

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**



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# **HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK**

## **MANUAL HANDLING POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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# MANUAL HANDLING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

## 1. Statement of Intent

Redditch Borough Council recognises its responsibilities to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992) as well as other related legislation in regard to the manual handling of loads for all employees of the Council.

The Council recognises that also musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) pose a significant risk of injury to employees and recognises the responsibility to ensure all measures are taken to provide and maintain working conditions that are safe, healthy and comply with Statutory requirements and Approved Codes Of Practice (ACOP).

To this end, the Council will ensure that adequate resources are made available, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the implementation of this policy.

This policy is based on an ergonomic risk assessment approach. Its aim is to avoid, assess and reduce risk, so far as is reasonably practicable, from manual handling tasks, involving people and inanimate loads.

The emphasis is on risk assessment resulting in recommended safe systems of work/handling plans that involve, where appropriate and so far as is reasonably practicable, the use of appropriate mechanical or automated equipment.

The aim of this policy is to set out the systems and procedures by which the Council will achieve, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe systems of work and a safe working environment with regard to manual handling operations by any of its staff. Such operations may be carried out on any Council premises or in community locations.

### 1.1 Objectives of the Policy

The primary objective is to avoid the need for hazardous manual handling. Where any such handling tasks cannot be eliminated a competent risk assessor will carry out an ergonomic assessment in order to minimise the risk of injury due to the manual handling task.

A manual-handling hazard can be defined as:

*“any transporting or supporting of a load, by one or more workers, including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, or moving a load, which, by reason of its characteristics or of unfavourable ergonomic conditions, involves a risk particularly of back injury to workers.”*

## 2. LEGISLATION

### 2.1 Current legislation and guidance documents

There are several pieces of legislation relating to the practice of safe manual handling at work and the most relevant are listed below. Key points that relate to policy and procedures which are required are also given; however for full details of the specific legislation, reference should be made to RBC Health and Safety Policy.

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995
- Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (“PUWER ‘98”)
- Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER ‘98)

#### **The Health and Safety at Work Act etc. (1974)**

This act remains the enabling act for all subsequent legislation and sets out responsibilities for both employer and employee. The employer is required to provide:

*“such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of his employees”.*

The act requires employees to:

*“take reasonable care for his or her own safety and the health and safety of other people who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions.”*

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

These regulations establish a clear hierarchy of measures to be taken by employers:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling operations as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided and taking account of all factors: task, load, individual capacity, environment and equipment.
- Reduce the risk of injury from these operations as far as is reasonably practicable and using an ergonomic approach.

The employee also has a specified responsibility to:

- Co-operate with safe systems of work and follow Health and Safety instructions
- Participate in training and to report defects

### **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**

The employer is further required to:

- Make suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk to the Health and Safety of their employees whilst at work as well as the risk to the health and safety of others who may be affected. The assessment must be written if more than 5 people are employed
- Record any group of people who may be at risk of injury
- Give information on the nature of manual handling hazards
- Set up emergency procedures

### **Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (“PUWER ‘98”)**

These regulations specify requirements of the employer to ensure that all equipment provided for use at work is:

- Suitable for the intended use
- Maintained in a safe condition so that people’s health and safety is not at risk
- Inspected in certain circumstances to ensure that it is and continues to be safe for use. Inspection must be by a competent person and a record must be kept

### **Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER ‘98)**

In addition to PUWER above, these are further requirements to maintain the safety of lifting equipment – i.e.: hoists, slings and adjustable height furniture; in particular these regulations specify the time scale for maintenance:

- Equipment for lifting persons that may be exposed to conditions causing deterioration is inspected and maintained at six monthly intervals and a record kept of the inspection
- Employees should be trained in use of equipment and in pre-use checks

***Reasonably practical*** - Legislation requires that control measures are put in place to reduce identified risk so far as is reasonably practicable; that is to assess the cost of the control measure against the consequences of the identified risk. It should be remembered that there are potential financial implications to the consequences of unmanaged risk as well as to control measures to reduce risk.

High risk ↑ ↓ Low risk	High risk – low cost <b>imperative</b>	high risk – high cost <b>imperative or acceptable alternative</b>
	Low risk – low cost <b>Advisable</b>	low risk – high cost <b>may not be required</b>
	Low cost ←	→ high cost

### 3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This section documents the roles and responsibilities of all individuals and groups of staff involved in manual handling at Redditch Borough Council.

**3.1 The Chief Executive Officer and Corporate Directors** have ultimate accountability for ensuring compliance with Health and Safety Legislation within Redditch Borough Council.

**3.2 Heads of Service** have the responsibility for ensuring implementation of the policy in their service area, with particular attention to the following:

- The avoidance where reasonably practicable of hazardous manual handling activities and work situations involving poor postures.
- Where these situations cannot be avoided, risk assessments are undertaken and control measures implemented to reduce the risk.
- Ensuring that Managers are adequately trained and competent to manage manual handling risk within their area of responsibility.
- Ensure that sufficient funding is available in order to purchase manual handling aids to assist staff in manual handling activities.
- Ensure that all manual handling activities are kept to a minimum and avoided wherever possible through mechanisation, automation etc.

### 3.3 Line Managers and Supervisors

Due to the fact that Managers and Supervisors are aware of the activities that their staff undertake in the workplace they have the following responsibilities:

- Be aware of the manual handling activities within their own area of responsibility and ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments and safe systems of work are in place and suitably recorded.
- Ensure systems are in place to identify all staff involved in manual handling activities, and ensure that they receive adequate training (including temporary and relief staff).
- Where equipment has been identified as required to reduce manual handling risks to acceptable levels this shall be provided, recorded and appropriately maintained as per the regulations.

- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate training before carrying out any manual handling tasks and that accurate records are kept of the training content and attendance
- Ensure that written risk assessments are kept and updated to identify appropriate control measures to minimise manual handling risks as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure employees are made aware of the findings of risk assessments, manual handling operations plans and safe systems of work
- Ensure that equipment provided is suitable and sufficient and is maintained in accordance with relevant legislation (PUWER, LOLER)
- Ensure that systems are in place for the periodic review and updating of risk assessments, with changes communicated to all those that face the risk from the manual handling hazard
- Give details of moving and handling requirements in job descriptions and person specifications
- Give full information to staff on the nature and weight of manual handling hazards within their workplace.
- Ensure that any equipment which is identified as necessary following risk assessment, is available for employees to use and they are all trained in its use
- Manual handling accidents/incidents are reported via the Orb and investigated with aim of preventing a reoccurrence.

### 3.4 Employees

Each employee is required to -

- Take reasonable care for their own health & safety and for that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
- Be aware of health and safety issues and the hazards associated with manual handling tasks including the cumulative effect of repeated manual handling operations
- Utilise appropriate equipment, where provided, in order to reduce the risks associated with a manual handling operation. The equipment should be used for its intended purpose and in line with any information and instruction the employee has received.
- Undertake manual handling operations in the way in which they have been instructed and trained
- Undertake visual checks on all relevant equipment used in conjunction with manual handling operations prior to its use
- Inform their immediate supervisor of any condition from which they are suffering which could affect the ability to comply with the requirements of this policy or carry out their duties safely;
- Inform manager of any concerns regarding their health and safety or that of any other relevant person in relation to safe manual handling operations
- Identify and alert managers or any new activity, equipment or change in circumstances that may require a risk assessment

- Ensure that any clothing /uniform that is worn will not be restrictive to the movement and posture required for safe handling; ensure footwear will be protective, offering good support and grip.
- Comply with Redditch Borough Council's policy on incident and accident reporting and report all accidents and incidents, however minor.

#### **4. RISK ASSESSMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES**

Legislation requires that all manual handling operations that may present a risk of injury must be the subject of a risk assessment carried out by a competent person and using an ergonomic approach. The assessment must be suitable and sufficient and if more than five people are employed it must be in writing. Legislation also suggests that where employees of different employers work in the same workplace that their employers co-operate to produce an overall risk assessment.

The purpose of a risk assessment is to:

- Identify all hazardous moving and handling tasks carried out at work and determine the likelihood and severity of any injury or harm arising from these tasks and to whom
- Assess all factors, including existing control measures, involved in the hazard using the TILE(E) analysis – given below (loads may be animate or inanimate)
- Identify control measures that will reduce the risk of injury to acceptable levels
- Identify all employees who may be at risk of injury from moving and handling tasks in the performance of their duties

##### **The TILE(E) analysis in risk assessment**

Manual handling risk assessment can be divided into the five areas, each of which has factors that influence the level of risk associated with the moving and handling operation. All of these areas require consideration during the assessment:

**T(ask)** – does the task involve:

- Twisting or stooping
- Strenuous pushing or pulling
- Excessive lifting or lowering
- Handling at a distance from the trunk
- High task frequency without adequate rest periods

**I(ndividual movers)** – do the people carrying out the tasks require:

- Specialised training
- Unusual strength or ability
- A uniform or personal protective equipment
- Consideration during impaired ability – for example if pregnant

**L(oad)** – is the person or object being moved:

- Heavy or large

- Unwieldy or difficult to grasp
- Unpredictable or unstable
- Vulnerable to injury or fragile
- Sharp, hot or hazardous in any other way

**E(nvironment)** – does the area in which work is carried out have:

- Restricted space
- Slippery or uneven floors
- Slopes ramps or steps
- Adequate levels of heat light and ventilation

**E(quipment)** – is any equipment used:

- Suitable for the task
- Available in all circumstances
- Maintained and inspected
- Clean

The three different types of risk assessment are:

**4.1 Generic risk assessment** covering the whole office or work activities together with any locations visited by staff outside these sites as part of their duties. A generic assessment must be completed at least annually and more frequently should significant changes in equipment, work place or staffing occur. The risk assessment is used to identify manual handling hazards and required control measures using the TILE(E) assessment.

**4.2 Individual risk assessment** to be completed for any member of staff whose capacity for moving and handling at work may be impaired.

**4.3 Service User Risk Assessment** - In respect of service user risk assessment and handling plans, it is recognised that a specific assessment for each user is required.

All these areas form the basis for both the assessment and the control measures that can be put in place to minimise risk and enable safe systems of work.

#### **4.4 Monitoring risk assessments**

It is the Managers responsibility on behalf of the Council to ensure that risk assessments are in place, accurate and updated at agreed intervals. Such intervals must be at least annually, but may be more frequent where conditions are prone to change. It is also necessary to review the risk assessments following significant changes in circumstances. Completion of the risk assessment document can be delegated to a competent risk assessor within the school or office; such an assessor is also likely to discuss moving and handling issues and control measures with the staff. However the Manager must confirm the suitability and accuracy of the assessment.



External monitoring of risk assessment completion and its translation to safe systems of work will be conducted through audit processes carried out by the Health and Safety Team.

## **5. TRAINING PROCEDURES**

### **5.1 Training format and content**

Training and instruction in awareness and safe handling principles will occur in conjunction with other risk control options. Training alone is not effective in the controlling of risks and other organisational and ergonomic factors must also be considered, with safe systems of work developed

All training will meet the standards laid down by Redditch Borough Council and will be tailored to service requirements and will be linked directly to risk assessment.

Managers must carry out a training needs analysis based on the modules as identified by Redditch Borough Council. Managers will be required to identify which modules are required to control the risks involved in the work activities their staff undertake.

Managers will ensure that employees receive appropriate training prior to undertaking any manual handling tasks, or following any significant change in circumstances.

### **5.2 Refresher Training**

Refresher training seeks to ensure that members of staff having received foundation training have retained their competencies. All staff regularly involved in manual handling activities of significant risk will receive refresher training.

### **5.3 Risk Assessor Training**

Line managers and supervisors or appropriately delegated employees who are responsible for undertaking manual handling risk assessments, will be provided with appropriate training that meets the current standards and which allows them to be competent to carry out this requirement.

### **5.4 Training Records**

Records of all training undertaken must be kept by the manager with a copy of the individual training record being forwarded to the employee. Managers and staff will be responsible for booking training and subsequent updates through Human Resources.

## **6. EQUIPMENT STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES**

Current legislation in manual handling practice requires that the first duty of employers is to **avoid** manual handling tasks at work. Where manual handling tasks cannot be completely eliminated, they must be assessed and all associated risks reduced as far as reasonably practicable – generally by the provision of further handling aids and equipment, staff training and modifications to the environment.

### **6.1 Selection of appropriate equipment**

Provision of manual handling equipment should be subject to risk assessment. All mechanical equipment used for moving and handling will be maintained in accordance with the Lifting Equipment Lifting Operations Regulations 1998 and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

Equipment will be subject to a six monthly thorough inspection and test by a competent person with records kept centrally and locally. All lifting accessories must be individually identified and subjected to a six monthly documented inspection and test.

An inventory of all equipment must be kept by the manager of a team or establishment who is accountable for the maintenance and review of the inventory.

Managers are responsible for the safe working order of all equipment and ensuring that it is subject to this regime. They are also responsible for contacting the relevant agency for repair or replacement.

All those using manual handling equipment will be required to undertake visual inspections of all equipment prior to use to ensure that there is evidence of above checks and to identify any faults which should be reported to their manager.

Equipment provided to carry out moving and handling actions in the workplace must be:

- fit for the purpose
- available in sufficient quantity
- maintained in good working order
- cleaned in accordance best practice to avoid cross-infection

Maintenance of equipment within the Council must comply with the standards set out within these regulations. Maintenance must be carried out by a suitably qualified person, which may be organised directly with the provider or be on a service contract arranged by Place Partnership Ltd.

### **6.2 Purchase and funding of equipment**

Manual handling equipment must be provided in circumstances where it has been assessed by a competent assessor to be the most appropriate

and reasonably practicable method to reduce manual handling risks to acceptable levels. In the first instance Departments/Service areas will be responsible for the provision of such equipment from their delegated budgets.

## **7. MONITORING OF MANUAL HANDLING ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS**

Any manual handling injury or incident that occurs at work must be recorded and reported as soon as possible. In certain areas paper forms are available but the incident still needs to be reported on the Orb. Any required remedial action to prevent a similar injury or incident must be undertaken immediately or warning signs put in place to reduce the risk of further incident.

The Accident Form on the Orb must be completed in all cases and sent to the Health and Safety Team. If the accident is deemed to be reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) the Health and Safety Team will file the report.

Following any such incident Risk Assessments and work procedures should be reviewed to ensure the continued safety of all staff members.

Further information regarding the reporting and recording of accidents at work can be found in the Accident & Incident Reporting Policy which can be found on the Orb.

## **8. Review**

This policy will be reviewed if there is a significant change in legislation or standards, change in any relevant structure or following any reason to suspect it is no longer valid.

### **Appendices**

There are Four Appendices to this Manual handling operations policy –

Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms

Appendix 2 - **The HSE's Manual handling operations Risk assessment filter** which has been reproduced from the Manual handling operations Regulations Guidance publication for information and explanation purposes. The Manual handling operations Assessor should be fully competent to understand and implement the contents of this appendix when undertaking Risk assessments.

Appendix 2 – **The HSE's Manual handling of loads Assessment checklist** which has been reproduced from the Manual handling operations Regulations Guidance publication. This assessment checklist has been adopted as the Council's Manual handling operations assessment form and should be used when assessing the manual handling of **loads**.

Appendix 3 – **The HSE’s Pushing and pulling of loads assessment checklist** has been reproduced from the Manual handling operations Regulations Guidance publication. This assessment checklist has been adopted as the Council’s Pushing and pulling of loads assessment form and should be used when assessing the Pushing and pulling of **loads**.

### DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

Current legislation in manual handling defines both the employers' and the employees' responsibilities in providing and maintaining a safe working environment. Some of the required terms used within the legislation are as follows:

***Manual handling:***

The transporting or supporting of a load, (including lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving by hand etc. or by bodily force).

***Load***

Includes any movable object or material supported manually or by tools or equipment. This definition includes people and animals.

***Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD)***

Involve the muscles, tendons, joints and skeleton, particularly in the back, hands and arms – symptom from mild aches and pains to severe swelling and inflammation.

***Hazard*** - A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause harm (e.g.: slippery floors, a frayed electric flex or a heavy load).

***Risk*** - A risk is the chance that somebody will be harmed by the hazard and can be quantified as high, moderate or low depending on the severity and likelihood of an incident.

***Ergonomics*** - The study of the relationship between workers and their environment. Ergonomics can be used to assess the 'fit' between people, the work that they do and the things that they use.

***Safe systems of work*** - Safe systems of work require risk assessment and analysis of all manual handling tasks undertaken, the individuals performing such tasks, the loads being handled, the environment in which handling takes place and the equipment available. Control measures to reduce all such identified risks to acceptable levels will result in safe systems of work that can be recorded and implemented.

***Generic Risk Assessment***

An assessment that encompasses a number of related operations which have similar characteristics.

***Individual Risk Assessment***

An assessment of the risks arising specifically from the provision of the duty of care to a person. The risk assessment assesses the risks to both the Post holder and anyone else who may be affected by the activities of the Post holder.