



SOUTH COAST LIFE CHURCH

Manual Handling Procedures

Obligations Under the Work Health & Safety (WHS) Act

Under the *Work Health & Safety (WHS) Act*, the Church is considered a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU). A PCBU must, so far as is reasonably practicable:

1. Ensure the health and safety of workers and others at your workplace;
2. Consult with workers who carry out work for the business or undertaking and who are (or are likely to be) directly affected by a health and safety matter; and
3. Consult, cooperate and coordinate activities with all other relevant duty holders.

What is Manual Handling?

Manual handling is any task whereby the human body is used to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain a load.

Musculoskeletal Disorders

Manual handling can place strain on the body and lead to Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD). MSD are injuries to the musculoskeletal system i.e. the muscles, bones, joints, discs, cartilage, tendons and ligaments.

Hazardous Manual Tasks

Hazardous manual tasks involve one or more of the following:

1. Repetitive movement;
2. Repetitive or sustained force;
3. High or sudden force;
4. Sustained or awkward postures; and
5. Exposure to vibration.

In order to decrease the risk of a worker developing a MSD, you should:

1. Identify hazardous manual tasks;
2. Eliminate or minimise the associated risks.

1. Identifying Hazardous Manual Tasks

A risk assessment should be performed to identify all hazardous manual tasks. This assessment should include a consultation with any workers who are or might be required to carry out the task. Consideration should be given to workers who may be more at risk of developing a MSD. For example, an inexperienced worker, or worker with a previous injury.

The risk assessment should identify:

1. The postures, movements and forces that are involved in completing a task;
2. When they may become hazardous; and
3. Ways to eliminate or minimise these risks.

2. Eliminating or Minimising Risks in Manual Tasks

The best way to manage hazardous manual tasks is to eliminate the risk through good workplace design. If a hazard cannot be eliminated the risk should be minimised by:

1. Changing the design or layout of work areas to minimise manual handling;
2. Ensuring workspace heights are appropriate to reduce the need for awkward postures;
3. Redesigning tasks to minimise manual handling, e.g. by using mechanical aids;
4. Rotating manual handling tasks between workers to reduce the strain from repetitive movements; and
5. Providing training on correct manual handling procedures.

Manual Handling Principles

There are 5 principles that can be used to achieve safer manual handling:

1. **Plan** – Plan the task, assess the risks and plan ways of minimising the risks.
2. **Position** – Position yourself close to the load, feet at shoulder width apart and with the load centred to the body.
3. **Pick** – Use both hands, minimise bending and twisting and keep the load around the centre of the body.
4. **Proceed** – Proceed with caution and watch for any obstructions.
5. **Place** – Place the load carefully and preferably in a convenient place if any further manual handling is required.

Adopted by Elders on 04/06/2024.