Manual Handling Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline how potentially hazardous manual handling tasks in the Department of Education and Training (the Department) workplaces are identified, assessed, controlled, monitored and reviewed.

Scope

This procedure applies to all Department Schools, central and regional offices.

Procedure

Hazardous manual handling has been identified by the Department as a mandated hazard requiring management in all Victorian Government Schools. It must be included in the *OHS Risk Register* of each workplace.

## 3.1 Identify Hazardous Manual Handling Tasks

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominees** in consultation with employees and Health and Safety Representatives (HSR) are to identify hazardous manual handling tasks undertaken in the workplace. Hazardous manual handling can be defined as “work requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain a thing if the work involves one or more of the following:

* sustained awkward posture
* repetitive movement
* application of single or repetitive use of unreasonable amount of force
* exposure to vibration
* lifting persons or animals
* unbalanced or unstable loads
* loads that are difficult to grasp or hold.

See the *Manual Handling Guide* for examples of hazardous manual handling tasks in Department workplaces.

A summary of these tasks should be included in the ‘Hazard Description’ column of your workplace *OHS Risk Register*.

## 3.2 Risk Assessment Process

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** in consultation with employees and HSR are to assess the level of risk for tasks that have been identified as potentially hazardous, taking into account the current risk controls implemented and the following risk factors:

* Task (e.g. undertaken for long periods of time)
* Individual (e.g. skills and training level)
* Load (e.g. too heavy, too large)
* Environment (e.g. stairs to navigate, lack of space).

The assigned level of risk should be recorded in the *OHS Risk Register* and/or *Risk Assessment Template* or equivalent.

A risk assessment can be completed by any Department employee, in consultation with Management and other relevant employees using the *Risk Assessment Template* or equivalent when:

* there is a high or extreme level of risk in the *OHS Risk Register*
* there is uncertainty about the level of risk associated with activities to be undertaken
* there is limited understanding and/or knowledge about individual manual handling tasks to be performed.

Sample risk assessments have been designed as generic guides to assist workplaces in assessing common manual handling risks.

A *Safe Work Procedure* (SWP) should be developed and displayed adjacent to where the hazardous manually handling task is to be carried out. Employees should be trained in the process as documented in the SWP.

See *Manual Handling Guide* for further information.

## 3.3 Record Current Risk Controls

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** in consultation with employees and HSR are to eliminate or reduce the level of risk associated with hazardous manual handling tasks so far as is reasonably practicable, by considering the risk factors in Section 3.2 of this Procedure.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to record the current risk controls in the *OHS Risk Register*. Current risk controls should also be recorded in the *Risk Assessment Template* or equivalent, where required.

See the *Manual Handling Guide* for sample risk controls.

## 3.4 Additional Controls

The **Workplace Manager** in consultation with employees and HSR are to implement additional controls if:

* specific hazardous manual handlings tasks are not understood
* individual factors need to be considered e.g. skills and level of training
* there are issues surrounding the load to be moved (e.g. too heavy, too large, etc.)
* there are environmental considerations e.g. layout/design or work area
* there has been a near miss, incident or injury reported as result of manual handling task.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to record additional controls in the *OHS Risk Register* and *Risk Assessment Template* or equivalent.

## 3.5 Information, Instruction and Training

The **Workplace Manager** is responsible for ensuring all employees, volunteers, visitors and casual relief teachers are informed about the potential hazardous manual handling tasks and risk controls, by:

* having all employees complete the Manual Handling eLearning Module.
* presenting the Manual Handling Awareness Training to employees
* providing employees with risk assessments and the opportunity to raise questions and participate in consultative processes
* completing an induction prior to commencing work
* communicating the process to report manual handling hazards, near misses and incidents.

Records of training should be documented in the *OHS Training Planner/Register*.

## 3.6 Reviewing Risk Control Measures

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of risk controls in the *OHS Risk Register* and Risk Assessments in consultation with the HSR and employees. The outcomes of the review should be communicated to all employees and HSR.

4. Defined Terms

Terms defined within this Procedure can be located on the Department [Defined Health, Safety Terms](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx?) website. Defined roles will appear **in bold**.

5. References

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

*Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*

*WorkSafe Victoria Compliance Code-Hazardous Manual Handling, March 2018*

6. Related Documentation

*Manual Handling Guide*

*Manual Handling Awareness Training*

*OHS Risk Register*

*OHS Training Planner/Register*

*Risk Assessment Template*

*Safe Work Procedure Template*

7. Further assistance

Further information, advice or assistance on any matters related to OHS planning is available by contacting the OHS Advisory Service on ph. 1300 074 715 or email [safety@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:safety@edumail.vic.gov.au).