

# Manual Handling Policy

## 1. Policy Statement

The company is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of all employees in accordance with UK legal obligations. The aim of this policy is to reduce the risk of injury arising from manual handling tasks by ensuring employees are adequately trained and supported. This policy aligns with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002).

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and visitors who are engaged in manual handling activities at the workplace. Manual handling includes lifting, carrying, lowering, pushing, pulling, or moving loads by hand or bodily force.

## 3. Legal Framework

The following UK laws and regulations underpin this policy:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974: Employers have a duty to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of their employees.
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (MHOR): These regulations require employers to avoid hazardous manual handling where reasonably practicable, and where it cannot be avoided, to assess and reduce the risk of injury.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999: Require employers to carry out risk assessments and take steps to minimize risks.
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER): Mandate the provision of safe work equipment.

## 4. Objectives

- Eliminate or reduce manual handling risks where possible.
- Comply with UK laws and regulations related to manual handling.
- Provide training on safe manual handling practices to all employees.
- Ensure appropriate mechanical aids are available and used to reduce manual handling risks.

## 5. Responsibilities

### 5.1 Employer Responsibilities

- Avoid Hazardous Manual Handling: The employer must avoid the need for hazardous manual handling tasks as far as reasonably practicable.
- Risk Assessments: Conduct risk assessments for all manual handling tasks that cannot be avoided and implement control measures to minimize risk.
- Training: Ensure employees receive adequate training in safe manual handling techniques.
- Provision of Equipment: Provide appropriate mechanical aids (e.g., trolleys, hoists) to minimize manual handling risks.
- Monitoring and Review: Regularly review the effectiveness of the manual handling procedures and update the risk assessments as necessary.

## 5.2 Employee Responsibilities

- Follow Training: Adhere to the manual handling techniques taught during training sessions.
- Use Equipment: Use any mechanical aids or equipment provided to reduce manual handling risks.
- Report Issues: Report any hazards, unsafe practices, or defects in equipment to supervisors.
- Self-care: Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of colleagues by following correct manual handling procedures.

## 6. Risk Assessment Process (As Required by MHOR)

All manual handling tasks that involve a significant risk of injury will be subject to a thorough risk assessment. The assessment will:

- Identify the tasks that involve manual handling.
- Evaluate the load: weight, shape, stability, and ease of grasp.
- Assess the environment: including the distance to be moved, potential obstacles, lighting, and flooring.
- Evaluate individual capabilities: such as physical fitness, age, health conditions, and specific task experience.
- Determine control measures: mechanical aids, team lifting, or other ways to reduce the risk.

## 7. Safe Manual Handling Procedures

All employees are expected to follow these safe manual handling guidelines:

- Plan the lift: Check the weight and plan the route before moving the object.
- Stable footing: Keep feet shoulder-width apart, one foot slightly in front of the other.
- Bend the knees: Avoid bending the back when lifting; use the legs for lifting power.
- Hold the load close: Keep the load close to the body to reduce strain.
- Avoid twisting: Pivot with the feet rather than twisting the spine.
- Break heavy loads: Split heavy loads into smaller, manageable portions where possible.
- Mechanical aids: Use trolleys, pallet jacks, or other aids whenever available.

## 8. Training and Education

As required by the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, all employees involved in manual handling will receive mandatory training that covers:

- Correct lifting techniques.
- The use of mechanical aids.
- How to conduct a quick dynamic risk assessment of manual handling tasks.
- How to report risks or issues to the management.

Refresher courses will be provided periodically to ensure that employees stay up-to-date with the latest best practices.

## 9. Mechanical Aids

In line with the duty to avoid hazardous manual handling tasks, mechanical aids should be used where possible. These include:

- Trolleys for moving loads over long distances.

- Hoists for lifting heavy or awkward objects.
- Conveyors to move items along production lines.
- Pallet jacks and other powered or non-powered equipment.

#### 10. Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes in legislation, incidents involving manual handling, or significant changes to the work environment. Regular audits of manual handling tasks and procedures will be conducted to ensure compliance with UK regulations.

#### 11. Incident Reporting and Investigation

All manual handling incidents, near misses, or injuries must be reported immediately to supervisors. The company will:

- Conduct an investigation into the incident.
- Review the risk assessment and control measures in light of the incident.
- Implement corrective actions to prevent recurrence.
- Record the incident in line with RIDDOR 2013 (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) if required.

#### 12. Disciplinary Procedures

Employees who fail to follow the manual handling procedures outlined in this policy or who disregard training and equipment instructions may be subject to disciplinary action under the company's disciplinary procedures. This may include verbal or written warnings, retraining, or more severe sanctions in cases of repeated non-compliance.

#### 13. Consultation and Involvement

Employees and their representatives will be consulted regularly regarding any changes to manual handling procedures, equipment, or workplace layout that may impact manual handling tasks. Their feedback will be considered in the review and improvement of the policy.

#### 14. Relevant UK Legislation

This policy is drafted with reference to the following UK legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended).
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER).
- RIDDOR 2013.

# Manual Handling

## ✓ Planning...



- Can I handle the load?
- Can a lifting aid be used?
- Do I need help?
- What are the hazards?



## Posture...

- Keep your feet apart.
- Slightly bend your back, hips and knees.
- Keep shoulders level and facing forwards.
- Keep the load close to your body.



✗ Don't over stretch your back.

## The lift...

- Raise the load whilst straightening your legs.
- Keep the load close to your waist.
- Keep your head up.
- Move smoothly.



✗ Do not twist or turn.