



Slips/Trips/Falls: Safety in the School Environment

DID YOU KNOW



Slips, Trips and Falls account for over 20% of non-fatal occupational injuries. As a temporary employee working in the schools, you are even more prone to slip and fall accidents than a permanent teacher or school employee is—simply due to the fact that you may not be as familiar with the surroundings.

Hazards are Everywhere

Wet floors, an open drawer, slippery shoes, an icy walkway—all can lead to serious painful injuries in the school environment.

While it may seem odd to be discussing such simple and basic topics—the fact is that slips, trips and falls account for over 20% of non-fatal occupational injuries.

As a Kelly substitute employee, you are likely working at a different school location every time you accept an assignment. Therefore, it is even more important that you take the time to observe your surroundings and maintain a heightened awareness whenever you enter the school environment. It makes no difference whether you are a custodian, food service worker, para, or teacher—safety in the school is an important matter.



The American Red Cross identifies the primary causes for workplace slips, trips and falls as:

1. Lack of Safety Awareness
2. Unsafe Conditions
3. Unsafe Behaviors



Preventing Slips

When the weather creates hazardous walking conditions:

- Keep your hands free for balance
- Wear shoes with enough traction for the ground condition
- Wear sunglasses on bright days to help you spot icy or slick roads and sidewalks
- Wipe your shoes thoroughly on rugs



Preventing Trips

Trips are caused by taking shortcuts, poor lighting and loose footing. Tips to prevent trips:

- Walk in designated areas/ turn on lights
- Carry only loads that you can see over (i.e., don't huge stacks of books)
- Close file drawers and cabinet doors after each use
- Watch for curled rugs, chipped flooring
- Correct or report potential trip hazards

Preventing Falls

Falls happen when your center of gravity is in an unsupported position. Don't put yourself in such a situation.

- Keep your center of gravity supported
- Follow safety warnings on equipment
- Don't stand on chairs or tables with wheels
- Don't stand on furniture not intended for standing/climbing
- Don't sit on banisters
- Look ahead when climbing stairs without lifting your head back (which can cause the body to lean backwards)