



## **Policy No. 2013- 14**

# **Manual Handling Policy**

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## 1. Background

Central Highlands Council has a responsibility to provide, as far as reasonably practicable, to eliminate risks to health and safety, and if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks to health and safety, to minimise those risks as far as is reasonably practicable, as stated in Section 19 of the [Work Health & Safety Act, 2012](#) (The Act) and Section 35 of the [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012](#) (The Regulations).

## 2. Application

This policy applies to all employees in all workplaces in relation to manual handling activities involving patients/clients or material objects.

## 3. Policy Statement

Central Highlands Council is committed to ensure that working environments, equipment, systems of work and training programs are appropriate for the prevention of manual handling injuries to employees. This will include conducting manual handling [risk assessments](#) and implementing task specific manual handling training.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

Managers

4.1 Managers must ensure that:

- 4.1.1 work practices involving manual handling are, as far as reasonably practicable, safe and without risk to health and safety;
- 4.1.2 work environments are, as far as reasonably practicable, to be consistent with safe manual handling activities;
- 4.1.3 [mechanical aids](#) used for the movement of plant, equipment or patients / clients meet the relevant Australian Standards;
- 4.1.4 a risk assessment is performed on manual handling tasks that are likely to be a risk to health and safety. This assessment shall be carried out in consultation with the employees who are required to carry out the task;
- 4.1.5 appropriate risk control strategies associated with manual handling tasks are implemented as far as reasonably practicable. This shall be done in consultation with the employees who are required to carry out the task;

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- 4.1.6 appropriate training is provided for all staff in their designated area and records are maintained. Managers are responsible for ensuring that:
- (a) employees undertake training as part of the Council Induction program;
  - (b) employees in identifiable high risk work areas participate in a workplace specific manual handling training course with regular up-dates, and where appropriate competency standards shall be implemented; and
  - (c) employees in identified high risk work areas are trained in the correct use of lifting devices and/or mechanical aids before use in their particular work areas/tasks.

## 5. Employees

### 5.1 Employees must:

- 5.1.1. abide by safe work practices and procedures as developed by their workplace;
- 5.1.2. participate in appropriate training in safe manual handling techniques, ie. use of mechanical aids and team lifting procedures, and apply that training wherever possible;
- 5.1.3. participate in manual handling risk assessments conducted at their workplace; and
- 5.1.4. Identify heavy/awkward items delivered by/to Council

## 6 Guidelines

- 6.1 When implementing control measures after a risk assessment, the relevant manager or officer should select the highest ranked reasonably practicable control measure from the following hierarchy of control measures as per Section 36, Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012.

- **Elimination**
- **Substitution**
- **Isolation**
- **Engineering Controls**
- **Administrative Means**
- **Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Examples of control measures that may be implemented are:

- modification of workplace layout;

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- rearrangement of materials flow; and modification of the task through mechanical assistance or team lifting;

6.2. Job redesign is undertaken wherever practical as the prime means of reducing manual handling risks.

6.3. Mechanical Handling Equipment is to be utilised where job redesign is not feasible and when practicable; and should be conveniently accessible and available.

6.4. Where employees are involved in manual handling activities, initial training and updates will be provided in accordance with this policy.

6.5. Other Administrative Controls:

- job rotation;
- all manual handling incidents shall be reported, documented and investigated to assist with the identification of prevention strategies and
- all manual handling activities identified as presenting a significant risk are to reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with identified workplace needs.

## 7 Glossary terms

**“Manual Handling”** is defined as ‘an activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull carry or otherwise move, hold, restrain any animate or inanimate object.’ (as per National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (NOHSC), National Code for Manual Handling.)

**“Risk Assessment”** means the overall process of estimating the magnitude of risk and deciding what actions will be taken ( as per Australian Standard AS 31000:2009)

**“Mechanical Aid”** could include:

- Trolleys
- Levers
- Rollers/Conveyors
- Hoists
- Fork Lift Trucks

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