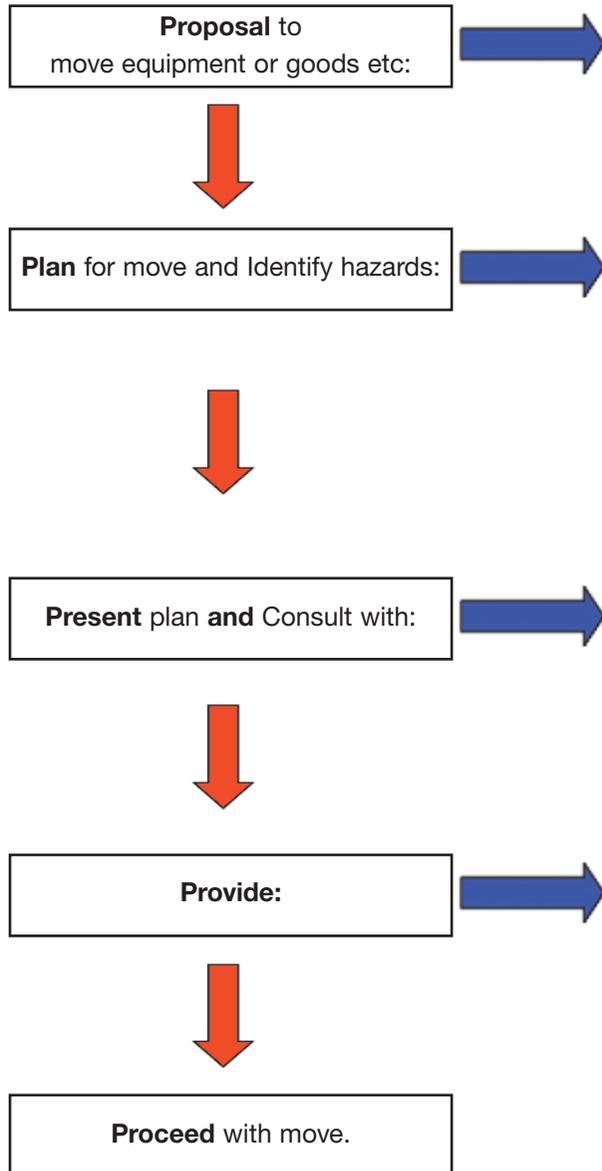


Move Smart



Tel: 9905 1016 Fax: 9905 2580
 Email: ohsehelpline@adm.monash.edu.au
www.adm.monash.edu.au/ohse/

- It is a line management responsibility to ensure all risks are eliminated or controlled as far as is practicable during the moving process.
- Size up the move (volume of goods/furniture).
- Where is it going?(distance, up and down levels, obstacles).
- Are additional resources required? (special lifting equipment).
- Are staff with appropriate skills available?
- Identify all the hazards as far as is practicable.
- Are outside removalists required? (a list of approved removalists can be found on the preferred suppliers listing).
- Is a budget required?
- Staff and students directly involved in physically moving items:
 - Are they happy to participate? (give them the option to raise concerns).
- Those that may be affected by the move:
 - Most moves cause disruption to others in local area.
 - They need to know how much disruption to expect and timing of the move.
- Safety officer and health and safety representative.
- Review the identified hazards and conduct formal risk assessment (see OHS [risk control program](#) – manual handling).
- Assistance such as lifting equipment and how to use it correctly.
- Training and information for staff and students.
- Communicate all risks and controls as far as is practicable to all involved in the move.

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Occupational Health, Safety and Environment

Move Smart

Guide to moving office, equipment or goods.

Background

When staff and students are moving offices or laboratories they are often faced with manual handling tasks that they don't usually perform, such as packing books and files into boxes. Staff can reduce the risk of manual handling injuries when moving offices by assessing the risks of the tasks to be performed and taking some simple steps to control those risks.

Unsafe manual handling may cause a range of injuries and conditions including:

- muscle sprains and strains
- injuries to muscles, ligaments, intervertebral discs and other structures in the back
- injuries to soft tissues such as nerves, ligaments and tendons in the wrist, arms, shoulders, neck or legs
- abdominal hernias and chronic pain

Monash University has an obligation under the *Occupational Health and Safety (Manual Handling) Regulations* to control the risk of injuring any staff or student as a result of moving equipment or goods at work.

Staff and students at Monash University are not required to move equipment or goods at work unless:

- they have had training,
- any risks identified have been eliminated or reduced as far as is reasonably practicable
- the information in this guideline has been taken into account.

Assess the risk: What makes it hazardous?

The physical activity:

- movements which involve reaching above shoulder height or below mid-thigh height, or twisting of the body;
- performing the task frequently or for long periods of time without a break.

The work environment:

- restrictions or obstacles to access items or perform the task;
- having long distances between points where a load is moved.

The nature of the hazard itself:

- heavy weights and forces;
- loads that are large, awkward in shape, slippery or unstable

The individuals concerned:

- lack of experience or training;
- individual characteristics such as pre-existing injury, physical condition, pregnancy etc.

Other risk factors:

- performing heavy tasks in close succession, or early in the shift when the body is not warmed up;
- clothing which restricts physical movement.

Control the risks

Good risk control measures may include (in order of preference):

- **Eliminate** the heavier manual handling tasks by having this done by removalists (who have specialist equipment and training).
- **Substitute** manual labour with mechanical devices eg, trolleys.
- **Reduce** the weight or size of the load by using smaller packing boxes or dividing box contents, or seeking assistance to make a coordinated team lift.
- **Organise** the packing work to reduce the distance involved in moving loads eg, place the box for filling directly beside the shelves being unpacked.
- **Store** heavy goods or equipment etc., near waist height to avoid the need for bending.
- Clear access routes.
- **Warm** up and stretch before conducting physical activity.
- **Space** activities that require physical exertion or repetitive action.
- **Avoid** actions and postures that might increase the risk of injury, eg move your feet rather than twisting your body, use a stable step or platform to access high shelves, rather than over-reaching above shoulder height.
- **Wear** attire that does not restrict movement. Provide additional assistance for those staff with pre-existing conditions that make them more susceptible to injury.
- **Inform/consult** with staff about the relative risks and recommended methods of control.