

Moving and Handling

Introduction

This guidance is designed to help keep you and the people you are working alongside safe whilst you are carrying out activities as part of your role with Independent Age. This guidance applies to both paid Independent Age staff and volunteers.

Independent Age have a duty of care under health and safety law where moving and handling is concerned to ensure the safety of our staff, volunteers and people we work alongside. This guidance covers activity within a person's home or within the community, it does not cover activity within an office or workspace.

We also want you to feel comfortable and confident if you need to take part in moving and handling. If at any time you are not sure or don't feel comfortable then please speak to your Independent Age contact or line manager.

What this guidance covers

This guidance:

1. Moving and Handling -assisting people
2. Risk assessment
3. Basic principles of Safe Manual Handling
4. Lifting equipment into vehicles
5. Providing Moving and Handling assistance
6. Wheelchairs and cars and kerbs

Moving and Handling Guidance as a volunteer for Independent Age

1. Moving and Handling – Assisting People

1. In your role you must not be involved in moving and handling people to help with personal tasks such as; bathing, toileting, dressing, hoisting, putting to bed, administering medication or getting out of bed. You must also not engage in lifting a person in any way.

2. You will be given specific guidance and training if you will be involved in moving and handling people to offer support such as: offering a steadying arm, pushing a wheelchair, lifting a walker into a car.

3. You will be given appropriate training if you will be asked to push people in wheelchairs.

For help and advice on all aspects of people moving and handling, contact your local team or line manager.

2. Risk Assessment

Everyone we work alongside will have had a risk assessment carried out by the local team before activity begins. This will give information on the person's level of independence and mobility. Details of this risk assessment will be shared with you by your local Independent Age Contact. If you become aware of a change in circumstance that may affect this risk assessment, please let your Independent Age contact know.

3. Basic Principles of Safe Manual Handling of Objects

1. Each situation is different and should be assessed according to its specific set of circumstances. We encourage you to take a common-sense approach if something not covered in your training arises.
2. Know your own capabilities and limitations. If necessary, get help. Please don't do anything you are concerned may harm you or the person you are with such as lifting something that's awkward, or heavier than expected. Remember you can always speak to your Independent Age contact for help.
3. Do make sure it is safe for you to go ahead. Think about the areas covered in your training. For example, check you have a clear area to work in, that there aren't any slip or trip hazards and that you have any equipment required.
4. If in any doubt DO NOT MOVE / HANDLE - seek assistance.
5. Inform your Independent Age contact if you have a health problem, injury, or if you are pregnant.
6. Report any problems to your Independent Age contact immediately.

4. Lifting Equipment into Vehicles (including wheelchairs)

You should assess the risks involved in the task before beginning, including your own capabilities. Only go ahead if you are sure you can do this safely and comfortably without injuring or straining yourself.

Remove obstacles from the environment as much as possible and prepare your vehicle (i.e. clear boot, remove parcel shelf etc.).

If lifting a wheelchair into a car, break the wheelchair down into its component parts: remove the cushion and footplates, take off wheels if possible. Fold the seat and back canvases to make a compact "package".

Adopt an upright posture, bend knees and grasp secure part of the wheelchair framework. Avoid stooping, twisting or over-reaching. Lift the chair into the vehicle, holding the load as close to the body as possible.

Do not attempt to carry out this task if you do not feel able to manage it safely.

5. Providing Moving and Handling Assistance

WALKING - ASSISTED

1. If the person is using walking aids these should be of an appropriate type/size and they should have been taught how to use them correctly.
2. If the person you are walking with needs a little support, then position yourself to the side of them and offer to place their palm in yours at elbow height, or if you prefer to place their palm on the top of your closed hand. This is much more stable than offering to link their arm with yours for support.
3. Alternatively place your hand in an upright position showing your palm, invite the person you are supporting to place their palm on your palm to create a palm to palm position.
4. There should be minimal weight placed on your hand
5. Use your hand as a guide and walk slowly with the person
6. Remember the person you're supporting should set the pace
7. Be aware of any dangers/hazards and give advance warning in a clear voice

SITTING

Giving verbal instructions to support someone from a seated position to standing: People should have already received advice from a professional if this is of concern, so do check if they have had instruction and to follow these if they have as they can differ depending on the individual's situation.

1. Ask the person to put their hands on the arms of their chair
2. Ask the person to lean forwards
3. Ask the person to move forward to the front of their chair using a side-side movement
4. Ask the person to put their feet flat on the floor in a comfortable position
5. Ask the person to face the direction that they are going
6. Ask the person to push up

Giving verbal instructions to support someone from a standing to a seated position

1. Ask the person to step back until they feel the chair on the back of their legs
2. Ask the person to lower their body down
3. Ask the person to feel for the arms of their chair
4. Ask the person to sit down gently

This procedure is not suitable for use with every person we work alongside and should only be used following risk assessment.

6. Wheelchairs and cars and kerbs

To put a wheelchair into a car boot: -

- Apply the brakes, take the footrests off, remove the armrests
- Fold the backrest
- Close the chair
- Pick the chair up by gripping the back and the front. Remember to use your knees to lift and keep your back straight. If it feels uncomfortable, please don't go ahead.
- Balance the chair on the edge of the boot (you may want to protect the car with an old blanket)
- Re-adjust the hold on the chair and place into the boot

To get a wheelchair out of the boot: -

- Reverse the process for getting the chair in the boot

Going down kerbs you should: -

- Inform the passenger of what you are about to do
- Take a firm grip of the push handles
- Place a foot on the tipping lever
- Push down on push handles and press foot down on tipping lever
- Ensure front castors are clear of the kerb
- Gently lower chair down the kerb whilst the chair is tilted on the back wheels
- Slowly lower the front castors onto the road so that the chair is in an upright position.

If you need more help

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with your Independent Age contact if you have any concerns or questions.