

Workplace Health & Safety

Environments you are not expected to work in

Clean & Personal takes great pride in finding domestic work in homes throughout Melbourne, helping participants of the NDIS scheme, their carer's, as well as Home Care Packaged Aged recipients with maintaining independence in their home.

You should always feel safe from harm or concern while in a client's home so if you ever come across a:

- situation where you feel unsafe, uncomfortable or the conditions are unhygienic, please leave the client's house and call your Team Manager at the Agency to report the incident to them.

Please be as informative as possible to enable your Team Manager to assess the situation and deal with it accordingly.

Workplace Health & Safety

Health and Safety is an important consideration to be taken when performing work to ensure illness and injury does not occur. It should not be an add-on consideration to the work being done. It should be incorporated in the way work is carried out.

Legislation

The Occupational Health and Safety Act and regulations is the main workplace health safety law in Victoria. It sets out key duties, responsibilities, and rights about occupational health and safety.

The Legislation covers many aspects and has many regulated requirements to address health and safety issues in all industries. However, in general terms and in medium to low-risk industries, an understanding of the management of risk is essential and sufficient.

Therefore, to comply with the Legislation, generally a Risk Management approach is to be adopted. This involves identifying hazards in the work environment, assessing the level of risk those hazards present to those in the work environment and then taking the most appropriate action that will eliminate or minimise the risks.

Risk Management

What is a hazard?

A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause harm or injury in the workplace.

(Example — slippery floor, hazardous chemical, heavy object)

What is a risk?

A risk is the likelihood of the hazard to cause injury or harm to persons in the workplace

(Example — a person could slip on the slippery floor, the outcome of this could result in serious injury)

How do I control risk?

As hazards in the work environment may change from visit to visit, a fresh assessment of the workplace needs to be undertaken at each visit and not just rely on the assessment undertaken at the initial visit. This will ensure all risks are being managed.

The most important step to take in managing risks is to eliminate them as much as reasonably

practicable and when elimination is not achievable, minimise them as much as reasonably practicable.

Your own experience will help you decide on what is the most effective, practical and efficient controls to use and when you're not sure, seek the assistance of your Team Manager. Remember, don't introduce a risk while trying to eliminate one.

Example of steps to eliminate or minimise risk (Slippery floor example)

Short term (minimise risk): Make anyone who is in the work environment aware that the floor is wet or slippery and guide persons away from it (Example: Advise persons in the house and put a chair/s over it or around it)

Longer term (eliminate risk): Clean it up



Hazard	Risk	Outcome	Control
Manual Tasks (lifting heavy objects, tasks requiring force, awkward postures, repetition or for long periods, reaching up or out, twisting bending)	Using excessive force, straining muscles, tendons and joints beyond normal body ability	Muscle strain, torn ligaments, back/ spinal injury, fall injuries, hernias	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't lift objects above personal ability• Don't move furniture or other heavy objects without assistance• Take breaks when doing repetitive tasks• Make room to work in areas of limited space without having to reach-bend or use awkward postures• Consider requesting mechanical aids (ladder) to reduce risk and suggest rearrangement of objects in areas of restricted space.
Electrical	Contact with live wire	Electric shock, burn, electrocution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspect appliance/ lead/ plug top for exposed wires before using• Use portable safety switch if one is not permanent on the house
Chemicals	Contact with skin/ eyes or inhalation of fumes	Chemical burn, skin reaction, illness from inhalation or ingestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check labels or data sheets for safety warnings and precautions to take• Consider requesting safer chemicals• Consider use of gloves, face masks (respirator), safety glasses
Floor Surfaces (wet/oil/slippery surface/obstacles/uneven floor/mats)	Slipping/Tripping/Falling	Muscle strains/sprains, broken bones, cuts/abrasions, head/ back injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspect floor surfaces before and when entering rooms• Clean areas of risk• Use and maintain appropriate (non-slip) footwear

Hazard	Risk	Outcome	Control
Visibility (inappropriate lighting, corners and doors)	Contact with, hitting body against unseen objects	Bruising, cuts/ abrasions, fall injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect dark areas for hazardous objects/flooring, protruding objects If lighting is available ensure to use it
Sharps (tin, glass, needles)	Contact with sharp edges of containers, broken glass or disused needles	Cuts, infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect area before putting hands in where sharp objects could be Consider wearing appropriate gloves
Personal Safety (relates to safety of the contractor/ worker from harassment, bullying or violence from client or other)	Abusive language or behaviors from the client or another at the workplace that intimidates, threatens vilifies or humiliates contractor/ work and creates a risk to the health and safety of contractor/ worker	Stress, Humiliation, Sexual intimidation or Violence that could lead to serious personal or psychological injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be vigilant of any suggestive comments; Be aware of controversial conversations; Be aware of tone of voice; Stay aware of your surroundings; Be aware of escape routes if needed; Trust your instincts; <p><i>Be aware you have the right to leave the workplace if a situation arises where you feel at risk and that you do not have to work with the client if your instincts suggest you are in danger of being at that workplace.</i></p>

Personal Safety

If a client seems like they are behaving in a way that makes you or is likely to make you feel unsafe or uncomfortable at any time, **leave the client's premises immediately.** Afterward, if you feel it is necessary for your physical safety, please call 000 and ask for the police immediately.

Following that, call management and we will begin a report and work with you going forward so that you feel comfortable and secure. ***Please see the last line in table above.***



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Client Safety

- Clients with certain disabilities may have higher risks of medical emergencies, such as seizures or respiratory issues. Familiarize yourself with the client's emergency plan and any specific steps to take if a medical situation arises.
- Always carry a phone in case you need to call for emergency assistance, and report any incidents to management to ensure proper documentation and follow-up.

Clients in general:

Report All Concerns

Any incident involving aggressive behaviour, unusual medical circumstances, or environmental hazards should be reported immediately to your Team Manager and documented for follow-up and prevention.



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Safety equipment



*Household installed
Safety Switch*



Safety Glove



Face Mask — Respirator



Safe Step Ladder



Safety Glasses



Mechanical Aid

Hazards identified in domestic work may include:

Electrical

- Faulty equipment-vacuum cleaners, irons, washing machines, dishwashers, etc.
- Broken or faulty electrical outlets or switches
- Frayed or damaged cords — broken or damaged plug tops
- Moisture around electrical equipment (electricity and moisture do not go together)
- Exposed wires hanging out of walls
- Electrical appliances with uncovered connection block
- Electrical appliances getting unduly hot
- Broken light fittings



Things to ask the homeowner

- Is the house fitted with a safety switch? If not, consider having your own
- Are electrical checks carried out periodically on appliances, power leads and the safety switch?
- How electrical appliances operate
- Is there anything I should be particularly aware of?

Manual Tasks

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Things to ask the homeowner

- Where to store objects causing clutter/restricted room.
- Correction of work environment issues
- Location of appliances to be used
- Rubbish disposal location

Points to Remember

Carrying the load:

- Test the load before picking up. Ensure it's within your lifting capacity and if packaged, ensure the package is secure
- Plan the path you are to take. Ensure it's free of obstacles
- Change direction by turning your feet, not your back
- Your nose and your toes should always be pointing in the same direction. Any sudden twisting can result in back injury
- Rest if you are fatigued. Set the load down and rest for a few minutes

Picking up and setting down loads:

- Bend your knees to pick up and put down the load. Squat down and let your legs do the work. Keep your back straight/chin in. Remember not to twist your body and keep the load close to your body. Try not to lean out with the load when picking up and putting down
- Plan your release. Once the load is where you want it and on secure footing, release your grip.
- Never release your grip unless the load is secure



Chemicals/Hazardous Substances

- Be aware of emergency procedures in case of accidental use or spillage of substance
- Are containers clearly labelled and in their original containers — is there a safer product to use?
- Are substances stored appropriately and out of reach of children?
- Is appropriate personal protective equipment available?
- Do you experience any ill effects from particular substances?
- Ensure adequate ventilation is provided when using substances
- Be aware of precautions to take when using toxic chemicals for example oven cleaners and grease removers
- Follow manufacturer's instructions/specifications if there is a need to dilute chemicals
- Be aware of fumes from chemicals and do not inhale

Things to ask the homeowner

- Are they prepared to purchase safer products
- Have they mixed any chemicals — precautions to take, has it been properly labelled (risk statements and controls should be on mixed or decanted chemicals)
- Are they prepared to relocate storage point of chemicals to safer location with spill tray if necessary

Points to Remember

- Be sure to follow manufacturer's instructions
- Be sure to use personal protective equipment as required — safety glasses, gloves, respirator, apron
- Know what to do if feeling ill effects or contact is made with chemicals
- Provide as much ventilation as possible when using chemicals

PREVENTION IS THE KEY



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Most common injuries sustained annually are caused by manual tasks:

- Strains and sprains (legs, arms, trunk, back)
- (Lifting/carrying heavy loads, reaching/bending/twisting, repetitive movement, slipping/tripping and falling)

Things to remember so you don't become part of these statistics:

- The Risk Management Process: Identify, Assess, Control
- Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) if no other control is available (Gloves, safety glasses, respirator, plastic apron, appropriate footwear)
- Suitable enclosed, non-slip footwear is recommended
- Move trip hazards — don't try stepping over them
- Use mechanical aids to reduce over-exertion
- Use a ladder not a chair — be aware of falls
- Stay alert not fatigued — hydrate regularly, rest if necessary and try not to rush (this is often when accidents occur)
- Plan your work to become effective and efficient
- Remember you are the person responsible for your health, safety and wellbeing

Reporting Incidents

Reporting incidents is an important part of a good workplace health and safety system. These reports can often be used to flag circumstances not previously addressed and provide the opportunity to become more health and safety aware.

All incidents should be reported to the client and Clean & Personal and recorded including:

- Injuries sustained by clients or workers.
- Emergency situations, near-miss incidents where no injury has been sustained but requires positive preventative action.

Report concerns as soon as possible by phoning the office so that this can be documented. Your personal safety is important.