



# Tenant Height Safety Checklist

Know your obligations when contractors access the roof of your building

You don't have to own the building to have legal obligations when work is carried out on its roof. As an occupier of commercial premises, you are a duty holder under Victorian OHS law. This checklist gives you the practical steps to protect yourself, your staff, and the contractors working on your site.

**■ No SWMS + No fall protection + No insurance = NO ACCESS. This is your single most important rule as a building occupier.**

## Section 1 — Your Legal Position as a Tenant

Under the **Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)**, OHS Regulations 2017 (Vic), and the **Occupiers Liability Act 1983 (Vic)**, you must ensure — so far as reasonably practicable — that your workplace is safe and that people (including contractors) are not exposed to risk.

Duties are shared between the landlord, real estate agent, contractors, and you. They cannot be transferred or avoided. If something goes wrong, multiple parties can be held liable at the same time.

## Section 2 — Before You Allow Roof Access

Every time a contractor needs to access the roof of your building, run through this checklist before giving the go-ahead.

- Ask the contractor for their Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)  
*Legally required for all high-risk work, including work at heights*
- Confirm what fall protection system they will be using  
*Harness and anchor points? Static line? Scaffolding? They must tell you.*
- Verify they hold current public liability insurance  
*Ask for a certificate of currency — not just a verbal confirmation*
- Check that their workers are trained and competent to work at heights
- Confirm the work scope — what exactly are they accessing the roof to do?  
*You need to understand what work is happening on your premises*
- Approve access in writing  
*An email is sufficient — this creates a record that you took reasonable steps*

## Section 3 — What to Watch For During the Work

You are not expected to supervise the work, but you should not ignore obvious risks. If you see unsafe practices, raise them immediately. Stopping access when safety is in question reduces your liability, not increases it.

- Workers are wearing and connected to a harness — not just carrying it
- No one is working without connecting to a certified anchor point
- No one is using makeshift access — gutters, forklifts, leaning ladders

- Workers are not walking across fragile surfaces such as skylights or fibro sheeting
- The SWMS is being followed — not improvised on the spot

## Section 4 — If Roof Access Happens Regularly

If contractors access your roof on a regular basis for HVAC servicing, gutter clearing, maintenance, or other tasks, you should be requesting that permanent height safety infrastructure is in place. This protects everyone and reduces your liability with every visit.

- Ask your landlord or property manager whether certified anchor points or static lines are installed  
*Certified height safety infrastructure should be in place for any regularly accessed roof*
- Request a copy of the building's current height safety audit report  
*This tells you whether the roof is compliant and when systems were last certified*
- Ask for height safety system documentation to be shared with all contractors  
*Trades should know what is installed before they set foot on the roof*
- Raise any concerns about unsafe access in writing  
*Document your communication — this protects you if a dispute or incident arises later*

## Section 5 — Protecting Yourself if Something Goes Wrong

If an incident occurs on your premises, you could face a WorkSafe investigation or prosecution, fines or penalties under OHS law, and civil claims for negligence. The best protection is evidence that you took reasonable steps.

- Keep copies of all SWMS documents from contractors
- File records of your written access approvals
- Keep records of any safety concerns you raised and how they were resolved
- Document any instances where you refused or stopped access due to safety concerns

## Quick Reference — Your 3 Non-Negotiables

1. SWMS	2. Fall Protection	3. Insurance
Always ask for a written Safe Work Method Statement before allowing roof access.	Confirm what fall protection system is being used — and that it will actually be used.	Verify current public liability insurance before work begins.

■ Unsure if your building is compliant? Call Anchored Height Safety: 03 9555 3586 | [anchored.com.au](https://anchored.com.au)