

Do not compromise Health, Safety & Wellbeing this Christmas!



12 Rules for Christmas Guide

18th October 2021



12 Rules for Christmas

The festive season for retail is a busy one, and this year is no different but with a bit of added complexity to keep workers and customers safe from Covid-19. For Covid-19 retail industry protocols: <https://www.shopcare.org.nz/covid19resources>

It is often around this time of year that more casual, temporary, or office-based workers are employed or redeployed to meet customer demands. This leads to the holiday season being potentially the most dangerous time of year and placing a strain on health, safety, and wellbeing, making it even more important to focus on proper planning ahead of time.

In the spirit of the '12 days of Christmas', here are some recommendations to assist the retail and supply chain industry to prevent incidents.

- 1. Induction & training** - In the rush to get casual, temporary, and office-based workers on board to meet customer demand during the holiday season, there is a risk that workers will not be provided with adequate induction and training. This is a vital part to ensure workers can safely perform their work. It is also a legal requirement for businesses to provide adequate information and training to their workers.
- 2. Vulnerable and young workers** - Consider adjustments for workers such as expectant mothers, or young workers. They are at a greater risk of being injured at work than any other worker.
- 3. Violence and aggressive behaviour** - Work-related stress, resulting from violent and aggressive behaviour, harassment and bullying that occur in the industry. These incidents happen to customer-facing workers as well as internally between co-worker and/or contractors working on site.

Plan to conduct effective training to diffuse the potential for verbal and physical violence. A bit of empathy, calmness and patience goes a long way

- 4. COVID-19** ShopCare has COVID-19 Retail operation protocols and Supply Chain guidelines documents for use at different alert levels. Businesses are expected to apply a risk management approach to ensure the health and safety of workers and customers.
- 5. Musculoskeletal harm and congestion risks** - Get manual handling training in order, reinforce safe manual handling behaviour with additional training and support. Plan and manage to include lifting heavy or awkward objects, moving and working in and around congested walkways, storerooms and chillers. Create a safe space to move in.
- 6. Working at height** - Provide and maintain the right equipment for working at height including stepladders. Monitor behaviours when people are working at height.



- 7. Working “overtime” & shift workers** - Fatigue increases the likelihood of incidents and near misses. Good rest is of utmost importance.
- 8. Housekeeping slips and trips** - Monitor all exit routes and walkways to keep them obstruction-free, keep stockrooms organised, and do not allow congestion. All the floors, front and back of the site, are kept in good condition. Ensure all workers including contractors know how to respond correctly in case of spillages.

When working in a store be mindful of the space you are working in, always being aware of potential hazards.

- 9. Site traffic management** - Plan, coordinate and communicate well in advance any concerns or changes to the site traffic management of the site. Clear and up to date communication to transporters, mobile plant operators and pedestrians will be key for a safe site.

Whenever you or your team visit a site, always make sure to familiarise yourself on-site traffic.

- 10. Shop fittings and visual merchandising** - Confirm that all installations and fixtures are properly secured accordingly. Consider the placement of any attractions. Distracted customers or workers are less focussed on the potential hazards around them.

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- 11. Fire safety** - Assess the risk before introducing any additional heat or electrical sources such as candles, portable electrical appliances or Christmas trees and lights.

- 12. Risk Management** - Consultation is an important part of risk management and no one knows the risks better than the frontline workers, it would be wise to consult with workers throughout the risk management process. Worker involvement in health and safety will result in a safer workplace.

May all of you have a splendid and safe festive season and remember to keep hydrated.

(Image courtesy of <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/holidays/christmas-ideas/advice/a22748/holiday-safety-advice/#sidepanel>)

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