

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

Policy:

Community Living-Central Huron believes the safety of its employees and volunteers is of paramount importance. Employees and volunteers must be aware of and adhere to safe, manual handling procedures, outlined herein. Failure to abide by said Policy and Procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment.

Definition:

Manual Handling - a wide variety of activities including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling and carrying.

Purpose:

Manual handling causes over one third of all workplace injuries, such as pain and injuries to the back, arms, legs and joints. If the tasks associated with manual handling are not carried out appropriately, there is a risk of injury. The Manual Handling Policy is to provide further awareness and education to employees and volunteers with respect to procedures, protocols and guidelines associated with manual handling.

Guidelines:

- Refer to pre-established procedures, protocols for manual handling tasks;
- Access qualified professionals (ie. Occupational Therapists for training and education);
- Refer to Hazard/Risk Policy and Procedures, including Risk Registry;
- Assess the manual handling task prior to engaging if there is not a pre-established procedure to determine if the task can be performed in a safe manner;
- Considerations for manual handling are: weight, size and shape of task; individual capability; equipment aids available; prior experience performing task; environmental conditions; urgency of task to be performed;
- Ensure there is a safe and clear pathway to perform manual handling task;
- Push versus pull;
- Decrease the weight when possible;
- Obtain the assistance from another person when possible;
- Reduce re-handling;
- Improve/enhance ergonomics;
- Eliminate risky postures (bending, twisting, extreme reaches);
- Reduce carrying distances;
- Avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height; and
- perform only manual handling tasks that can be easily and safely managed.

Responsibility:

Employer:

The Employer will:

- abide by the Occupational Health and Safety Act and all other relevant legislation;
- take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of an employee and volunteer;
- provide and maintain equipment, materials and protective devices as prescribed; equipment may include but is not limited to: mechanical ceiling, outside or van lifts, slings, transfer belts, wheelchairs, walkers, etc.
- maintain an up-to-date Registry of identified workplace hazards/risks;
- assess the risks of Manual Handling that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work or conditions of work and record in the Hazard/Risk Registry, location specific;
- reassess the risks of Manual Handling as often as is necessary;
- include measures and procedures for employees and volunteers to report incidents of injury related to Manual Handling to their immediate Supervisor;
- establish a procedure as to how the Employer will investigate and manage incidents and injuries from Manual Handling;
- ensure all materials requiring Manual Handling present in the workplace are identified in the prescribed manner and are available in English and such other languages as required;
- review at least once a year the Agency's Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Procedures for the health and safety of employees and volunteers and revise based on current legislation and practice;
- review and revise measures and procedures more frequently than annual, if the employer and Location Health and Safety Representatives determine necessary; and
- in consultation with Location Health and Safety Representatives, develop, establish and provide training and educational programs on Manual Handling, safety measures and procedures for employees that are relevant to employees' work.

Supervisor:

The Supervisor will:

- advise employees and volunteers of the existence of any potential or actual danger to the health and safety of employees and volunteers, related to Manual Handling of which the Supervisor is aware;
- provide employees and volunteers, when so prescribed, written instructions as to the measures and procedures to be taken for protection of the employee and volunteer related to Manual Handling;
- take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the employee and volunteer related to Manual Handling;
- conduct annual Workplace Hazard/Risk Assessments using the Agency's designated form;
- complete monthly workplace inspections;
- ensure regular inspections (as per manufacturer's instructions) are completed and documented for all mechanical lifts or assistive device products/systems;
- ensure employees and volunteers work in a safe manner and with the protective devices and equipment, measures and procedures required by the Occupational Health and Safety Act; the Health Care and Residential Facilities Regulation and the Agency's Health & Safety Policies and Procedures;

- instruct and train or arrange with qualified professionals to train/educate employees and volunteers on how to wear or use any protective clothing, equipment or device prior to such use and at regular intervals thereafter;
- educate employees and volunteers on the hazards and risks and provide written measures and procedures, as required for Manual Handling;
- investigate all reports of health and safety hazards/risks and incidents related to Manual Handling;
- respond in writing to any written or verbal reports and provide written recommendations of hazards/risks/incidents related to Manual Handling.

Location Health and Safety Representatives:

The Location Health and Safety Representatives will:

- participate in all training and educational programs, as determined by the Employer to be beneficial for the area of Manual Handling;
- encourage co-workers to work safely and to report any hazardous or unsafe conditions immediately to their Supervisor or designate using Workplace Hazard and Suggestion Report;
- obtain from the Employer information concerning the conducting or taking of tests of any equipment, machine, device, article, thing, material or biological, chemical or physical agent in or about a workplace related to Manual Handling, for the purpose of occupational health and safety;
- be consulted about, and be present at the beginning of, testing conducted in or about the workplace if the Representative believes his or her presence is required to ensure that valid testing procedures are used or to ensure that the test results are valid related to Manual Handling;
- related to Manual Handling, obtain information from the Employer respecting the identification of potential or existing hazards of materials, processes or equipment, and health and safety experience and work practice(s) and standards in similar or other industries of which the Employer has knowledge;
- conduct and document monthly inspections of their work location and submit such to their immediate Supervisor within the designated time frame;
- identify and report situations immediately, that may be a source of danger or hazard to employees and volunteers and make recommendations to their Supervisor by completing a Workplace Hazard & Suggestion Report;
- review location Workplace Hazard and Suggestion Reports and make written recommendations;
- review Employee Incident Reports and make written recommendations and submit to Supervisor or designate in the time frame required;
- accompany a Ministry of Labour Inspector during an inspection visit;
- investigate work refusals;
- investigate, when notified by the employer of a critical injury/fatality and provide a report in writing to the Ministry of Labour, within forty-eight (48) hours as prescribed.

Employees:

The Employees will:

- arrange for regular inspections (as per manufacturer's instructions) are completed and documented for all mechanical lift or assistive device product/system;
- document and complete daily inspections of all equipment and devices used within the work location;
- report to their Supervisor or designate, immediately, the absence of or defect in any equipment or protective device of which the worker is aware and which may endanger himself, herself or another employee or volunteer using a Workplace Hazard & Suggestion Report;
- report to their Supervisor or designate, immediately, anything that may be a hazard or risk using a Workplace Hazard & Suggestion Report;
- abide by established protocols/safe work practices/safe operating procedures, related to Manual Handling; qualified professionals will provide training as appropriate;
- take part, when requested, in a workplace inspection to advise of any hazards or risks related to Manual Handling;
- seek clarification from the relevant Supervisor or designate on manual handling related tasks
- participate in all training and educational programs, as determined by the Employer to be beneficial for Manual Handling.

Reporting and Investigation:

It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to immediately report all potential risk factors for hazards/incidents related to Manual Handling to their immediate Supervisor or designate using the Employee Incident Form and/or the Workplace Hazard & Suggestion Report. The Supervisor will investigate risks/hazards/incidents as soon as possible and take appropriate steps to address any continuing risk to the health, safety and well being of all employees and volunteers. Should a hazard result in a critical injury or fatality, Supervisors, employees and Location Health and Safety Representatives will follow the Agency's Critical Injury Policy (#D-006) .

Evaluation:

Community Living-Central Huron is committed to looking at leading indicators of workplace risks and hazards related to Manual Handling, through such methods as information gathering (Workplace Inspections, Incident Investigations, Job Hazard Analysis, etc), surveys, data collection (Rate Group Trends), and Staff meetings.

Supervisors will regularly audit employee and volunteer practices related to Manual Handling through such means as: monthly, periodic inspections at the work locations; documenting written reports on the designated form(s); providing written recommendations in response to any reports of hazards/risks related to Manual Handling; reviewing monthly work location checklists completed by Location Health and Safety Representatives; and, completing annual workplace hazard/risk assessments. The Location Health and Safety Representative (LHSR) will provide written recommendations to the Employer when identifying issues related to Manual Handling and any risks to employees or volunteers. The Agency will maintain a Hazard/Risk Registry, which will be updated annually in consultation with the Location Health and Safety Representative, as necessary, based on the written information/documentation received by Supervisors, employees, volunteers and the Location Health and Safety Representatives.

Related Policies and Procedures:

Duty of Care Policy (B-010)

Health and Safety Policy Statement D-001

Emergency Policy D-003

Annual Workplace Maintenance Policy (D-009)

Critical Injury (D-006)

Early and Safe Return to Work Policy (E-016)

First Aid Policy & Procedure (D-011)

Hazard/Risk Policy and Procedures (D-014)

Health & Safety Orientation Policy (D-015)

Ladder Safety Policy and Procedures (D-017)

Location Health and Safety Representatives Policy (D-016)

Musculoskeletal Disorders Awareness Policy (D-010)

Working Alone Policy (D-012)

Workplace Inspection Policy (D-021)

Other Related Agency Documents:

Community Living-Central Huron Occupational Health and Safety Document.