

Guardrails

Definition: A structure designed to prevent people from falling from an elevated walking area.
Guardrails are required when the following criteria is met:

- an elevated walking surface where there is a drop off 30 inches or greater measured vertically
- the height of a guardrail must be at least 36 inches

Name guardrails, railings, rail, balustrade, bannister
Variants:

Most Common Materials: metal, wood, plastic

Most Common Components: railing, post, top rail, mid rail, vertical rail, balusters, anchors, brackets

Location & Inspection of Guardrails

Abilities or Knowledge Needed:

- Visual acuity for location & inspection
- Mobility for access to all areas of the property
- Understanding of item's components

Tools for Location & Inspection

Useful: none

Required: length measuring device

Common Locations:

Unit/Inside: balconies, stairs, decks, hallways

Outside: balconies, stairs, decks, retaining walls, rooftops

How to Locate:

Visual Observation: Look in common locations for elevated walkways and the surrounding areas for railings or bannisters installed to prevent falling.

Possible Deficiencies:

Deficiency 1: Guardrail is missing where required

Deficiency 2: Components are missing

Deficiency 3: Guardrail is not secure

Deficiency 1: Guardrail is missing where required

Rationale: Maintenance: Indicates maintenance is not identifying deficiencies or responding to self-generated or complaint-driven work orders

Health and Safety: Increases probability that residents could fall and become injured.

Health and Safety **Severe:** **This is a life-threatening or severe health and safety issue requiring a 24-hour repair, correction, or act of abatement.**

How to Inspect: Visual Observation: Look in the unit, common areas, and outside for the presence of a guardrail, specifically near an elevated walking surface where there is a drop off 30 inches or greater measured vertically.

Action: Measure the drop off distance if unsure if vertical distance is 30 inches or greater.

Record deficiency if: the guardrail is missing where required.

Deficiency 2: Components are missing.

Rationale: Maintenance: Indicates maintenance is not identifying deficiencies or responding to self-generated or complaint-driven work orders

Health and Safety: Increases probability that residents could fall and become injured.

Health and Safety **Severe:** **This is a life-threatening or severe health and safety issue requiring a 24-hour repair, correction, or act of abatement.**

How to Inspect: Visual Observation: Look at all elevated walking surfaces and identify any guardrails. Inspect guardrails for missing components like balusters or anything creating an opening that would allow passage of a sphere of at least 4 inches in diameter.

Record deficiency if: guardrail is missing a component that would allow passage of a sphere of at least 4 inches in diameter.

Deficiency 3: Guardrail is not secure

Rationale:	Maintenance:	Indicates maintenance is not identifying deficiencies or responding to self-generated or complaint-driven work orders
	Health and Safety:	Increases probability that residents could fall and become injured.
Health and Safety	Standard:	This is a standard health and safety issue. A repair, correction, or act of abatement for this deficiency should occur within 30 days.
How to Inspect:	Action:	Grab the guardrail and apply moderate force to each section, pushing and pulling rapidly to ensure it is securely affixed.
Record deficiency if:	the guardrail has any movement when pushed and pulled.	