

Reasonably Practicable

In Ireland, all employers and self-employed persons have the duty to protect safety, health and welfare of their employees and other persons in so far as is reasonably practicable.

But what does it mean?

Reasonably practicable means all that an employer or self-employer person is reasonably able to do to ensure the safety, health and welfare of their employees and other persons.

The following should be taken into account when establishing what is reasonably practicable:

- the **likelihood** of the risk occurring
- the **potential severity** of harm that might result
- the **availability and suitability** of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk
- once you have assessed the risk and the ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, you should consider whether the cost (financial, time, etc.) associated is appropriate or grossly disproportionate to the risk.

There are two elements to what is 'reasonably practicable'. An employer or self-employed person must consider:

- What can be done? (ie what is possible in their particular circumstances for ensuring health and safety).
- Whether it is **reasonable**, in their particular circumstances to do all that is possible?

*information for this page was found in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and Safe Work Australia's 'The meaning of Reasonably Practicable' information sheet