

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Manual Handling

Category: staff and volunteers



SoLO
Life
Opportunities

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England Company No.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. SoLO Life Opportunities (SoLO) operates a Safer Handling Policy in respect of all manual handling including the manual handling of members. It is a mandatory requirement for health and social care organisations to have in place policies and procedures for any moving and handling activities, this is an important part of good risk management.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1. SoLO recognises the importance of managing the risks associated with moving and handling. This policy establishes the framework within which such management can take place
- 2.2. Statistics show that incorrect 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.
- 2.3. These injuries may often have long term effects. SoLO therefore intends to reduce the risk of manual handling injuries to its employees and volunteers, and provide guidance, through this policy, on the measures that should be taken to ensure safe lifting and carrying at the workplace.
- 2.4. SoLO Employees and Volunteers are never to manually lift any person; this refers to lifting the whole, or a large part of the weight of a person. The only exception to this is in an absolute emergency, In which case the risks to both parties need to be assessed to find a balance where one party's benefit does not significantly increase the other party's risk.
- 2.5. Interpretation of the Manual Handling Regulations now means that the lifting of people and other hazardous manual handling operations must be avoided except in exceptional circumstances. To achieve this, the company recognises the need to provide safe systems of work, appropriate mechanical aids and training.

- 2.6. SoLO recognises and accepts its responsibilities identified within the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

SoLO will endeavour, as far as is reasonably practicable, that no individual is exposed to avoidable risks to their health and safety through the activities of SoLO.

To ensure that risk assessments are carried out and recorded for all identified hazards to which a person may be exposed as a result of the activities of SoLO, that identifies the safest approach for moving and handling people or objects, Before any work commences which might cause such exposure.

To ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent or control exposure to risk from those activities.

3. Definition of Manual Handling

- 3.1. 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.

4. Responsibilities of Employees, Volunteers, Managers and Leaders

- 4.1. This policy covers every person who is employed by SoLO or volunteers for work at SoLO.
- 4.2. Project Managers and Project Leaders have a responsibility to ensure that good practice is adhered to and workers and volunteers are challenged if they contravene the guidelines. Any person who operates a hoist must be trained before doing so and Project Managers and Leaders must ensure that training is provided.
- 4.3. Managers are responsible for developing a safe system of work and ensuring compliance with those systems through information, instruction, supervision and training.

4.4. Duties of Managers and Supervisors

- 4.4.1. Managers are responsible for ensuring in relation to employees volunteers for whom they have line management responsibility that:
 - 4.4.1.1. manual handling assessments are carried out where relevant and record are kept by the section/premises;
 - 4.4.1.2. adequate information, instruction and training is provided to persons carrying out manual handling activities;
 - 4.4.1.3. any injuries or incidents relating to manual handling are investigated, with remedial action taken where necessary;
 - 4.4.1.4. all relevant persons adhere to safe systems of work;
 - 4.4.1.5. safety arrangements for manual handling operations are regularly monitored and reviewed;

- 4.4.1.6. employees and volunteers undertaking manual handling activities are suitably screened for reasons of health and safety, before undertaking the work; and
- 4.4.1.7. special arrangements are made, where necessary, for individuals with health conditions which could be adversely affected by manual handling operations

4.5. Duties of Employees and Volunteers

- 4.5.1. Employees and volunteers who undertake manual handling operations are required:
 - 4.5.1.1. To report to management (in confidence) any personal conditions which may be detrimentally affected by the manual handling activity;
 - 4.5.1.2. To comply with instruction and training which is provided in safe handling activities;
 - 4.5.1.3. To ensure their own health and safety is not put at risk nor that of others when carrying out manual handling activities;
 - 4.5.1.4. To use equipment which has been provided to minimise manual handling activities;
 - 4.5.1.5. To report any problems or Incidents related to the activity to a responsible person immediately;
 - 4.5.1.6. To co-operate with their manager/supervisor to enable them to comply with their health and safety duties and;
 - 4.5.1.7. Attend any training as required
- 4.6. All employees and volunteers share a responsibility for participating in risk reduction exercises, such as risk assessments, and to report any concerns or problems as they arise.
- 4.7. If you raise a health and safety matter related to manual handling, SoLO will:
 - 4.7.1. Take all necessary steps to investigate the matter;
 - 4.7.2. Implement any reasonable and practical improvements that might be required; and
Keep all employees and volunteers informed of the improvements.

5. Objectives

- 5.1. The objective of this policy is to reduce the level of risk of injury to persons who may be involved in manual handling so far as reasonably practicable in compliance with all health and safety statute and legislation.

6. Assessment of risk

- 6.1. 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.
- 6.2. The following factors will be considered during the assessment:
- 6.3. **The task**
 - 6.3.1. Bending and stooping to lift a load significantly increases the risk of back injury;

- 6.3.2. Items should ideally be lifted from no lower than knee height to no higher than shoulder height;
- 6.3.3. Outside this range, lifting capacity is reduced and the risk of injury is increased;
- 6.3.4. 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;
- 6.3.5. Carrying distances should be minimised, especially if the task is repeated regularly. Repetitive tasks should be avoided wherever possible;
- 6.3.6. Tasks which involve lifting and carrying should be designed in such a way as to allow for sufficient rest breaks to avoid fatigue;
- 6.3.7. Avoid tasks which require twisting the body wherever possible; and
- 6.3.8. Wherever possible, equipment should be used to help transport heavy objects or the object should be split up to smaller, more manageable sizes.

6.4. **The load**

- 6.4.2. 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;
- 6.4.3. An indication of the weight of the load and the centre of gravity should be provided where appropriate;
- 6.4.4. Heavy items should be stored on lower shelves. Shelves above head height should only have light materials stored and should always be accessed by a suitable step;
- 6.4.5. Unstable loads should be handled with particular caution. A change in centre of gravity can result in overbalancing;
- 6.4.6. A secure handhold should be maintained using gloves where necessary to protect against sharp edges or splinters;
- 6.4.7. Where the load is an individual, risk assessments should be carried out and non-emergency lifting should be carried out using hoists (where training must be given);
- 6.4.8. Where individuals can weight bear, contact should only be to steady the individual and support their balance. If an individual falls to the ground, they must be encouraged to lift themselves back to a sitting position and then standing position unless there is a dangerous situation if they are not moved immediately; and
- 6.4.9. At all times, the individual should be treated with respect and dignity.

6.5. **The Individual**

- 6.5.1. Consideration must be given to the age, body weight and physical fitness of the person undertaking the manual handling task;
- 6.5.2. Regard must be given to personal limitation. Employees and / or volunteers must not attempt to handle loads which are beyond their individual capability. Assistance must be sought where necessary;

6.5.3. 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; and

6.5.4. Sufficient knowledge and understanding of the work is an important factor in reducing the risk of injury.

6.6. The working environment

6.6.1. There must be adequate space to enable the activity to be conducted in safety and the transportation route must be free from obstruction; and

6.6.2. 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.

Appendix One (Manual Handling Policy) – Safe Storage and Handling of Equipment and Materials – 3 step guidance

1. Create a Safe Environment

- Plan the area out and stick to the plan – make sure that staff know the plan and know where to store items so that they can put them back in the right place.
- Label the area well so it is clear what goes where.
- Challenge staff when items are not put back correctly.
- Review storage on a regular basis and remove items that are not required.

2. Designate an area to store equipment and materials

- This must be an appropriate area – with security if the items are dangerous (e.g sharp instruments, or electrical equipment).
- Items that are hazardous – e.g. cleaning products, must be stored in an area that is not easily accessible to children or vulnerable adults.
- Other areas must not be used to store items – as this can cause a trip hazard

3. Store equipment and materials appropriately

- Heavy items should be stored low to the ground
- Use steps to retrieve items that are stored above head height
- Assess the load and take the necessary steps to ensure safe handling, ie. Does the load require a two man lift?
- Stack items safely so that there is no danger of them falling.
- If load is heavy, break it down into a manageable size.

Appendix Two (Manual Handling Policy) - Making an assessment

Problems to look for when making an assessment	Ways of reducing the risk of injury
<p><i>The tasks, do they involve:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding loads away from the body? Twisting, stooping or reaching upwards? Large vertical movement? Long carrying distances? Strenuous pushing or pulling? Repetitive handling? Insufficient rest or recovery time? A work rate imposed by a process? 	<p><i>Can you:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a lifting aid? Improve workplace layout to improve efficiency? Reduce the amount of twisting and stooping? Avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height, especially heavy loads? Reduce carrying distances? Avoid repetitive handling? vary the work, allowing one set of muscles to rest while another is used? Push rather than pull?
<p><i>The loads, are they:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavy or bulky? Difficult to grasp? Unstable or likely to move unpredictably? Harmful, eg sharp or hot? Awkwardly stacked? Too large for the handler to see over? 	<p><i>Can you make the load:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lighter or less bulky? Easier to grasp? More stable? Evenly stacked? <p>If the load comes in from elsewhere, have you asked the supplier to help, e.g. by providing handles or smaller Packages?</p>
<p>The working environment, are there:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrictions on posture? Bumpy, obstructed or slippery floors? Variations in floor levels? Hot/cold/humid conditions? Gusts of wind or other strong air movements? Poor lighting conditions? Restrictions on movements from clothes or Personal protective equipment (PPE)? 	<p><i>Can you:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove obstructions to free movement? Provide better flooring? Avoid steps and steep ramps? Prevent extremes of hot and cold? Improve lighting? Provide protective clothing or PPE that is less restrictive? Ensure your employees' clothing and footwear is suitable for their work?
<p><i>Individual capacity, does the job:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require unusual capability, eg above average strength or agility? Endanger those with a health problem or learning/ physical disability? Endanger pregnant women? Call for special information or training? 	<p><i>Can you:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay particular attention to those who have a physical weakness? Take extra care of pregnant workers? Give your employees more information, e.g. about the range of tasks they are likely to face? Provide more training get advice from an occupational health advisor if you need to?
<p>Handling aids and equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the device the correct type for the job? Is it well maintained? 	<p>Can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust the work rate? Provide equipment that is more suitable for the task?

<p>Are the wheels on the device suited to the floor surface? Do the wheels run freely? Is the handle height between the waist and shoulders? Are the handle grips in good condition and comfortable? Are there any brakes? If so, do they work?</p>	<p>Carry out planned preventive maintenance to prevent problems? Change the wheels, tyres and/or flooring so that equipment moves easily? Provide better handles and handle grips? Make the brakes easier to use, reliable and effective?</p>
<p><i>Work organisation factors:</i></p> <p>Is the work repetitive or boring? Is work machine or system-paced? Do workers feel the demands of the work are excessive? Have workers little control of the work and working methods? Is there poor communication between managers and employees?</p>	<p>Can you:</p> <p>Change tasks to reduce the monotony? Make more use of workers' skills? Make workloads and deadlines more achievable? Encourage good communication and teamwork? Involve workers in decisions? Provide better training and information?</p>

Appendix Three (Manual Handling Policy) – Further Reading

Further reading

HSE's website on musculoskeletal disorders: www.hse.gov.uk/msd

Manual handling. Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended). Guidance on Regulations L23 (Third edition) HSE Books 2004 ISBN 978 0 7176 2823 0

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l23.htm

This book gives comprehensive guidance, including:

- The full text of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002) with detailed advice on each regulation;
- Guidelines for assessing risk while lifting, carrying, pushing and pulling, and handling while seated;
- Practical advice on measures to reduce the risk of injury; and
- An example of an assessment checklist.

Manual handling: Solutions you can handle HSG115 HSE Books 1994 ISBN 978 0 7176 0693 1

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg115.htm

Getting to grips with hoisting people Health Services Information Sheet HSIS3 HSE Books 2011

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsis3.pdf

More guidance on risk assessment can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/risk.

Further information

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit www.hse.gov.uk/. You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory, unless specifically stated, and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance.

This leaflet can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.htm.

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