



MANUAL HANDLING PROCEDURES

What is Manual Handling?

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 define it as 'any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying, or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force'.

In effect, any activity that requires an individual to lift, move or support a load will be classified as a manual handling task.

Why are Manual Handling Procedures Important?

Manual Handling injuries can occur almost anywhere and cause over a third of all workplace injuries. Manual Handling injuries can have serious implications for both the person who has been injured and the employer.

Responsibilities

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers are required to:-

- Make suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees while at work.

Under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, employers are required to:-

- Avoid hazardous manual handling activity so far as reasonably practicable
- Undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of any manual handling activities that cannot be avoided
- Reduce the risk of injury from those operations as far as reasonably practicable.

NORCA and Sistema in Norwich's Operations Manager is responsible for: -

- including any manual handling risks, and measures taken to mitigate those risks and causes of injury, in risk assessments for the day to day work of the company and for specific events and projects.
- ensuring that all personnel, volunteers, and trustees are aware of the manual handling procedures, which will be provided during induction training. The procedures will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

- Investigating and reporting to HSE – if applicable - any work-related manual handling accidents or incidents and updating risk assessments in relation to the accident/incident.

Personnel, volunteers and trustees are responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are adhered to, that the manual handling techniques described below are used and that any accidents or 'near misses' are reported to the Operations Manager. The techniques and procedures are also applicable when working for the company outside of the employer's premises.

Techniques for good manual handling for lifting

Before lifting anything: -

- Do you have any health issues that affect your ability to carry out manual handling activities? If so, you need to let the Operations Manager know as soon as possible.
- Do you have enough time to move the load safely? – accidents happen when people rush.
- Assess the need to lift – is there another way to do the task?
- Is there a trolley you can use?
- Is there someone who can help you?
- Are you capable of moving the load? (there is a difference between what a person can lift and what a person can *safely* lift)
- Do you need gloves?
- Are you wearing appropriate clothing and footwear to lift a load? (a scarf or a necklace could get caught on the load, you may injure your toes/feet if you are wearing open toed sandals etc.)
- Is the route you plan to use free of obstructions? Can the load fit through the doors you are planning to use?
- Is there somewhere you can put the load down on your planned route if you need to rest or change your grip, for example, a table or a bench?
- Is where the load ending up free of obstructions and suitable for the load?
- What are the weather conditions? – be aware of hands getting wet or cold, or the floor being slippery.

If you are satisfied with your pre assessment of the lift you can now proceed with lifting the load: -

1. Adopt a stable position and make sure your feet are apart, with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance and stand close to the load – do not overreach.
2. Start with a good posture – relax your knees, bend at your hips, and keep your back straight. Try to avoid stooping or squatting. Tuck your chin in to straighten your neck.
3. Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways. Shoulders should be kept level and facing in the same direction as the hips. Turning by moving your feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.
4. Get a good grip - make sure the load is secure.
5. Keep the load close to your waist. The load should be kept close to the body for as long as possible while lifting
6. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body
7. Keep your head up when lifting or carrying – once you have the load held securely, look ahead not down at the load.
8. Maintain vision – do not lift if the load is obstructing your vision
9. Move smoothly – the load should not be jerked or snatched as this can make it harder to keep control and can increase the risk of injury.
10. Put down and adjust if needs be – don't try to adjust whilst moving.
11. If lifting with another person, you need to discuss the plan of action and decide who will give the lifting signals. Where possible the other person should be of the same stature.