Gait Belts

- Be sure the correct size gait belt is available and that you’re using it properly!
- A gait belt should be worn by staff so it is readily available for use.
- As with all transfers, communication is critical between the caregiver and resident/patient. Greet the resident/patient and explain to them the transfer process.
- A gait belt is not a lifting device. Gait belts are positioning devices.
- A gait belt should be placed around the resident’s waist.
- Fasten the gait belt snugly around the resident’s waist. A general rule is to leave enough room to fit two finger widths between the body and belt. Remember to tighten the belt after the person stands.
- Never place the gait belt on bare skin.
- The caregiver should be positioned in front of the resident/patient in a staggered stance.
  - When transferring to the left, the right foot goes between the resident’s leg.
  - When transferring to the right, the left foot goes between the resident’s leg.
- Utilize a three-count and remember “Nose Over Toes.”
- Pull the resident to a standing position — do not lift!
- Once standing, allow the resident to stabilize and gain their balance before completing the move.
- If, at any time, you feel you have to lift the person or they are not stable, discontinue the move and consider a safer method of transferring (such as mechanical lift).

Our safety evaluations, reports and recommendations are made solely to assist your organization in reducing hazards and the potential of hazards and accidents. These recommendations were developed from conditions observed and information provided at the time of our visit. They do not attempt to identify every possible loss potential, hazard or risk; nor do they guarantee that workplace accidents will be prevented. These safety evaluations, reports and recommendations are not a substitute for ongoing, well-researched internal safety and risk management programs. This report does not warrant that the property inspected and its operations are compliant with any law, rule or regulation.