

FOOD4MACC MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

(no longer operational)

Signed on behalf of

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Name:

Date:

Issue Number	Date issued	Revision / change

1. Introduction

This policy covering manual handling supports the Food4Macc (F4M) Health and Safety policy.

Manual handling causes over a third of all workplace injuries. These include work-related musculoskeletal disorders such as pain and injuries to arms, legs and joints, and repetitive strain injuries of various sorts.

The term manual handling covers a wide variety of activities including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling and carrying. If any of these tasks are not carried out appropriately there is a risk of injury.

2. Requirements

To help prevent manual handling injuries, such tasks should be avoided as far as possible. However, where it is not possible to avoid handling a load, project managers should ensure reasonable steps are taken to prevent and avoid injury and take into account the capabilities of the volunteers involved.

Volunteers should only lift and carry loads when i) it is unavoidable, ii) they are comfortable in doing so and iii) they understand the following guidance.

3. Guidance for lifting and carrying loads

When lifting something manually:

- Reduce the amount of twisting, stooping and reaching
- Avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height, especially heavy loads
- Minimise carrying distances
- Assess the weight to be carried – maybe the load can be broken down to smaller, lighter components

Example only – not an operational document

There are some simple things to do before and during the lift/carry:

- Remove obstructions from the route
- For a long lift, plan to rest the load midway on a table or bench to change grip
- Keep the load close to the waist. The load should be kept close to the body for as long as possible while lifting.
- Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body
- Adopt a stable position and make sure your feet are apart, with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance

Adopt a stable position

The feet should be apart with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load, if it is on the ground). Be prepared to move your feet during the lift to maintain your stability. Avoid tight clothing or unsuitable footwear, which may make this difficult.

Get a good hold

Where possible, the load should be hugged as close as possible to the body. This may be better than gripping it tightly with hands only.

Start in a good posture

At the start of the lift, slight bending of the back, hips and knees is preferable to fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees (squatting).

Don't flex the back any further while lifting

This can happen if the legs begin to straighten before starting to raise the load.

Keep the load close to the waist

Keep the load close to the body for as long as possible while lifting. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If a close approach to the load is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before attempting to lift it.

Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways, especially while the back is bent.

Shoulders should be kept level and facing in the same direction as the hips. Turning by moving the feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.

Keep the head up when handling.

Look ahead, not down at the load, once it has been held securely.

Move smoothly

The load should not be jerked or snatched as this can make it harder to keep control and can increase the risk of injury.

Don't lift or handle more than can be easily managed

There is a difference between what people can lift and what they can safely lift.

Put down, then adjust

If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put it down first, then slide it into the desired position.