

## INSTRUCTION 8

### MANUAL HANDLING

References:

- A. Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- B. Manual Handling Operations Regulations (as amended)
- C. Manual Handling Risk Assessment template, Annex D to this policy

#### Introduction

8.1 The term 'Manual Handling' refers to the handling of loads by human effort, i.e. lifting, carrying, pushing or pulling. These injuries can happen as a result of a single incident or a gradual build up over a period of time when bad handling techniques are repeatedly used.

8.2 The most common injuries resulting from manual handling are:

- Disc injuries
- Ligament/tendon injuries
- Muscular/nerve injuries
- Hernias
- Fractures, abrasions and cuts

8.3 These injuries can occur as a result of a single incident of lifting, pushing, pulling and carrying or the accumulative effects of manual handling over a period of time.

#### Risk assessment

8.4 If the manual handling tasks cannot be avoided, manual handling risk assessments are to be carried out on each task where there is a risk of injury, however slight. The assessment is to be recorded on the Council's manual handling risk assessment found at Annex D. As a result of that assessment, the risk of injury must be reduced for each particular task identified, so far as is reasonably practicable.

#### Risk assessment guidance

8.5 It is important that what is required initially is not a full assessment of each of the tasks, but an appraisal of those manual handling operations which involve a risk that cannot be dismissed as trivial, to determine if they can be avoided.

8.6 The aim of the full assessment is to evaluate the risk associated with a particular task, and identify control measures which can be implemented to remove or reduce the risk (mechanisation and/or training).

#### Training

8.7 All employees that have access to a computer must undertake the "Manual Handling" training located on the Council's intranet site. Managers/supervisors are to ensure that their staff complete this at induction and then annually. Further advice and assistance on manual handling assessments is available from the Health & Safety Team.

## Reducing the risk of injury

- 8.8 Before lifting anything check to see whether it is of a size and shape that is within your capabilities, and that it is in a stable condition before lifting.
- 8.9 Never lift anything, which is too heavy for you. Check the weight to make sure it won't be too much for you by trying to lift one corner. If in doubt, GET HELP.
- 8.10 Look for any protrusions or sharp edges that could cause injury. Wear relevant personal protective equipment e.g. gloves, steel toe capped shoes/boots etc.
- 8.11 Make sure that there is room to manoeuvre and that your route is clear before you lift the object. Check that there is a clear place to set down the load at destination.
- 8.12 When lifting from floor level, bend your knees keeping your feet the same distance apart as your hips. Keep your head up and your back straight (but not necessarily upright). Putting one foot forward and to the side of the object gives better balance and control.
- 8.13 Take a firm grip of the load using the whole length of your fingers.
- 8.14 Use your thigh muscles to lift the object, and keep your back straight (but not necessarily upright) the moment the load is taken.
- 8.15 Keep your arms close to your body and do not twist your body when lifting or carrying.
- 8.16 Make sure you can see where you are going.