 - (4) Guard-rails, toe-boards and barriers required by paragraph (1) of this regulation may be removed or remain unerected for the time and to the extent necessary for the access of persons or the movement of materials or other purposes of the work; but guard-rails, toe-boards and barriers removed or remaining unerected for any of these purposes shall be replaced or erected as soon as practicable.
 - (5) On the side of a suspended scaffold next to the wall or working face -
 - (a) guard-rails where required by this regulation, need not extend to a height of more than 27 inches above the platform if the work is impracticable with a guard-rail at a greater height; and
 - (b) guard-rails and toe-boards or other barriers shall not be required if the workers sit at the edge of the platform to work and ropes or chains affording all the workers safe and secure handhold are provided.
 - (6) None of the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this regulation shall apply to -

- (a) the platform of a ladder scaffold if a secure handhold is provided along the full length of such platform;
 - (b) the platform of a trestle scaffold when the platform is supported on folding trestle, split heads or similar devices or folding step ladders;
 - (c) a platform which is used only in the course of erecting any framework or prefabricated unit forming part of a building or other permanent structure for the purpose of jointing, bolting up, riveting or welding work and which is used for such a short period as to make the provision of guard-rails and toe-boards or barriers unreasonable if -
 - (i) the platform is at least 34 inches wide;
 - (ii) there is adequate handhold; and
 - (iii) the platform is not used for the deposit of rail or articles on the platform.
12. (1) In the case of any opening, corner, break or edge through or from which any person is liable to fall a distance of more than 6 feet 6 inches, or to fall into any liquid or material so as to involve risk of drowning or serious injury, there shall be provided either:-
- (a) a suitable guard-rail or guard-rails of adequate strength to a height of between 3ft and 3ft 9 ins above the surface across which persons are liable to pass, together with toe-boards or other barriers up to a sufficient height which shall in no case be less than 6 inches, so placed as to prevent as far as possible the fall of persons, materials or articles and so that the space between any toe-board or other barrier and the lowest guard-rail above it shall not exceed 30 inches; or
 - (b) a covering so constructed as to prevent the fall of persons, materials or articles, which covering shall either be clearly and boldly marked to show its purpose or be securely fixed in position.
- (2) In the case of any opening, corner, break or edge (not being an opening, corner, break or edge to which the provisions of paragraph (1) of this regulation apply) through or from which materials or articles are liable to fall so as to endanger persons below, suitable precautions by way of the erection of toe-boards, secure covering or otherwise shall be taken to prevent materials or articles from falling.
- (3) When work is done on or immediately above any open joisting through which a person is liable to fall a distance of more than 6 feet 6 inches, such joisting shall be securely covered by boards or other temporary covering to the extent necessary to afford safe access to or foothold for the work; safety nets shall moreover be provided when necessary, and other effective measures shall be taken to prevent persons from falling.
- (4) Guard-rails, toe-boards, barriers and coverings required by this regulation may be removed or remain unerected -

- (a) where and when this is necessary in order to proceed with any permanent filling in, covering or enclosure; or
- (b) for the time and to the extent necessary for the access of persons or the movement of materials or other purposes of the work;

but guard-rails, toe-boards, barriers and coverings removed or remaining unerected for any of those purposes shall be replaced or erected as soon as practicable.

- 13. (1) Where roofing is carried out by laying stone slabs on steel joists or on beams, workmen shall in no case make use of naked slabs as a means of support.
- (2) Suitable planks be provided for such workmen and the planks shall be supported by the joists or beams.
- 14. Every ladder used shall be of good construction, sound material and adequate strength for the purpose for which it is used, with rungs evenly spaced.
- 15. Ladders shall not stand on loose stones or other loose packing, but shall have a level and firm footing.
- 16. Where a ladder is used as a means of communication adequate handhold shall be provided to a height of at least three feet above the place of landing.
- 17. No ladder shall be used which has -
 - (a) a missing or defective rung; or
 - (b) any rung which depends for its support solely on nails, spikes, or other similar fixing.
- 18. No wooden ladder shall be used unless it is constructed with -
 - (a) uprights of adequate strength made of straight-grained wood free from defects and having the grain of the wood running lengthwise; and
 - (b) rungs made of straight-grained wood free from defects and mortised or securely notched into the uprights.
- 19. In appropriate cases, the following provisions relating to ladders shall also apply -
 - (a) if a ladder is 25 feet or more in length it shall be secure at the top;
 - (b) ladders reaching to a platform or roof shall rise at least 3 feet above the landing place; and

- (c) where a ladder is used as a means of connection and is 10 feet or more in length, a person shall be stationed at the foot of its lower end to prevent it from slipping; alternatively, the ladder shall be secured to the ground where possible, or to a solid anchorage, in a way to prevent the ladder from slipping.
20. (1) A ladder used by stone carriers shall be so constructed that the distance between the upper edge of one rung and the upper edge of the next rung shall not exceed 7 inches.
- (2) Any such ladder shall not be less than 2 feet 6 inches wide at the base.
21. An adequate supply of timber of suitable quality or other suitable material shall, where necessary, be provided and used to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable and as early as is reasonably practicable in the course of the work, danger to any person employed from a fall or dislodgement of earth, rock or other material forming the side of, or is adjacent to, any excavation or earthwork:

Provided that this regulation shall not apply where, having regard to the nature and slope of the side of the excavation or earthwork other circumstances, no fall or dislodgement of earth or other material likely to bury or trap such a person, or likely to strike such a person from a height of more than four feet, is liable to occur.

22. (1) No material shall be placed or stacked near the edge of any excavation, pit or opening in the ground so as to endanger persons employed below.
- (2) No load shall be placed or moved near the edge of any excavation where it is likely to cause a collapse of the side of the excavation and thereby endanger any person.
23. (1) Effective steps shall be taken to secure and maintain the adequate ventilation of every working place in any excavation, pit, hole, adit, tunnel shaft, caisson or other enclosed or confined space and of every approach to any such working place so as -
- (a) to maintain an atmosphere which is fit for respiration; and
 - (b) to render harmless, so far as is reasonably practicable, all fumes, dust or other impurities which may be dangerous or injurious to health and which may be generated, produced or released by explosives or by any other means in such working place or approach thereto.
- (2) Where there is reason to apprehend that the atmosphere in any of the working places or approaches thereto mentioned in paragraph (1) of this regulation is poisonous or asphyxiating, then, without prejudice to the requirements of the said paragraph, no person shall be employed in or allowed to enter such working place or approach until the atmosphere has been suitably tested by, or under the immediate supervision of a competent person and such person is satisfied that the working place or approach is, for

the time being, free from the danger of any person being overcome by poisoning or asphyxiation.

- (3) No stationary internal combustion engine shall be used in any enclosed or confined space unless specific provision is made for conducting the exhaust gases from the engine into the open air or the place is adequately ventilated so as to prevent danger to health from such exhaust gases.
 - (4) No person shall be held not to have complied with a requirement of the foregoing paragraphs of this regulation by reason of any matter proved to have been due to physical conditions over which he had no control and against which it was not reasonably practicable for him to make provision.
24. Every flywheel and every moving part of any prime mover, every part of transmission machinery and every dangerous part of other machinery (whether or not driven by mechanical power) shall be securely fenced unless it is in such position or of such construction as to be as safe to every person employed or working on the site of the operations as it would be if it were securely fenced.
 25. Every crane, crab and winch shall be provided with an efficient brake or brakes or other safety device which will prevent the fall of the load when suspended, and by which the load can be effectively controlled whilst being lowered.
 26. (1) Skips and buckets are to be at least two feet and six inches deep and constructed of metal.
 - (2) Skips and buckets, suspension ropes and chains or other means of support shall be free from defect.
 - (3) Persons loading the skip below shall stand clear when the skip is being raised, and enough space shall be provided for the person binding the skip below to stand clear when the skip is being raised.
 27. Explosives shall not be handled or used except by or under the control of competent persons with adequate knowledge of the dangers connected with their use and steps shall be taken to see that, when a charge is fired, persons employed are in positions in which, so far as can reasonably be anticipated, they are not exposed to risk of injury from the explosion or from any flying material.
 28. All persons employed in any operations to which these regulations apply shall wear suitable boots of strong material which will completely enclose all the toes when engaged in processes involving the use of cement.
 29. Every person engaged in plastering or whitewashing in such a manner that the application of the plaster or lime to the object being treated is made at a level higher than the eyes of such person shall wear suitable eye shields to protect his eyes.

30. The Building (Safety) Regulations, 1952, are hereby revoked without prejudice to any proceedings taken or to be taken thereunder.