# Isle of Anglesey County Council

# SAFER HANDLING Policy

# Version 1.0 February 2016

**About this policy**

The aim of the policy is to safeguard employees and others against the risks associated with manual handling operations

The Policy is supported by resources on the Council's website.

**Revision history**

| Version | Date | Summary of changes |
|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | February 2016 | Changed to reflect updated legislative requirements |
| 1.0 | May 2017 | No change |
| 1.0 | April 2018 | No change |
| 1.0 | April 2019 | No change |
| 1.0 | January 2021 | No change |

| **Date of next review** | |
|---|---|
| This policy will be reviewed in: | April 2021 |
| The review will be undertaken by: | Corporate Health and Safety Team |

**Contact Details:**

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We are happy to provide this policy in alternative formats on request. Please use the above contact details.

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg.

This document is available in Welsh.

# Contents

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Manual handling is one of the most common causes of injury at work and causes over a third of all workplace injuries which include work related Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) such as upper and lower limb pain/disorders, joint and repetitive strain injuries. It is recognised that manual handling injuries can occur almost anywhere in the workplace and that heavy manual labour, awkward postures and previous or existing injury could increase the risk. The injuries suffered can be serious, incapacitating and prolonged. In some cases they can result in permanent disability.

## 2. AIM

The aim of the policy is to safeguard employees and others against the risks associated with manual handling operations.

## 3. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, provides the general duties placed upon employers; of particular relevance is the requirement for employers to ensure the provision of arrangements for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, safety and absence of risk to health in connection with the use handling and storage and transport of articles and substances and to ensure the provision of such information, instruction and training and supervision as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of his employees.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations (MHOR) 1992 (as amended) should not be considered in isolation. Regulation 3(1) of the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 2002 as amended requires employers to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees while at work. Where this general assessment indicates the possibility of risks to employees from the manual handling of loads, the requirements of the MHOR should be followed.

MHOR establishes a clear hierarchy of measures:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practicable;
- Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided;
- Reduce the risk of injury from those operations so far as is reasonably practicable. Where possible, mechanical assistance should be provided.

MHOR asks that an ergonomic assessment, based on a range of relevant factors, is used to determine the risk of injury and point the way to remedial action.

Other relevant legislation:

- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
- Workplace (Health Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

## 4. DEFINITION

***'Manual Handling Operations' means any transporting or supporting of a load (Including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by bodily force.***

## 5. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Council, recognises and accepts its responsibility for providing, so far as is reasonably practicable, workplaces and systems of work that are safe and without risk to the health of employees and others in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other statutory provisions. In particular, and in order to effectively implement the requirements of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, the Council will follow guidance, and adopt best practice as recommended by the Health and Safety Executive.

The Council accepts that, in the provision of its services, there are risks involved in manual handling activities, and whilst every effort is taken to avoid hazardous manual handling operations, it recognises that not all activities can be avoided, and the adoption of a 'no lifting' policy would be unnecessarily restrictive and difficult to implement, particularly so, for people moving and handling.

The Council has therefore, opted for a more balanced approach, with the adoption of a 'minimal lifting' policy, with emphasis on the assessment of risks and the reduction of them to safeguard it's employees and others from injury, so far as is reasonably practicable.

In support of this policy, the Council is committed to the adoption of the All Wales Passport Training and Information Scheme, which is endorsed by the Health and Safety Executive as it illustrates good practice and following the guidance would secure compliance with the aforementioned legislation.

The Council will ensure that adequate resources are made available to meet this commitment.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

Heads of Service are responsible for the implementation of this policy, they will:

- include within their departmental health & safety policies, the organisation and arrangements in relation to the effective management of manual handling risks within their respective department;

- maintain an overview of the implementation of their departmental policy, with a view to initiating reviews and actions as required to secure compliance with this policy;
- ensuring their respective directorates/ department receives competent advice regarding the management of manual handling and that adequate training and monitoring is taking place.

**Service Managers**

Service Managers will be responsible for :

- ensuring that systems are in place to identify manual handling risks within their service provision and for ensuring that suitable and sufficient assessments have been carried out on these risks where the risk of injury has been identified, and findings communicated to relevant staff;
- ensuring that systems are in place to eliminate or reduce risks, so far as is reasonably practicable;
- ensuring that systems are in place to identify all staff involved in manual handling operations within their service provision, and ensuring that they receive adequate training (to include any temporary/relief staff and refresher training as appropriate);
- ensuring that risk assessments are periodically reviewed and updated accordingly, with any changes communicated to relevant staff;
- maintaining an overview for the monitoring and auditing of the implementation of the safe systems of work to ensure that risk are being effectively controlled;
- ensuring that all manual handling equipment and aids are provided as required and are regularly inspected and maintained in accordance with relevant legislation;
- ensuring that systems are in place to liaise with Occupational Health in relation to medical conditions that may preclude staff from undertaking their duties safely (to include attendance at training sessions);
- ensuring that systems are in place to record and report incidents involving manual handling whereby an individual is injured (whether staff or service user);
- ensuring that the appropriate action is taken to investigate the incident and remedial action taken as necessary;
- ensuring that systems are in place to monitor that any agency/contract staff have attained the required standard of instruction and training;
- ensuring that systems are in place to inform service users and relatives of the Council Safer Handling Policy.

**Frontline Managers**

Frontline Managers will be responsible for:

- undertaking manual handling risk assessments within their service provision and ensuring that findings are communicated to relevant staff;

- ensuring that risks are eliminated or reduced, so far as is reasonably practicable;
- identifying all staff involved in manual handling operations within their service provision, and ensuring that they have received training as required (to include any temporary/relief staff and refresher training as appropriate);

- maintaining records of training for staff within their service provision;
- undertake periodic reviews of risk assessments and ensuring they are updated accordingly, with any changes communicated to relevant staff;
- monitoring and auditing the implementation of the safe systems of work to ensure that risk are being effectively controlled (to include, in some services - the observation of manual handling techniques);
- ensuring that all manual handling equipment and aids as required are regularly inspected and maintained in accordance with relevant legislation, and keeping records of such;
- ensuring that any agency/contract staff have attained the required standard of instruction and training.

**Employees**

Employees must:-

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for that of others who may be affected by their acts and omissions;
- not undertake any unsafe practice in line with best practice guidelines as instructed via training, etc;
- use appropriate manual handling equipment to minimize the risk of injury in accordance with any instruction or training received and follow any safe system of work that is in place;
- visually inspect any handling aid prior to use to ensure that there are no obvious defects that may compromise their safety or the safety of the service user/others. Any defects must be reported immediately to the Line Manager and the equipment taken out of service;
- report to their line manager any physical/health conditions (including pregnancy) that could affect their ability to comply with the requirements of this policy and associated procedures or that they feel may be the result of a manual handling activity;
- attend manual handling training as required by their Line Manager;
- advise their Line Manager if they identify additional training needs or do not feel competent/safe in carrying out their duties;
- report all hazards, defects in equipment, incidents and near misses in accordance with the Incident Reporting Procedure/Policy for the organisation.

## 7. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

### Risk Assessment

The Council must effectively manage the risk its employees are likely to be exposed to in relation to manual handling, and in doing so will ensure the provision and maintenance of risk assessment, and where necessary the introduction of measures to eliminate, reduce or control the risks.
The Council will ensure that systems are in place for assessments to be undertaken on all foreseeable risks associated with manual handling operations, whether it be for inanimate general load handling, or person moving and handling.

Suitable and sufficient risk assessments will be undertaken for all significant manual handling risks, and findings communicated to relevant staff and others as appropriate.

Risk assessments will be undertaken by suitably competent staff **.**

Risk assessments will be subject to review when there are changes to those factors contained in the risk assessment, or as follows:

- for inanimate loads - annually
- for person moving and positioning - refer to local specified review periods

Specific guidance is provided in relation to undertaking risk assessments for inanimate loads and for person moving and handling.

### Emergency Situations

Risk assessments must be undertaken for all foreseeable manual handling operations, however, if an emergency situation arises it may not be possible to undertake a formal assessment prior to undertaking the required manual handling operation. In all such cases (which it is anticipated will be extremely rare), it will be necessary for the employee to apply the principles of safe handling to reduce the risk of injury.

### Handling Plans/ Safe Method of Work

Where a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been undertaken, it must be supported by a documented handling plan/ safe method of work (as appropriate) which will detail the methods to be adopted to ensure safer manual handling.

### Provision of Equipment

Appropriate equipment as identified to eliminate/ reduce or control the risk of injury in relation to inanimate load handling or person moving and positioning will be provided to ensure the employee undertakes any manual handling operations safely.

- all equipment provided must be suitable for the purpose;

- all equipment must be kept in safe and serviceable order in compliance with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998;
- all employees will receive appropriate instruction and training on any manual handling equipment before use.

**Training**

The Council recognises that inter-alia, staff training in this specialist field is of paramount importance and taking cognisance of this, the Council will ensure that training is provided in accordance with the All Wales Manual Handling Training Passport & Information Scheme.

The Council will ensure that training (to include refresher training) is provided to those employees identified as part of the risk assessment process, and to this end, manual handling training will be mandatory.

The Council will ensure that prior to the completion of the required manual handling and training employees will not be permitted to undertake any manual handling operations.

The Council will ensure that the training provided will meet the needs of groups of officers and individuals, to enable them to undertake their duties and responsibilities effectively and safely.

Basic introduction to manual handling will be included in the Council's Induction Programme for all relevant new employees.

## 8. RECORDING, REPORTING AND MONITORING OF INCIDENTS

The Council in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 has guidance for managers and supervisors in respect of reporting and recording incidents whereby an employee has suffered an injury due to undertaking manual handling operations (as defined).

Report form ADIR should be completed when such an incident has taken place, such incidents should be investigated and recommendations acted upon to prevent a recurrence.

Following an incident, the Council will, as appropriate, refer the employee to the Occupational Health Service for assessment.

## MONITORING

Managers must ensure compliance with the Council's Safer Handling Policy and the requirement of the All Wales Manual Handling Training Passport and Information Scheme.

Particular emphasis must be placed on monitoring to ensure that good practice is adopted and maintained and that the risks of musculoskeletal disorders are controlled.

To assist Managers in undertaking the required monitoring, reference may be made to the following performance indicators:

- number of manual handling incidents reported;
- number of manual handling incidents resulting in injury;
- number of manual handling incidents reported under RIDDOR
- MSD sickness absence data
- ill health retirement due to MSD

## 9. CONSULTATION

The Council will consult fully with employees and employee representatives/safety representatives appointed by their recognised Trade Unions in safeguarding employees from risks to their health, safety and welfare.

## 10. REVIEW OF POLICY

This Policy will be subject to periodic review and will be amended as appropriate in the light of experience.