

## RISK INFORMATION – CHURCHES

### SLIPS, TRIPS & FALLS

The majority of incidents occurring in our churches can be categorised as Slips, Trips & Falls. Mostly these incidents could have been avoided by the adoption of more rigorous practices to identify and eliminate causes.

The guidance aims to help churches minimise slip, trip and fall incidents

Slips happen when a person's foot loses traction with the ground surface.

Trips occur when a person unexpectedly catches their foot on an object or surface.

Falls can be the result of a slip or trip but can also happen due to falls from low objects such as stairs, curbs, holes or depressions.

Common causes of slips and trips include:

- Wet floors
- Highly polished floors
- Wet leaves on paths or steps
- Changes in floor surfaces, e.g. joins where the surface changes from carpet to polished timber
- Loose flooring; bumpy flooring
- Sloping ramps or walkways
- Use of unsuitable footwear
- Low light levels
- Ridges in carpets
- Cracked or broken floor tiles
- Changes in floor levels
- Power extension cords or phone cords
- Potholes in car parks
- Cracked or broken concrete on footpaths or walkways

**We encourage churches to establish regular patterns of inspection of church premises to identify hazards and establishment of appropriate risk management controls.**

Attached to this guide is a "Housekeeping Checklist" that can be used to assist you identifying hazards. Actions to minimize impact of hazards can be recorded in the final section of the form. Note that the checklist is a guide. Not all items on the checklist may be applicable to your church; conversely additional items may need to be added to the checklist.

The information provided is of a general nature only and may not identify all matters that need to be included in the design of effective controls for the subject area. Professional advice should be obtained on individual circumstances.

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### SLIPS, TRIPS & FALLS

Examples of controls to minimize Slips, Trips & Falls include:

- Change of floor design
- Upgrade or replacement of stairs including use of landings, handrails and uniform risers and treads
- Better lighting solutions to illuminate stairways, walkways, passages and similar
- Better signage to provide notice of hazards not able to be removed
- Improved drainage to minimize water on walking surfaces; modify flooring surfaces so they are slip-resistant
- Provision of adequate storage
- Clear marking of step edges
- Eliminate sources of liquid wetting surfaces – drainage etc.
- Cordon off hazardous areas
- Remove leaves and other debris from pathways
- Eliminating use of extension cords; securing cables with tape or other means

Any Slips, Trips or Falls should be recorded on your church's incident reporting forms/system. Remember to review incidents periodically to identify hazards that might need to be managed differently.

#### **References:**

"Risk Management Guide for Churches", Baptist Insurance Services – contains the "Housekeeping Checklist"

For additional information on this topic refer to: Safe Work Australia Fact Sheet: "Slips and Trips at the Workplace" The document can be found at: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/slips-and-trips-fact-sheet>

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# HOUSEKEEPING CHECKLIST

Name of Church

Person Inspecting

Date of Inspection (dd/mm/yyyy)

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No.	Checklist Items	Yes	No	N/A
<b>Floors, Aisles, Stairs &amp; Landings</b>				
1	All aisles are clear			
2	Aisles are free of slip, trip and fall hazards			
3	Stairs free of worn or broken treads			
4	Handrails are in good repair			
5	Non-skid strips on chairs are in good condition			
<b>Storage</b>				
6	No storage in traffic areas			
7	Stacks stable with good bases			
8	No rubbish or unwanted material			
9	Flammable items correctly stored			
<b>Electrical Power</b>				
10	Plugs, sockets and switches in good order			
11	Free of frayed or defective leads			
12	Free of double adaptors or piggy-back plugs			
13	All lights adequate or operational			
14	Residual Current Devices installed and maintained			
<b>First Aid</b>				
15	First Aid kits identified and appropriately stocked			
16	Names of qualified first aiders displayed			
<b>Emergency Response/Fire Protection</b>				
17	Evacuation Procedures clearly displayed			
18	Fire extinguishers appropriate to material			
19	Extinguishers readily available and properly mounted			
20	Exits and exit signs adequately illuminated			
21	Exits and fire doors in good repair and unobstructed, internally and externally			
<b>Car Park/Outdoor Areas</b>				
22	Clean and free from rubbish			
23	Even surfaces – no holes			
24	Free of grease and oil			
25	Vehicle traffic ways clearly marked and lit			
26	Free of dense shrubbery obstructing vision			

## HOUSEKEEPING CHECKLIST

No.	Checklist Items	Yes	No	N/A
Equipment				
27	Office chairs suitable and in good condition			
28	Ladders serviceable, no broken rungs/defects			
29	Metal ladders not used for electrical work			
30	WHS policies and procedures appropriately displayed			
31	Safety signs clearly displayed where necessary			
32	Kitchen appliances properly maintained			

Any items identified as needing attention should be listed on the Action Plan below.

[illegible]