1. **OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE**

Manual Handling, is one of a number of safety management procedures forming the Trust’s Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy written arrangements in compliance with general duties under the [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/contents).

This Standard outlines the arrangements in place to control the risks to persons who undertake manual handling operations, in compliance with the [Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1992/2793/contents/made)**.**

Any reference to the Council in this document will refer to East Ayrshire Council.

1. **RESPONSIBILITY**

Overall responsibility for this standard belongs to the Chief Officer, Head of Corporate Services and Development Managers. Managers and Supervisors are responsible for ensuring arrangements are fully implemented within their areas of control.

Services will need to supplement this standard with written details of the local arrangements in place, including how the health risks associated with manual handling are controlled.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This Standard provides guidance to managers, supervisors and employees about the health and safety risks associated with manual handling in the workplace.

Manual handling is defined as the movement of or supporting of a load by human effort. This includes lifting, supporting, carrying, lowering, pushing and pulling actions.

A load is defined as a discrete moveable object. This includes people, animals and inanimate objects.

The use of human effort for tasks other than moving or supporting loads does not count as manual handling. This includes tasks such as:

* Turning the starting handle of an engine
* Lifting the control lever on a machine
* Pulling on a rope while lashing down items on the back of a van
* Holding a drill or other tool while using it

# DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

* 1. **Managers and Supervisors**

Managers and Supervisors are required to eliminate or reduce risks associated with manual handling tasks in the workplace. This may involve removing the need for manual handling, for example, by automating the work task.

Where manual handling cannot be removed, Managers and Supervisors must:

* Organise and minimise manual handling activities under their control
* Complete risk assessments for manual handling tasks, recorded as appropriate, and review if there are any changes e.g. new practices
* Reduce the risk of injury so far as is reasonably practicable
* Provide information, instruction and training to employees about the risks and control associated with manual handling
  1. **Employees**

Employees who undertake manual handling operations at work must have a crucial role in controlling the risks and protecting themselves and others from injury.

Consequently, employees must:

* Cooperate with their employer on manual handling arrangements
* Follow risk assessments and systems of work laid down for their safety
* Follow any information, instruction and training on manual handling
* Make proper use of manual handling equipment provided
* Not put themselves and others at risk during a manual handling task
* Report any failings in safe systems or equipment to their Manager or Supervisor for remedial action

# 3. MANUAL HANDLING

## **3.1 The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992**

The [Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1992/2793/contents/made) place a legal duty on employers to protect workers from risks associated with manual handling.

Where a risk assessment indicates the possibility of risks to employees from manual handling then the requirements of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 must be complied with.

## **3.2 Why is dealing with manual handling important?**

Incorrect manual handling is one of the most common causes of injury at work. It causes work related musculoskeletal disorders which account for over a third of all workplace injuries.   
Injuries can be caused by:

* the weight of the item
* repetitive lifting or carrying
* the distance the item is carried
* the height it is being picked up from or put down at
* twisting, bending, stretching, or other awkward posture

There is evidence that heavy manual labour, awkward postures and a previous or existing injury can increase the risk of manual handling injuries occurring.

Work related manual handling injuries can be seriously debilitating and can affect the individual’s ability to do their job and impact on their everyday life. Employers can also incur costs associated with absence and retraining. It is therefore essential that managers assess and manage the risks to employees.

## **3.3** **Avoiding manual handling**

Where the possibility of injury from manual handling operations is identified, the first thing to consider is whether the manual handling operation can be avoided altogether.

The initial consideration should be whether the load needs to be handled at all, or if the work can be done in a different way.

If handling the load cannot be avoided the use of automated or mechanised processes should be considered, where practical, taking into account additional hazards associated with the use of equipment.

## **3.4** **Risk assessment**

Where manual handling risks are identified within a work activity, a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks must be carried out and recorded. The assessment must follow the [ergonomic approach](https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg90.pdf) and take the following factors into account:

* The requirements of the **Task** to be carried out
* Physical capabilities of the **Individual** worker
* Characteristics of the **Load**
* The working **Environment**
* Use of **Handling Aids and Equipment**
* **Work Organisation Factors**

Manual handling risks can be identified within the existing risk assessment, as required by regulation 3 of the [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/contents/made). There is no requirement to carry out a separate assessment, with the exception of the moving and handling of people.

Risk assessments should be reviewed regularly and where there have been changes in manual handling operations, new information becomes available or an employee has been injured as a result of manual handling task.

Employees should be consulted and involved in the risk assessment process, know first-hand what the risks in the workplace are and may be able to offer practical solutions to controlling them.

The **Manual Handling Flow Chart** details the steps required in the risk assessment process, see Appendix 1.

## **3.5** **Identifying the risks**

Where manual handling cannot be avoided managers must identify where employees undertake manual handling operations which may be a risk to their health and safety. This does not have to be a complicated process and can be achieved by having an understanding of the tasks carried out and making simple observations to identify potentially problematic manual handling operations.

If the answer is ***yes*** to any of the following questions, it is likely that there are manual handling risks which need to be managed.

**Task –** does the task involve:

* Holding a load at a distance
* Twisting the trunk, stooping, reaching upwards or a combination of movements
* Strenuous pushing/pulling
* Excessive lifting/lowering distances
* Excessive carrying distance
* Repetitive handling
* Insufficient rest or recovery time

**Individual –** does the job:

* Require special knowledge/training for safe performance
* Present greater risks for those who are pregnant
* Present greater risks for those who have health problems
* Require unusual strength or height

**Load –** is it:

* Heavy/bulky/unwieldy
* Difficult to grasp
* Unstable in any way
* Sharp/hot/cold/abrasive
* Too large to see over/around

**Environment –** are there:

* Space constraints or restrictions on posture
* Uneven/slippery/unstable floors/variations of levels
* Extremes of temperature/humidity/air movement
* Poor lighting conditions
* Restrictions on movement from work wear or PPE

**Handling Aids and Equipment –** are they:

* The correct type for the job
* Well maintained
* Suited to the surface, with wheels able to run freely
* In good condition with handle height between waist and shoulder and working brakes

**Work Organisation Factors –** is the work:

* Repetitive or boring
* Machine or system paced
* Placing excessive demands or allow the individual little control
* In an environment with poor communication between employees and management

## **3.6** **Risk controls**

Practical control measures must be put in place to control any identified risks and these must be communicated to employees.

The risk of injury should be reduced as far as is reasonably practicable by considering the following:

* Use of equipment for tasks involving manual handling
* Reducing carrying distances
* Avoiding repetitive lifting
* Avoiding lifting from floor level or above shoulder height
* Varying work to allow one set of muscles to rest while another is used
* Reducing the amount of stooping or twisting
* Reducing the weight or bulk of the load
* Making the load easier to grasp or more stable
* Removing obstructions
* Avoiding steps and steep ramps
* Providing suitable equipment or lifting aids
* Changing transit routes, or making sure wheels are suitable for the surface
* Preventing extremes of hot and cold
* Ensuring employees clothing and footwear is suitable for their work
* Providing additional information, instruction and training to employees
* Considering individual capabilities of employees, including additional risks for those who are pregnant or have health problems
* Storing heavier items at waist height
* Task rotation
* Involving workers in the decision making process for control measures

## **3.7** **Use of equipment for manual handling**

Suitable equipment must be provided for manual handling operations and be easily accessible for employees.

Any lifting equipment used is subject to regular maintenance, inspection and, where applicable, examination in accordance with the [Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1998/2307/contents/made)  and the [Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1998/2306/contents/made).

Equipment must only be used by employees who have been suitably trained in its use, and in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

Pre-use safety checks should be carried out and recorded for all equipment prior to use.

Any defective equipment must be removed from service, clearly labelled and arrangements made for repair or replacement.

Manufacturer’s instructions must be followed when maintaining and washing equipment. All equipment must be cleaned and stored safely.

## **3.8 Information, instruction and training**

Employees must be provided with appropriate information, instruction and training to ensure that they understand the risks associated with manual handling and are able to recognise and report hazardous situations and take appropriate action.

The Trust provides training appropriate to employee’s duties dependant on whether they are involved in manual handling of inanimate loads or the moving and handling of people.

Employees who carry out manual handling operations of inanimate loads will be provided with training by the [Councils Organisational Development Section](http://eacintranet/Services/Organisational-Development/Organisational-Development-Home-Page.aspx?securitytoken=U7g58DzIGticOJGESll0wFzgQq%2fJqJjcW8ZHBOFz6FdND11zEDgcjPAooMHZ5VFKN5urggTBmojD%2bg%2boxz2Q%2fA%3d%3d) or trainers within their own section. This training covers:

* Relevant legislation and guidance
* Manual handling common statistics
* Common manual handling injuries
* Identifying manual handling hazards
* Estimating risks
* Evaluating the risks
* Recording the findings
* Good handling techniques for lifting, pushing and pulling
* Use of mechanical aids
* Practical examples to allow technique to be assessed

A training matrix will identify which modules employees require to complete relative to the manual handling risks which arise from their normal tasks.

## 

## **3.9 Inanimate loads**

The manual handling of inanimate loads may be undertaken by all employees, but additional consideration must be given to those who handle difficult, heavy or continually moving loads as part of their regular duties.

Where manual handling tasks cannot be avoided, a minimal lifting approach will be applied, based on a risk assessment. The risks can be identified in the existing risk assessment; a separate manual handling risk assessment is not normally required.

Mechanical aids should be utilised whenever possible, such as:

* Levers
* Hoists – powered or hand-operated
* Trolleys, barrows or sack barrows
* Chutes
* Hooks or suction pads

Factors such as size, shape, weight and design of the load; individual capabilities; design of the task and environment should be considered when assessing the manual handling operations. Where practicable these should be altered to reduce the risk to employees.

Team lifting may be employed where mechanical aids cannot be used and the weight or size of the load cannot be altered, in order to complete the task.

## **3.10** **Managers’ responsibilities**

Managers are required to ensure that all significant manual handling risks are identified and control measures are implemented to reduce the risk as far as is reasonably practicable.

Information, instruction and training must be provided to employees to make them aware of safe working practices and reducing risk.

Adequate supervision and monitoring should be in place to ensure safe working practices are being implemented and to determine their effectiveness.

Sufficient resources should be made available for the purchase of manual handling equipment and the provision of training for all employees.

Support will be provided for individuals who suffer from musculoskeletal conditions, including a referral to Occupational Health where required.

**3.11 Employees’ responsibilities**

Employees have the following responsibilities:

* Take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others
* Attend training, including updates relevant to area of work
* Work within their own limitations and not carry out any activity for which they are not trained
* Co-operate with their line manager when assessing risks from manual handling operations
* Use any lifting aids and equipment provided as instructed
* Follow safe working practices
* Not interfere with or misuse any equipment
* Not use equipment they have not been trained to use
* Follow training and instructions on manual handling
* Report any problems or shortcomings in the risk assessment or safe system of work to their line manager
* Report any factors, including pregnancy, which may affect their ability to undertake manual handling tasks safely to their line manager
* Wear the personal protective clothing and footwear provided for carrying out manual handling tasks

Employees should look out for hazards and report any unsafe situations to their line managers, such as:

* Faulty equipment
* Unsafe working practices
* High risk handling procedures
* Environmental problems

## **3.12 Reporting incident**s

Incidents and near misses related to manual handling must be reported to line managers/supervisors and then reported through the SHE incident reporting system.

The circumstances surrounding manual handling incidents and near misses should be investigated and appropriate measures put in place to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

When an incident or near miss occurs involving manual handling, the risk assessment should be reviewed and updated as necessary.

**3.13 Employee health**

Manual handling requirements should be clearly identified when recruiting employees to allow appropriate medical and Occupational Health advice to be sought as part of pre-employment health screening.

Employees should be referred to Occupational Health if there is reason to suspect that their health status might significantly increase the risk of injury from any manual handling tasks they are required to undertake. Referrals can also be made to Occupational Health to offer employees support in recovery from musculoskeletal injuries, such as physiotherapy.

Reasonable allowances should be made for any known health problems which may affect an employee’s ability to carry out manual handling tasks safely.

**4. FURTHER INFORMATION**

**4.1 Contact Information**

Health and Safety Strategy Group, East Ayrshire Leisure Trust

Telephone: 01563 554057

E Mail: [EALHealthandSafety@eastayrshireleisure.com](mailto:EALHealthandSafety@eastayrshireleisure.com)

Intranet: [Health & Safety](https://leisurenet/admin-docs/health-safety/)

Health and Safety Section East Ayrshire Council

Tel: 01563 554825

E Mail: [healthandsafety@east-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@east-ayrshire.gov.uk)

EAC Intranet:[Health and Safety](http://eacintranet/Services/HealthandSafety/HealthandSafety.aspx)

Organisational Development

01563 576360 or [organisationaldevelopment@east-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:organisationaldevelopment@east-ayrshire.gov.uk)

Occupational Health

01563 576741 or [OccupationalHealth@east-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:OccupationalHealth@east-ayrshire.gov.uk)

Moving and Handling Team East Ayrshire Council

01563 503331

**4.2** **External Sources of Information**

Further useful information for managers on controlling manual handling risks can found in a variety of widely available HSE guidance documents and information sheets, including:

**HSE Manual Handling website**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/manualhandling.htm>

**HSE Manual Handling Guidance**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l23.pdf>

**HSE Toolbox: Manual Handling**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/manual.htm>

**Manual Handling at Work: A Brief Guide**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.pdf>

**Scottish Manual Handling Passport Scheme**

**https://www.hse.gov.uk/scotland/pdf/manual-passport.pdf**

Monitor and review

Identify all manual handling tasks

Use the guidelines to identify if a detailed risk assessment is required

Yes

Undertake a detailed risk assessment

Can the manual handling task be avoided?

Is it possible for the process to be fully automated?

Implement suitable control measures

Is the risk sufficiently controlled?

No

No

No

No

Yes

Yes

Yes

mnnbss

Risk assessment process

## **Appendix 1: Manual Handling Flow Chart**

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