

Footwear Best Practices Requirement

Subject: Appropriate footwear in the school environment

Effective: September 2019

BEST PRACTICES REQUIREMENT

Seaside School District is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment. As part of that commitment and due to the risk of slips, trips and falls resulting in personal injury, certain footwear is both required as well as prohibited in the work environment. Even when special protective footwear is not necessary, all footwear must be appropriate for the environment and the employee's job requirements. For example, extremely high heels or open-toe shoes are inappropriate for our work environments and create safety hazards for the wearer.

This best practices guideline clarifies requirements about footwear that should be worn when on duty and provides guidance for all staff about footwear that is suitable for general activities on school sites. School staff act in loco parentis, when children are in their care at school. Staff have the responsibility to be ready to respond quickly and appropriately to emergency situations which translates into wearing appropriate footwear.

The Seaside School District reserves the right to determine whether a particular style of footwear is appropriate for the workplace and/or job requirements.

PROCEDURE

Footwear worn in the workplace must be sturdy, provide a firm base and good support; as well as, have a good grip. It is also strongly recommended that staff have a closed toe shoe.

Food Service, Transportation and Maintenance staff must wear sturdy, low-heeled shoes, which prevent slips, falls, trips burns, and cuts. Socks are preferred. Flip-flops or sandals are never appropriate.

While some tasks require protective footwear due to the inherent risks of the activity, all staff should consider the tasks and activities they will undertake during the day including where they will be performing those activities and whether their footwear is appropriate, to protect the feet and minimize risk of injury. Activities may include: ✓ traversing uneven ground and loose surfaces (e.g. playground duty, commuting to portables, field trips); ✓ supervising physical activity; ✓ manual tasks (e.g. cleaning, moving teaching resources); and ✓ required school drills (e.g. tsunami, fire).

Staff and students transition continuously throughout the day in school facilities. **School staff should consider wearing footwear that is suitable for walking on a number of different surfaces during the working day (e.g. stairs, playgrounds, grass, bark chips, carpet, gravel and concrete).**

Non-specialty footwear worn by those walking or working outdoors while in the scope of their job responsibilities must be appropriate for the conditions. For example, to help prevent slips and falls, boots or other appropriate footwear must be worn outdoors during inclement weather and/or while navigating snowy or slippery surfaces and must have an aggressive sole tread.

PROHIBITED FOOTWEAR

The following shoes will NOT be allowed to be worn while in the workplace or working off-campus, as they are considered a risk factor for trips and falls.

- Flip-flops or similar sandals with or without elevated heels.
- Clogs or other shoes with an elevated sole and open heel.
- Any shoe with an open heel and no strap to secure the foot.
- Shoes with an excessive high heel of one (1) inches or higher.

FOOTWEAR SAFETY BEST PRACTICES

This best practice footwear requirement has been established to minimize injury and promote a safe workplace. Your participation is essential to the success of our safety program. The School District's goals are to: ✓ demonstrate the importance of setting an example for the students; ✓ promote the safety aspects of shoe choice in the school environment; ✓ mandate particular types of footwear for high risk activities and environments based on a risk assessment; and ✓ reduce employee slip, trip and fall injuries.

To further ensure safety, footwear must be free of defects or contamination. Staff should:

- Check footwear before wearing each day to make sure there are no rips, holes or other defects.
- Check soles to make sure they have adequate tread remaining.
- Replace footwear that no longer provides good support and protection.
- Footwear laces must remain tied at all times.
- Keep all components of footwear clean, particularly treads on soles.