

 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development		Procedure No: DEE EHU-07-1-3
Title: Manual Handling Procedure		Authorised By: Manager EHU
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1. Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure hazardous manual handling tasks are identified and risk of musculoskeletal disorders associated with such tasks is controlled.

2. Scope:

This procedure applies to manual handling performed in Department of Education and Early Childhood Department (DEECD) workplaces including schools and central and regional offices.

3. References

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*
- *Victorian Code of Practice for Manual Handling 2000*

4. Definitions:

Deputy Health and Safety Representative: An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a Designated Work Group (DWG) on matters relating to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in the absence of the HSR.

Hazard: Anything with the potential to cause harm, injury, illness or loss.

Hazardous Manual Handling:

- a) manual handling having any of the following characteristics:
 - repetitive or sustained application of force;
 - repetitive or sustained awkward posture;
 - repetitive or sustained movement;
 - application of high force being an activity involving a single or repetitive use of force that it would be reasonable to expect that a person in the workforce may have difficulty undertaking;
 - exposure to sustained vibration;
- b) manual handling of live persons or animals;
- c) manual handling of unstable or unbalanced loads that are difficult to grasp or hold.

Health and Safety Representative (HSR): An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a DWG on matters relating to OHS.

Management OHS Nominee: A position nominated by the Workplace Manager to oversee the operational aspects of implementing health, safety and wellbeing initiatives, policies and procedures.

Manual Handling: Any activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any object.

Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD): An injury, illness or disease of the musculoskeletal system affecting the muscles, bones, tendons, ligaments, intervertebral discs or nerves that arises in whole or in part from manual handling in the workplace, whether occurring suddenly or over a prolonged period of time but does not include an injury, illness or disease that is caused by crushing, entrapment or cut resulting primarily from the mechanical operation of plant .

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Risk: A description of the likelihood and consequence of a hazard causing injury or illness.

Workplace Manager: The Manager or Principal responsible for the school, central office, regional office or other DEECD workplace.

5. Responsibility:

Workplace Managers and/or Management OHS Nominees are responsible for:

- Consulting with HSRs and employees in relation to identifying hazardous manual handling tasks and assessing and controlling associated risks;
- Ensuring risk assessments are conducted for identified hazardous manual handling tasks;
- Ensuring risks associated with identified hazardous manual handling tasks are controlled;
- Monitoring and reviewing implemented risk controls;
- Maintaining records related to hazardous manual handling identification, risk assessment and risk control, including updated **OHS Risk Register** and training records; and
- Complying with legislation relating to manual handling.

HSRs:

The functions of **HSR** can include:

- Encouraging employees to report tasks that may involve hazardous manual handling; and
- Participating in hazardous manual handling identification, risk assessment and the development, monitoring and review of risk control measures.

Employees are responsible for:

- Reporting tasks that may involve hazardous manual handling;
- Participating in and assisting Workplace Managers and/or Management OHS Nominees in identifying hazardous manual handling tasks, risk assessment and risk control process; and
- Cooperating with measures implemented to control risk associated with hazardous manual handling.

6. Procedure:

6.1 Hazard Identification

Workplace Managers and/or Management OHS Nominees are to identify all hazardous manual handling tasks within the workplace in consultation with HSRs and employees. In all instances the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must record the identified manual handling hazards using the **Hazardous Manual Handling Identification Form** or equivalent template.

Hazardous manual handling tasks may be identified when:

- An incident, injury or near miss is reported in the workplace;
- A new task is introduced into an employee's job;
- Observation of manual handling tasks;
- New plant or equipment is introduced;
- Workstations or the work environment is changed;
- New or additional information relating to hazardous manual handling becomes available; and
- Consulting with employees performing manual handling tasks.

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Hazard identification may be carried out for a group of tasks rather than for individual tasks if all the tasks in the group are similar and does not result in the employee being subject to any greater, additional or different risk.

6.2 Risk Assessment

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is to conduct a risk assessment for each hazardous manual handling task in the workplace. All risk assessments are to be conducted in consultation with HSR and employees.

The risk assessment is to be documented using the **Hazardous Manual Handling Risk Management Form** or equivalent template.

Risk assessment of hazardous manual handling tasks are to include examination of the following risk factors:

- The postures, movements and forces required to carry out the task;
- The duration and frequency of the task;
- Environmental factors that act directly on a person carrying out the task including heat, cold, vibration, humidity and wind; and
- Systems of work or the way the work is organised and will determine of the sources of risk.

Risk assessments in relation to screen based workstations are to be documented using the DEECD **Screen Based Workstation Risk Management Form**.

6.3 Risk Control

Where specific hazards have been identified for manual handling tasks, controls are to be established and implemented by the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS nominee** in consultation with HSRs and employees. This is to be documented using the **Hazardous Manual Handling Risk Management Form**.

When determining risk controls to reduce manual handling risks, the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must follow the hierarchy of control outlined in **OHS Risk Management Procedure**. Examples of effective manual handling controls (from most to least effective) could include:

- Eliminating heavy lifting by implementing a no lift of students policy;
- Substituting heavy drills with lighter drills;
- Improving workplace design and layout i.e. using work benches at correct heights;
- Providing personal protective equipment (PPE) e.g. gloves with increased grip for handling objects; and
- Training employees in safe lifting techniques.

6.3.1 Safe Work Procedures

Where it is not reasonably practicable to reduce risks, risks may be controlled by the use of specific information, instruction and training which may include the development of a Safe Work Procedure using the **Safe Work Procedure template**.

6.3.2 Manual Handling Training

For employees exposed to hazardous manual handling tasks, the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is to make sure training is provided for safe manual handling and lifting techniques. This training is to include:

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- The process for identifying and assessing and controlling risk associated with hazardous manual handling;
- The measures in place to control the risk of MSD;
- How to select and use appropriate mechanical aids and manual handling techniques; and
- First aid and incident reporting procedures to be followed in case of injury.

Records of this training are to be recorded and maintained by the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** as outlined in *Induction and Training Procedure*.

6.4 Reviewing of Risk Control Measures

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of hazard controls in consultation with HSRs and employees. This review is to be documented using the *Hazardous Manual Handling Risk Management Form*.

Measures in place to control the risk of MSD's must be reviewed and, if necessary, revised:

- Prior to any alteration to any objects used or to systems of work;
- Prior to an object being used for another purpose than for which it was designed;
- If new or additional information becomes available;
- If an MSD is reported;
- In relation to any incident notifiable to WorkSafe Victoria;
- Where for any reason the measures do not adequately control risk; and
- Following a request from a HSR.

6.5 OHS Risk Register

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is to make sure that the *OHS Risk Register* is kept up to date as necessary when manual handling hazards are identified, assessed, controlled and reviewed.

7. Related Documentation:

Hazardous Manual Handling Identification Form
Hazardous Manual handling Risk Management Form
Screen Based Workstation Risk Assessment and Control Form
OHS Risk Management Procedure
Safe Work Procedure
OHS Induction and Training Procedure
OHS Risk Register

8. Version Control

Version	Section Amended	Amendment	Date Created	Author
2	All	Reviewed as per OHSMS 2 yearly review process. Inclusion of reference to Hazardous Manual Handling Risk Management Form. Wording changes in responsibilities section, inclusion of examination of risk factors, inclusion of review section.	April 2011	EHU
3	6.1,7	Inclusion of Hazardous Manual Handling Identification Form	October 2011	EHU