# MANUAL HANDLING



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## Summary

* 1. The Manual Handling Operations Regulations apply to the manual handling of loads, i.e. human effort, as opposed to mechanical handling by crane or forklift truck.
  2. The Regulations impose the need to avoid manual handling tasks wherever reasonably practicable. If it is not reasonably practical to avoid moving loads, or the operation cannot be automated or mechanised – and there is a risk of injury – then the task must be assessed, risks reduced and adequate information, instruction and training provided in the residual risk. This is a change to the notion of ‘safe weights’ and health, safety and productivity is likely to be optimised if an ergonomic approach is applied to the manual handling operation as a whole.

## Definitions

* 1. Manual handling **-** “involves both the transporting and supporting of a load.” It includes lifting; lowering; holding; carrying; pushing; pulling; throwing; or moving by hand or by bodily force. Anything, which applies force to an object to relocate it from point A to point B, is ‘manual handling.’ Risks exist in all sorts of ‘handling’ tasks. The application of human effort for a purpose other than transporting or supporting a load does not constitute a manual handling operation, e.g. use of tools.
  2. Load - is a discrete moveable object and includes any object, person or any animal. An implement, tool or machine is not considered to constitute a load while in use for its intended purpose.

## Responsibilities

1. Senior Managers should have an overview of this procedure and adopt the responsibilities incumbent upon them as outlined in the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy Document.

1. Service area Managers must ensure that all manual handling tasks are identified within the areas of their control, and where appropriate, carry out manual handling assessments. All actions arising from the assessments must be addressed.
2. All Staff who are required to conduct manual handling tasks will need to decide for themselves how they will carry out any manual handling tasks they undertake but they must recognise their own limitations and use mechanical devices to reduce all instances of manual handling. Once they have been trained they must put the training into action.

**Manual Handling Training**

1. It is compulsory for all staff to complete manual handling training. Training options on line or otherwise will be provided to staff. In addition practical attendance training will be provided for staff at higher risk or who do not have IT facilities.

On line training is availble at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nt4PEss3Ppk>

1. Refresher training is required to be completed on a 24 monthly rolling cycle. New employees must complete training or have a comprehensive induction within 4 weeks of starting employment.

## Procedures and Practices

1. First principles of manual handling are not to undertake such a task in the first place if you can avoid doing so.
2. Recognising this is often impractical manual handling tasks should be identified during a pre-assessment walk through. This can be conducted as a separate item for all manual handling tasks, particularly where there are many activities which involve manual handling, or can be part of the procedure for general risk assessments required under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.
3. A risk assessment process is described within section 2. It is envisaged that the majority of manual handling tasks can be assessed using this guidance and the recommended standard template.
4. The regulations clarify that the risk assessment should specifically consider:
5. The physical suitability of the employee to carry out the operations;
6. The clothing, footwear or other personal effects he/she is wearing;
7. His/her knowledge and training;
8. The results of any relevant risk assessment carried out to comply with management regulations;
9. Whether the employee is within a group of employees identified by that assessment as being especially at risk; and
10. The results of any health surveillance provided for that employee.
11. In most cases managers should be able to carry out the assessments themselves as they are best placed to know about the manual-handling taking place in their own departments. There may be a requirement to draw on the knowledge of others who have greater knowledge, experience and have been trained in risk assessment to advise or assist in the assessments.
12. If after assessment it is determined that staff require training to minimise the residual risk then training must be carried out by competent / qualified trainers. Staff must be made aware of the fact that safe handling is not just work related but also a lifestyle issue.

## Dynamic Risk Assessment

1. Manual handling risk reducing principles should be adopted for all types of lifting or when the manual movement of an item is being contemplated. By applying a simply dynamic risk assessment before commencing with a manual activity the risk of injury can be greatly minimised. It is a simple thought process, ask yourself:

* Does the object look awkward to hold, has it sharp edges or is difficult to grip;
* Have I lifted the same type of object before, how did I feel, did I cope;
* Is it heavy - perhaps just rock the object backwards and forwards to make a judgement on how heavy it is;
* Could the load have an unequal centre of gravity that could put me off balance or add to straining;
* What is my capability today at this time, am I tired or have I suffered with recent back pain or twinges;
* Are sack trucks or a trolley available to take the load;
* Can I ask someone to help me with a two person lift; and
* Where do I need to take the object, are there stairs or is the walking surface slippery.

1. By asking these simple types of question you can risk assess the task and give yourself the best chance to avoid injury, remember if in doubt – do not lift.

## References

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations, 1992

For additional guidance, visit the HSE Website on [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) and enter ‘Manual Handling’ in the ‘Search’ box

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