

As a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) you are required to protect workers from the risk of musculoskeletal disorders. The hazard identification and risk assessment processes set out below apply to the identification and management of manual handling hazards.

Manual handling is any activity that requires the use of force exerted by a person to lift, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain anything. Injuries can occur due to:

- a) incorrect positioning of the body;
- b) lifting or carrying heavy loads;
- c) lifting or twisting;
- d) sustained application of force (e.g. pushing/pulling);
- e) repetitive work;
- f) working in a fixed position for long period of time; or
- g) vibration from the use of tool.

Risk Control Tips

Employees working in the retail industry, including warehousing are often required to perform manual handling activities as part of their duties. The Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU), employee representatives and employees assignment to carry out manual handling duties should consider the list below to assist in controlling risks associated with manual handling.

1. Redesign the task: brainstorm other ways to complete the task. Here are a few examples to get you started:

- consider the equipment that can be used to complete the task
- protective clothing
- reducing the load
- providing training and education

2. Redesign the set-up of the workplace: this process can involve illuminating repetitive movements, high or sudden force and uncomfortable posture.

3. Redesign the transportation of loads, depending on the nature of the business this can vary.

4. Redesign the process: this doesn't have to include the workplace, one can also focus on how the task at hand can be modified. For example, instead of illuminating repetitive movements brainstorm how it can be reduced by incorporating another process/movement.

Providing training and education not only creates a safe workplace but it also increases productivity and reduces cost.

Principles of Correct Manual Handling

How workers can safely lift loads (see diagram below).

1. Stand close to the item you are lifting.
2. Keep your feet apart and squat down by bending at the knees.
3. Keep your back as straight as possible while lifting the object.
4. Lift using your legs, keeping your back straight



Further Information

For further information contact our Specialist Workplace Advisors on 1800 RETAIL (738 245).