

Health And Safety Legislation And Procedures Applicable To Hotel Housekeeping Department

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Health and Safety in Hotel Housekeeping

A commitment to HSE regulations is essential in the hospitality industry. Since the 1970s, legislation regarding safety and health regulations has been legislated to ensure that management maintains adequate standards. The laws are necessary to ensure that accidents at the workplace are reduced, premises are run safely, and workers' limbs and backs are protected when performing essential job functions.

Occupational Risks Faced by Housekeeping Staff

Several studies have pointed towards the adverse conditions and risks housekeeping staff are exposed to, such as chemical exposure, ergonomic strain, low job control, poor pay or job insecurities alongside mental and physical health risks (Niklas Krause, 2005). Among service occupations, these hazards have led to high health disparities that led to musculoskeletal disorders, strain injuries, psychological distress and allergies (Susan Buchanan, 2010). Findings from research conducted in this regard show that housekeeping staff and attendants are at moderate to high exposure levels for risk factors in performing their tasks when using their back for movement, hands/wrists, shoulders/arms and neck (Rahman, 2017).

Employer Duties Under Health and Safety Law

According to the 'Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005', the law requires employers to identify hazards, assess risks, communicate controls and risks, and prepare written safety statements. The safety measures must be appropriate according to the real risks involved to control, eliminate or minimise injuries and risks (HSA, 2010). Legislative interventions are highly significant in addressing housekeeping needs. For example, regulating the workload of employees requires policies to be developed, and any health risks to agency workers must be remediated (Sanon, 2013). An understanding of risk factors, etiologies, prevention, and treatment of injuries is vital to reducing the costs of occupational injuries. Primary preventative methods seek to decrease or eliminate the risks through controlling hazards and recognising high-risk activities. Secondary prevention aims to detect injuries at earlier stages to limit their effects, whereas tertiary preventive measures include efforts

that seek to hasten recovery or decrease any disability (Merrill Landers, 2004).

Required Safety Procedures and Staff Training

Some HSE procedures that housekeeping staff are required to follow include receiving proper instructions and training that covers any dangers from sharp objects or biological hazards, such as syringes. They should be provided with appropriate PPE to wear during work. Proper equipment or precautions must be taken if storing or transporting chemicals, biological waste or sharp objects. Laundry should be moved with trolleys. Safe manual handling techniques must be taught and practised. When moving or lifting heavier furniture or objects, these handling techniques should be followed, and adequate assistance must be available. It is better to wheel items for transport instead of lifting. Therefore, wheels or castors should be fitted where possible. Rooms should be cleaned using safe working practices such as washing a bath's far side first to avoid leaning over slippery surfaces. Water should be provided at a safe temperature. The housekeeping staff must be trained to report and spot fire risks such as faulty wire detection equipment, wiring, open fire doors, or blocked emergencies (HSA, 2010). Combustible materials should only be kept and used in amounts necessary to perform the task. Flammable materials should be kept in locations designated and marked, away from sources of ignition. It should be ensured that Fire doors and passageways are not obstructed. High-efficiency vacuum cleaning systems and wet methods should be used to control dust (Totto, 2015). Any leaks or spills should be cleaned and reported to prevent trips, slips and falls. Damaged or worn flooring must be replaced. Participation in safety training programs should be ensured so that housekeepers are regularly instructed on safe work practices, which include bathroom, handling of linen carts, bed-making and room cleaning practices to control physical hazards. Psychosocial hazards can be minimised through intervention and prevention strategies that can help reduce work-related stress for housekeepers, and unions can be established to negotiate their concerns with management (Yu-Chin Hsieh, 2013).

Housekeeping Programs and Hazard Prevention

A proper housekeeping program in a hotel makes sure that the movement and storage of materials are kept orderly from the point of entry to exit. A flow plan helps to ensure that minimal handling takes place. It also incorporates a good worker training program (CCOHS, 2018). These regulations and procedures serve a practical purpose. They ensure that duty holders and managers are kept aware of health and safety issues and allow them to maintain the right balance in managing appropriate control measures to address HSE problems according to their size.

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