

COMMUNITY LIVING BRANT
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

SUBJECT: Lifts, Transfers, Carries and Response to Falls	POLICY NO.: 2.11 PAGE 1 of 6
FILE UNDER SECTION: 2 – Health and Safety	EFFECTIVE DATE: November 17, 1999 REVISION DATE: May 2019

POLICY:

Community Living Brant is committed to the prevention of occupational illness and injury in the provision of human services. To achieve such compliance relevant legislation includes The Occupational Health and Safety Act and The Health Care and Residential Facilities Regulations. Community Living Brant is committed to decreasing the risk of musculoskeletal disorders associated with supporting people.

PURPOSE:

Community Living Brant is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all employees and people receiving services. Community Living Brant is committed to providing financial, physical and human resources to reduce the risks of injury from completing lifts, transfers and carries. Community Living Brant will implement the use of safe work practices to reduce ergonomic hazards while lifting, transferring, and carrying. Community Living Brant is committed to ensuring assessments are completed to ensure safe procedures are selected. There should be no manual lifting of non-weight bearing people receiving services. Community Living Brant is committed to annually reviewing and evaluating the program in consultation with the Multi Site Joint Health and Safety Committee

DEFINITIONS:

Lift:

The procedure used when the entire weight of a person (or object) is borne by the person completing the lift. A lift is used to move a person who is physically unable to assist with procedure.

Transferring:

The procedure used when assisting a person to move from one surface to another. A transfer should be used when a person can follow direction and can bear weight at least through one leg or both arms.

Repositioning:

The procedure used to move a person to a new position on the same surface. Repositioning should be used to adjust a person in bed or a chair when that person is physically unable to move or unable to follow instructions.

Mechanical Lift:

A device used in assisting with a lift of a person or an object.

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RESPONSIBILITIES:

1.0 The responsibilities for ensuring a safe workplace rest with all employees of Community Living Brant as well as the Agency itself. Through this joint responsibility, the workplace will be made safe and healthy for all.

1.1 Employer

- Enforce the policy, procedures and program
- Provide equipment, necessary resources, and initial and ongoing employee training
- Maintain the lifts, transfers, and carries safety program through continuous quality improvement
- Appoint a “program leader”. This person would be a management representative from the Multi Site Joint Health and Safety Committee whose role will be to take a lead role in planning, co-ordination and implementation of a training program for Lifts, Transfers and Carries in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee.
- Create a committee to work on the Lifts, Transfers and Carrying Program to support the goal of increased employee safety
- The Lifts, Transfers and Carrying Program committee shall be comprised of management, employee, and self-advocate representation.
- The Lifts, Transfers and Carrying Program committee shall meet a minimum of twice a year or more often if required
- Quorum for the Lifts, Transfers and Carrying Program Committee shall be 50%, with at least one person from management and employee representation.
- Ensure that an appropriate training program on Lifts, Transfers and Carries, including the use of mechanical lifts, is developed in consultation with the Multi Site Joint Health and Safety Committee and implemented in the workplace
- Evaluate and update the program annually by reviewing the Workplace Injury Reports observations and information

1.2 Managers/Supervisors

- Enforce program through regular monitoring strategies
- Ensure the development of site specific procedures in the support of the policy
- Ensure all employees are trained in the use of mechanical lifts and proper lifting, transferring and carrying techniques
- Maintain training records for a three year period
- Ensure all new employees receive general and site-specific orientation to the policy and program
- Include the auditing of employee work practice in the planned inspections and report on findings to senior management as required
- Take every reasonable precaution for the protection of the employee

1.3 Employees

- Comply with policy and procedures at all times

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- Participate in regular training as established by the Community Living Brant
- Report any unsafe acts, hazards, equipment problems or any other untoward issue immediately to the supervisor or delegate
- Report any incidents, accidents and near misses to the supervisor immediately and co-operate in the investigation as required by management
- Use Back Safety/Proper lifting techniques
- Ask for help in lifting heavy items (or pushing heavy items)
- Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as required
- Report any accident or injury to the supervisor

I.4 Multi Site Joint Health and Safety Committee

- At every meeting and annually, lifting incidents and injuries will be reviewed. This information will be compiled by Human Resource using the Worker's Report of Injury/Disease/Violence form
- Review policy and program annually
- Revision to the training program and policy will be made as required in consultation with the Lifting, Transferring and Carrying Program Committee
- If required by policy, an accident investigation of a lifting, transferring or carrying injury shall be conducted by the Multi Site Joint Health and Safety Committee
- A summary report of all findings of investigations shall be forwarded to senior management.

PROCEDURES:

Rules for Safe Lifting

- Plan ahead before lifting
- Lift close to your body
- Feet shoulder width apart
- Bend your knees and keep your back straight
- Tighten your stomach muscles
- Lift with your legs

Response to Falls

- This includes instances where due to an employee's responsibility of care they may risk injury by reflexively assisting a person when they unexpectedly move or fall
- Wherever possible ease the person to the floor (Note: Epilepsy Canada recommends attempting to do this. It is acknowledged, however, that this may not always be possible or feasible.)
- If staff are supporting someone that has the potential to fall (seizure activity, poor balance, concerns with gait), encourage the person, where feasible to walk close to a wall so if the need arises, the wall can be used to ease the person to the floor.
- If a person falls, where ever possible, try and protect their head from hitting the ground.
- If an incident occurs relating to a fall, review the Hazard Risk Registry to determine if additional controls can be put in place.

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- Incorporating the preceding may reduce your risk of injury by observing and then communicating to other employees any factors that may influence a person's physical stability. These factors could include but are not limited to the person's environment, medication, medical condition or behavior.

NOTE:

- A lift could occur that does not involve a person receiving service. The basic principles utilized when lifting and assessing the situation would apply whether it is a person or an object.

Lifting Assessments

- Initial and ongoing assessments must occur for any person that requires a lift. This assessment would include but not limited to assessing the person's weight-bearing capacity, communication abilities, cognitive capacity, and pain level
- There is an abundance of equipment which makes moving and handling much easier. This may include hoists, turntables, transfer boards, transfer belts, sliding sheets, or for objects, dollies.
- The assessments and plan of support will be developed with the person, support staff and in consultation with a qualified person (occupational therapist, physiotherapist, home care)
- All locations will develop plans with the person specific to the site

Communication

- Give information to each staff at the beginning of each shift if a person's status has changed i.e. their medical condition, the person's strength
- Communication ensures the safety of all parties

Training Techniques and Equipment

- Each support method requires a formal, documented, step-by step procedure, to ensure consistency of safe techniques when lifting/transferring/repositioning a person (i.e. car transfers, getting a person in and out of a bathtub, loading a dolly,)
- Staff must inform the person when using a lift and the step-by-step procedures that they are doing.

Pre-Use Inspection Use

- Equipment must always be in good working order to avoid unnecessary accidents or injuries
- A daily mechanical lift Inspection checklist will be completed and a record will be maintained in the Red Inspection Binder. (Appendix A). Any equipment including lifts and slings must have a daily inspection completed to ensure the safety of everyone
- If the location has only Transfer Poles/Chair Lifts, use Appendix B

Preventative Maintenance of Equipment

- Lifting equipment will be serviced according to manufacture requirements or at least annually by qualified service providers
- Manufacture information about the weight capacity must be posted on all the lifting equipment.
- Documentation of all inspections will be kept in the Red Inspection binder
- Slings will be washed in accordance to manufacturer's instructions and guidelines
- Before using slings, employees must inspect for wear and discard when worn and unsafe

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Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

- The training program will be reviewed annually in connection with the Joint Health and Safety Committee and the Lifts, Transfers and Carries Safety Program Committee
- The Joint Health and Safety Committee will review the Policy and procedures annually at the first meeting of the new year.
- Statistical reports regarding Lifts, transfers and carry Injury reports from Human Resources will be utilized to assess the effectiveness of the program.

Purchasing of Equipment and Devices

- A proactive approach must be used in the purchasing of equipment, all parties should be involved in assessing the necessary equipment
- Refer to the Safe Purchasing Policy 2.30 when purchasing equipment

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Back Safety Techniques

- Sizing the Load – Do Not Manually Lift Heavy Objects
- Before even attempting to lift an object, it is important to size up the load. Determine if the load is light enough to lift. If the load is too heavy, try to do the following: Make objects smaller; Use smaller containers or take smaller loads; Use lighter containers; Lighten the loads in containers.
- If the size and weight of the load cannot be reduced, it must be determined if a team lift is necessary.
- Reaching for objects, especially in high places, can strain the back. Some back safety techniques to use are: Reach only as high as your shoulders.
- Test the weight of the load by pushing up on a corner before lifting. ***If it's too heavy, get help.***
- Bending – Do Not Bend Over from the Waist
- When bending down to reach or lift, move whole body to protect the back. Some back safety techniques to use are: Bend the knees and hips, not the back; Kneel down on one knee, if necessary; Get as close to the object as possible so you will not have to reach with your arms; Lifting – Do Not Use Back to Bend
- Lifting is one of the most common causes of back injuries. Some back safety techniques to use are:
 - Face the load squarely.
 - Get a firm footing.
 - Tighten your abdominal muscles to support your back when you lift.
 - Lift with your legs – not your back.
 - Lift gradually, not suddenly.
 - Keep the load close to your body.
 - Do not twist while lifting.
 - Take your time
 - Ensure that you are wearing proper footwear

Push – Do Not Pull

Pulling large and heavy objects can be as hard on the back as lifting. Instead of pulling the load, try pushing the load. Some back safety techniques to use are:

- Stay close to the load, without leaning forward.
- Tighten your stomach muscles as you push.
- Push with both arms, keeping your elbows bent.
- Turn – Do Not Twist the Back
- Remember to get help if the load is too heavy/large
- Ensure that you are wearing proper footwear.