



ILLOGAN PARISH COUNCIL

Manual Handling Policy

This policy is intended to reduce the risk of manual handling injuries and provide guidance on the measures that should be taken to ensure safe lifting and carrying in the workplace.

Statistics show that manual handling is one of the most common causes of absence through injury in the workplace. More than one-third of lost time accidents are caused in this way at an estimated cost of £130 million per annum. These injuries may often have long-term effects, severely affecting earning potential and subsequently life style and leisure activities.

Summary of Duties

Under Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, every employer has the duty to provide a safe place of work, a safe environment and safe systems of work, so far as is reasonably practicable. This duty includes the need to minimise risk arising from manual handling tasks.

Under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (MHOR), manual handling is interpreted as the transporting or supporting of any load.

Regulation 4 of Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 requires the employer to avoid the need for hazardous manual handling activities, so far as is reasonably practicable. Where it is not possible to eliminate hazardous manual handling, an assessment must be undertaken to determine the level of risk. Suitable control must then be introduced to reduce the risk of injury to the lowest extent reasonably practicable. This may be achieved by the use of automation, mechanical aids or redesigning the system of work or even the workplace itself.

An assessment should take into consideration the tasks, the load, the individual, the environment and any other factors which may affect its safe lifting and carrying. Assessments should be reviewed when there is significant change in:

- The activity or process
- The working environment
- The numbers or abilities of personnel
- The nature of the load(s) to be handled

Reassessment may be required where accident/absence statistics show that the original control measures were not sufficiently effective.

Where appropriate the employer is under a duty to provide employees with information on the weight of the load and the centre of gravity, where this is not

positioned centrally. There is no maximum weight that a person can be required to handle. Tasks should be assessed on the basis of an ergonomic approach to manual handling operations in the workplace i.e. fitting the task to suit personal abilities and limitations.

Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act requires the provision of suitable training, instruction and information. This extends to training in safe methods of lifting and carrying for those employees who undertake manual handling activities. Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 also require appropriate steps to be taken to reduce risk, one of which will be the provision of adequate training.

Duties of the Council

Illogan Parish Council will ensure that:

- Manual handling assessments are carried out where relevant and that records are kept.
- Employees are properly supervised.
- Adequate information and training is provided to persons carrying out manual handling activities.
- Any injuries or incidents relating to manual handling are investigated, with remedial action taken.
- Employees and Councillors adhere to safe systems of work.
- Safety arrangements for manual handling operations are regularly monitored and reviewed.
- Special arrangements are made, when necessary, for individuals with health conditions who could be adversely affected by manual handling operations.

Duties of Employees

Employees must ensure that:

- They report to the Staffing Committee any personal conditions which may be detrimentally affected by the manual handling activity.
- Their own health and safety is not put at risk when carrying out manual handling activities.
- They use equipment which has been provided to minimise the risk from manual handling.
- Any problems relating to the activities are reported to the Staffing Committee or the Council.
- Comply with safe systems of work, undertake training and supervision as appropriate.

Arrangements for securing the Health and Safety of Employees

The elimination of hazardous manual handling activities

The Council will ensure the operations which involve manual handling are eliminated, so far as is reasonably practicable. The measures to achieve this include ergonomic design of the workplace and activity and the provision of mechanical aids such as trolleys.

Assessment of risk

An assessment of manual handling activities will be carried out by a suitably qualified competent person. Risks which are identified will be reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable. The following factors will be considered during the assessment:

The Task

- Bending and stooping to lift a load significantly increases the risk of a back injury.
- Items should ideally be lifted from no higher than knee-height to no higher than shoulder height. Outside this range, lifting capacity is reduced and the risk of injury is increased.
- When items are required to be lifted from above shoulder height, a stand or suitable means of access should be used.
- Items which are pushed or pulled should be as near to waist level as possible. Pushing is preferred particularly where the back can rest against a fixed object to give leverage.
- Carrying distances should be minimised, especially if the task is repeated regularly.
- Repetitive tasks should be avoided where possible.
- Tasks which involve lifting or carrying should be designed in such a way as to allow for significant rest breaks (rotation tasks) to avoid fatigue.
- Avoid tasks which require twisting the body where ever possible.

The Load

- The Load should be kept as near as possible to the body trunk to reduce strain and should not be of such size as to obscure vision.
- An indication of the weight of the load and the centre of gravity should be provided where appropriate. Unstable loads should be handled with particular caution. The change in the centre of gravity is likely to result in over balancing.
- Ensure there is a secure hand hold, using gloves where necessary to protect against sharp edges or splinters.

The Individual

- The consideration must be given to age, body weight and physical fitness.
- Regard must be given to personal limitation; employees must not attempt to handle those which are beyond their individual capacity. Assistance must be sought where necessary.
- Persons with genuine physical or clinical reasons for avoiding lifting should be made allowance for, as should pregnant women, who should not be required to undertake hazardous lifting or carrying tasks.
- Significant knowledge and understanding of the work is an important factor in reducing the risk of injury.
- Individuals undertaking lifting or carrying will be given suitable instruction, training and information to undertake the task with minimum risk.

The Working Environment

- There must be adequate space to enable the activity to be conducted in safety and the transportation route must be free from obstruction.
- Lighting, heating and weather conditions must be taken into account.
- Floors and other working surfaces must be in a safe condition, and adequate ventilation is required, particularly where there is no natural ventilation.

Other Factors

- The use of personal protective equipment may be necessary whilst carrying out manual handling activities. If the use of personal protective equipment restricts safe and easy movement, this should be reported.
- Constant interruptions from other employees must be avoided, as this can reduce the concentration of an individual.

Information and Training

Suitable information and training will be provided to persons who are required to carry out manual handling activities. Training needs will be identified and reviewed during the annual appraisal process. Refresher training will also be given at reasonable intervals. Employees will be informed of the approximate weight of loads which are handled and objects which have eccentric weight distribution.

Safe System of Work

Poor lifting and carrying techniques can result in discomfort and increase the risk of injury. In extreme circumstances, these injuries can have permanent effects. These risks can be reduced by adopting the following simple precautions:

- Ensure that formalised systems of work are designed for the work activity are complied with.
- Make full and proper use of aids to lifting and carrying, such as trolleys.
- Store heavy items between shoulder and hip height. Where possible only store small, light items above shoulder or below knee height.
- Use the legs and knees to bend and lift – do not stoop or bend the back.
- Avoid tasks which require stretching or lifting.
- Ensure that regular rest breaks are taken where manual handling activities are repetitive to prevent onset of fatigue.
- Ensure that there are no sharp, hot or cold, slipper or wet edges which could cause injury.
- Ensure that walkways are free from obstructions.
- Make full and proper use of personal protective equipment.
- Report any problems or concerns associated with manual handling operations to the staffing committee or full council.
- Manual handling risk assessments are incorporated in all risk assessments where manual handling activity is involved.

Consequences of incorrect handling

- Repetitive strain injury
- Musculoskeletal injury
- Back injuries – slipped discs
- Hernias
- Prolapse discs,
- Prolapse uterus
- Dislocations of fingers
- Crush injuries (falling objects)
- Fractures

Review Date:	Reviewed By:	Amendments	Minute Number