

# Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball Association

## MANUAL HANDLING PROCEDURE

X endeavours to keep its staff safe at all times when in the work place.

Unless it is specifically in your job description no one should be taking part in Manual Handling.

If your job description does involve daily Manual Handling then the organisation will provide aids where necessary to help with lifting and moving heavy objects.

X has a yearly risk assessment covering all aspects of health and safety and manual handling, and any failures will be dealt with promptly.

Any member of staff who is aware of a hazard should report it immediately.

Before any member of staff takes part in manual handling they are to read this document and demonstrate that they understand the procedures.

### Advice on Safe Manual Handling

There are basic principles that should be followed even prior to lifting the load. The person should ensure that the object is light enough for a one-person to lift, check that there are no sharp or abrasive edges, and that the load is equally distributed and stable.

If an object is heavy or awkward, a mechanical aid should be employed to assist with the lift. It is important that a clear route is established for the lift, with any obstructions removed, and areas designated for rest breaks and for unloading the object. Proper clothing should be worn for manual handling, such as strong, flat shoes, or anti-slip safety shoes, where necessary; gloves to allow a firmer grip; and durable clothing.

Before attempting to lift the object, the worker should establish an effective grip.

### One-Person Lift

Once it has been established that the load can be lifted safely by one person, the following techniques should be employed:

- the person should stand close to the load and, for stability, spread the feet to shoulder width;
- the knees should be bent and the back's natural line maintained. Kneeling or bending the knees fully will reduce lifting power;
- the load should be grasped firmly and held close to the body for more leverage and stability;
- the head and shoulders should be raised and the legs (not the back) used to push the body up. This should be carried out in one smooth motion;
- the load should be held close to the body, the hips and shoulders should be facing the same direction, and the feet should be pointed in the direction of the move.

If lifting from **inaccessible places**, a person should brace the knees against something firm, bend from the hips and push the buttocks out behind, maintaining a straight line for the head and back, and lifting with the leg, buttock and stomach muscles.

When **carrying** a load, it is necessary to hold it close, keeping the elbows turned in, avoiding changing grips without first supporting the load, ensuring the route can be

clearly seen, using the feet to change direction (do not twist the body), and turning the feet, shoulders and hips to face the unloading spot. When unloading, the object should be held close, and lowered by bending the knees with the back straight. Fingers and toes should be kept away from the bottom of the load, and the object should be placed onto the edge of the surface and slid into place securely, ensuring that it will not fall, tip over, etc.

### **Team Lift**

A team lift is safer when:

- Lifters are around the same height and build;
- one person calls directions;
- the object is lifted to the hips at the same time and raised to a comfortable level, which is maintained while carrying the load;
- movements are smooth and in unison; and
- both persons unload at the same time.

### **Lifting from a High Place**

If lifting from a **high place**:

- a platform should be used instead of a ladder;
- the load should be lightened into smaller units, where practicable;
- the person should confirm the weight and the stability of the load before lifting; and
- the load should be kept close to the body, grasped firmly and slid down the torso.

### **One-Arm Lifts**

For one-arm lifts the load should be split where possible; the person should lift with legs, balance with the other arm, keep the shoulders level and change hands frequently.

### **Using Mechanical Aids**

The use of mechanical aids, such as hand trucks, trolleys and wheelbarrows can help to reduce the risk of accidents if used correctly, eg. pushing, rather than pulling the object for more power; staying close to the load and keeping elbows in; maintaining a firm grip; keeping close to the load with the back straight, knees bent and leaning in the direction of movement. The leg muscles and body weight should do the work, rather than the person pushing with their feet, and the load should be kept under control at all times, particularly when moving on slopes.