



**Workforce**

## **Manual Handling Policy**

# Aim

The policy aims to make sure everyone is aware of their responsibility in line with health and safety legislation.

It aims to:

- Raise awareness of and make sure employees comply with safe manual handling practices.
- Manage and reduce the risks from lifting, carrying, and moving loads.
- Support employees with muscle and joint (musculoskeletal) symptoms.

# Scope

This policy applies to all employees. It also applies to bank, secondees, agency, sessional workers, volunteers, contractors, and those on placement, such as trainees, students, or individuals undertaking work experience.

Reference to employees applies to all these groups unless otherwise stated.

This policy complies with current legislation and meets the aims of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) of the [Equality Act 2010](#).

# Definitions

**Manual handling** is any activity that involves using your body to support or move a load. This includes:

- lifting
- lowering
- pushing
- pulling
- carrying
- supporting

The legal duty and practical steps to ensure that activity is carried out safely can be found in the [Manual Handling Operations Regulations \(1992\)](#).

**Competent person** is a term used by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). It describes someone with the right skills, knowledge, and experience to spot hazards and help implement sensible safety controls.

**RIDDOR** stands for the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations. It's the official way that work-related accidents or incidents are reported to the relevant enforcing authority

The **Scottish Manual Handling Passport Scheme** sets a standard for manual handling training across NHS Scotland. It means your skills are transferable when you move between health boards.

[Find out more about the Scottish Manual Handling Passport Scheme.](#)

## Roles and responsibilities

There is a range of standard expectations which underpin all policies. [Read more about standard roles and responsibilities.](#) In addition, the following specific responsibilities apply to this policy.

### Employer

The employer is responsible for complying with all health and safety laws. It will:

- Recognise that the Chief Executive has overall responsibility for all health and safety matters within their health board.
- Comply with all legislative requirements, including any data collection and reporting.
- Provide education and training on manual handling.
- Make sure that arrangements are in place for employee training and specialist advice on manual handling issues.
- Identify and consider manual handling risks when designing new facilities, buying equipment, or implementing new work practices.

### Manager

The manager will:

- Make sure employees in their team are trained in safe manual handling.
- Identify and assess risks in their work area and take steps to reduce them to the lowest level possible.

- Be aware of how to access specialist advice, resources and guidance, including manual handling training and support networks.
- Complete all necessary documentation, such as risk assessments.
- Complete the required documentation and process for all injuries or near misses involving manual handling, including RIDDOR reportable incidents.

## **Employee**

The employee will:

- Keep their manual handling training up to date.
- Take care of their own safety and the safety of colleagues, patients, and service users.
- Make full and proper use of the equipment provided and report any defects or unavailability to their manager.
- Follow safe work systems, including precautions and procedures established to avoid or reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injury.
- Make sure they report any injuries or near misses involving manual handling using the appropriate system.
- Report any problems or shortcomings in the risk assessment or safe system to their manager.

## **Safe manual handling practice**

All health boards are responsible for adhering to health and safety legislation and ensuring safe manual handling:

1. Training
2. Risk assessments
3. Equipment
4. Reporting

## **Identifying manual handling risks**

Moving and handling risk assessments identify the risks of injury from manual handling. The aim is to reduce and remove risk factors where possible. This can be task—or person-specific. It will include requirements under other workforce policies, for example, the NHS Scotland Maternity Policy.

A suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the associated risk of 'harm' arising from moving and handling tasks should be carried out. Risk assessments must be carried out by an appropriately trained individual.

A written assessment of moving and handling tasks or activities should be completed. These assessments should identify where injuries could occur and, where possible, remove or reduce risk factors.

Risk assessments will inform the safe systems of work to be implemented, including any associated training needs. Specialist advice should be accessed when required.

## Reporting and recording

Employees should report all incidents, including near misses, to their manager as soon as possible. Managers should record and investigate the incident by following local protocols and procedures.

### RIDDOR reporting

If an employee sustains a manual handling injury at work, you may need to officially report it under the RIDDOR regulations.

RIDDOR is the legal system for reporting serious workplace incidents to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). A report is only required when the incident is work-related and results in a reportable injury.

Under Regulation 4 of RIDDOR, certain 'specified injuries' must be reported, such as:

- fractures
- amputation
- crush injury to the head or torso

[Find out more about RIDDOR.](#)

The employee's injury or condition may not become apparent until some time after the accident. However, it must be reported as soon as it has prevented them from doing their normal work duties for more than 7 consecutive days.

A RIDDOR report must be made if a work-related accident causes an employee to be unable to do their normal work for more than 7 consecutive days. This applies even if the injury isn't obvious

immediately after the incident. This 7-day period does not include the day of the accident but does include weekends and rest days.

Some situations will include days when the injured person would not normally have been expected to work. These non-working days must also be considered when deciding whether the employee was unable to do their normal duties for more than 7 consecutive days.

Similar reporting may also apply to modified duties because of injuries sustained. This meets RIDDOR requirements.

All work-related manual handling accidents and incidents must be reported on the board's incident reporting system.

## **Monitoring and review**

NHS Scotland workplaces, equipment, and procedures are regularly reviewed to make sure risk assessments are up to date. This review process includes collecting and monitoring all reported incidents and using this data to improve safety for everyone.

A new risk assessment should be undertaken where new risks are identified or circumstances have changed. The review process will include:

- Collecting and monitoring all reported incidents.
- Regular reporting of incident statistics and safety improvement measures to appropriate health and safety committees and partnership forums.
- Reporting to the board to highlight progress in reducing risk and incidents and making recommendations.

The data collected should also be used to monitor the policy's implementation.

## **Related policies**

The following policies are related to the Manual Handling Policy:

- [Attendance Policy](#)