

POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Solihull
Life
Opportunities

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Charity No. 1102297
England Company No.
5025939

Manual Handling

Category: staff and volunteers

Introduction

Policy Statement

Statistics show that manual handling is one of the most common causes of absence through injury at the workplace. More than one third of lost time accidents are caused in this way. These injuries may often have long term effects. Solihull Life Opportunities therefore intends reducing the risk of manual handling injuries to its employees and provide guidance, through this policy, on the measures that should be taken to ensure safe lifting and carrying at the workplace.

Definition

Manual Handling Operations means the transporting or supporting of a load by hand or bodily force and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving.

References

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

Objectives

Seek to prevent injury to Solihull Life Opportunities employees from the manual handling of loads by;

- (a) identifying manual handling operations with the potential to cause harm and the individuals that may be at risk
- (b) avoiding hazardous manual handling operations so far as reasonably practicable

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Organisation: Solihull Life Opportunities

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Amended April 2008 Approved by: SoLO Board of Directors Date: April 2008

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Next Review Date: September 2010

- (c) assessing those manual handling operations which cannot be avoided
- (d) reducing the risk of injury by introducing appropriate control measures
- (e) providing adequate information, instruction, training and supervision for personnel undertaking manual handling tasks
- (f) monitoring and reviewing assessments and control measures

Assessment of risk

An assessment of manual handling activities will be carried out by competent persons. Risks which are identified will be reduced to the lowest level reasonable practicable. The following factors will be considered during the assessment.

The task

Bending and stooping to lift a load significantly increases the risk of back injury. Items should ideally be lifted from no lower than knee height to no higher than shoulder height. Outside this range, lifting capacity is reduced and the risk of injury is increased. Where items are required to be lifted from above shoulder height, a stand or suitable means of access should be used. Items which are pushed or pulled should be as near to waist level as possible. Pushing is preferable particularly where the back can rest against a fixed object to give leverage.

Carrying distances should be minimised, especially if the task is repeated regularly. Repetitive tasks should be avoided wherever possible. Tasks which involve lifting and carrying should be designed in such a way as to allow for sufficient rest breaks to avoid fatigue. Avoid tasks which require twisting the body wherever possible.

The Load

The load should be kept as near as possible to the body trunk to reduce strain and should not be of such size as to obscure vision. An indication of the weight of the load and the centre of gravity should be provided where appropriate.

Unsuitable loads should be handled with particular caution. The change in centre of gravity is likely to result in overbalancing. A secure handhold should

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be maintained using gloves where necessary to protect against sharp edges or splinters.

The Individual

Consideration must be given to age, body weight and physical fitness. Regard must be given to personal limitation; employees must not attempt to handle loads which are beyond their individual capability. Assistance must be sought where necessary.

Persons with genuine physical or clinical reasons for avoiding lifting should have allowances made for them as should pregnant women, who should not be required to undertake hazardous lifting or carrying tasks.

Sufficient knowledge and understanding of the work is an important factor in reducing the risk of injury. Individuals undertaking lifting or carrying will be given suitable instruction, training and information to undertake the task with minimum risk.

The Working Environment

There must be adequate space to enable the activity to be conducted in safety and the transportation route must be free from obstruction. Lighting, heating and weather conditions must be taken into account. Floors and other working surfaces must be in a safe condition, and adequate ventilation is required, particularly where there is no natural ventilation.

Duties of Managers and Supervisors

Managers are responsible for ensuring in relation to employees for whom they have line management responsibility that:

- (a) manual handling assessments are carried out where relevant and record are kept by the section/premises
- (b) adequate information, instruction and training is provided to persons carrying out manual handling activities
- (c) any injuries or incidents relating to manual handling are investigated, with remedial action taken where necessary
- (d) employees adhere to safe systems of work
- (e) safety arrangements for manual handling operations are regularly monitored and reviewed

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- (f) employees undertaking manual handling activities are suitably screened for reasons of health and safety, before undertaking the work
- (g) special arrangements are made, where necessary, for individuals with health conditions which could be adversely affected by manual handling operations

Duties of Employees

Employees who undertake manual handling operations are required to:

- (a) report to management (in confidence) any personal conditions which may be detrimentally affected by the manual handling activity
- (b) comply with instruction and training which is provided in safe handling activities
- (c) ensure their own health and safety is not put at risk nor that of others when carrying out manual handling activities
- (d) use equipment which has been provided to minimise manual handling activities
- (e) report any problems related to the activity to a responsible person
- (f) co-operate with their manager/supervisor to enable them to comply with their health and safety duties

Procedures for dealing with problems

All employees share a responsibility for participating in risk reduction exercises, such as risk assessments, and to report any concerns or problems as they arise. If you raise a health and safety matter related to manual handling, SoLO will:

- **Take all necessary steps to investigate the matter**
- **Implement any reasonable and practical improvements that might be required**
- **Keep all employees informed of the improvements.**

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