



# HOTEL/MOTEL OPERATORS' RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR HOUSEKEEPERS' TASKS

Date checklist completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date checklist to be reviewed (annually or when there is a change or addition to housekeepers' tasks): \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of person(s) who completed checklist: Initial: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business name: \_\_\_\_\_

This tool covers the most common hazards for housekeepers in typical hotels and motels. It is not designed to cover all risks for housekeepers, but to help you get started on the process of identifying the hazards involved in tasks at your hotel or motel. You should involve your employees in filling out this tool.

An important part of managing your hotel or motel is to ensure the health and safety of all your employees. This tool will help you decide how likely it is that an incident will happen and how severe the impact of the incident could be. This is known as a 'risk assessment'. In order to meet their legal obligations under occupational health and safety, employers must perform a risk assessment for all tasks that have the potential to harm the health or safety of a person. This must be done in consultation with employees who are involved in the work being assessed.

To make sure you fulfill your obligation for a safe workplace, you need to become aware of what can cause harm and then take action to make sure no one is at risk at your workplace. You should ask yourself the following questions as part of the risk assessment process:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Do you talk to your employees about safety issues?  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you encourage your employees to report safety problems?  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you have an OHS policy that clearly specifies how health and safety will be managed at your workplace?                 | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you developed safe work procedures so employees, such as housekeepers, know how to do their job properly and safely? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you provide training for employees, particularly where changes in work procedures occur?                               | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you supervise employees to make sure the safe work procedures are effective and are followed?                          | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you regularly monitor and review these measures to make sure they are still effective and being followed?              | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |

In the hospitality industry, housekeepers perform some tasks that have a high risk of causing injury. The most common ones are:

- bed making/changing
- cleaning bathrooms.

Following is a step-by-step process of how to complete a risk assessment. On the next pages are two examples of completed risk assessments for the two common tasks performed by housekeepers, bed making/changing and cleaning bathrooms. The blank risk assessment form can be used for *any* task that has been identified as a hazard at your workplace.

**WorkCover. Watching out for you.**

### **How to complete a risk assessment**

You should involve your employees when carrying out any risk assessment.

**Step 1:** Identify hazards in the workplace by: reviewing past injury/illness and incident investigation records; talking to employees; doing a walk round inspection of the workplace; and analysing the way work tasks are performed - consider lifting, bending and repetitive tasks, room layout, and any slip and trip hazards.

**Step 2:** Review any guidance material, minimum standards or legislation governing the particular hazard (see Resources). Where such information exists, it should be followed immediately. If no information exists, then do a risk assessment of the particular hazard.

**Step 3:** Consider who might be injured and how. Are there existing measures already in place? Are they sufficient? You should prioritise the risks to determine which ones you should address first. To help you do this, you can use the Risk Priority Chart on the last page.

**Step 4:** Take steps/measures to eliminate or reduce the risk. This is also known as 'risk control'.

**Step 5:** Keep records of the risk assessments you have completed. Make sure that the risk controls are well documented and employees are informed about the controls and safe work procedures that have been put into place.

### **Resources**

For further information phone the WorkCover Assistance Service on **13 10 50** or Standards Australia on 1300 654 646, or visit the WorkCover website at [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au)

Or read the following material, available from WorkCover NSW:

NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000  
NSW Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001  
OHS Consultation Code of Practice 2001, WorkCover NSW  
Risk Management at Work Guide 2001, WorkCover NSW  
Risk Assessment Code of Practice 2001, WorkCover NSW

### **Disclaimer**

This publication contains information regarding occupational health, safety, injury management or workers compensation. It includes some of your obligations under the various workers compensation and occupational health and safety legislation that WorkCover NSW administers. To ensure you comply with your legal obligations you must refer to the appropriate Acts.

This publication may refer to WorkCover NSW administered legislation that has been amended or repealed. When reading this publication you should always refer to the latest laws. Information on the latest laws can be checked at [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au) or contact (02) 9238 0950 or 1800 463 955 (NSW country only).

© WorkCover NSW

# RISK ASSESSMENT RECORD

TASK/ACTIVITY: Bed making/changing		Date assessment conducted and by whom	Date assessment reviewed and by whom
Hazards identified	Level of risk	Risk controls to be put in place	Person responsible for putting risk control in place and by when
<p><b>Manual handling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, moving mattresses</li> <li>- pulling pillow cases off pillows</li> <li>- carrying, folding, tucking linen</li> <li>- pushing equipment trolley</li> <li>- overloading equipment trolley (eg with clean or dirty linen)</li> <li>- lack of time to work safely</li> <li>- poorly designed equipment trolley</li> <li>- frequent bending/twisting postures</li> </ul>	<p><b>High</b></p> <p>probability of muscular or joint stress or strain from over exertion or repetitive nature of tasks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use other forms of bed covering/linen to reduce manual handling requirements</li> <li>• Limit the number of tasks per day</li> <li>• Develop safe work procedure for this task</li> <li>• Train staff on how to recognise and control manual handling risks; safe manual handling methods; safe use of mechanical aids (such as trolleys)</li> <li>• Improve the way work is planned</li> <li>• Put in place an equipment maintenance program</li> <li>• Improve work environment by designing safer rooms</li> <li>• Improve work practices-eg, kneeling reduces strain on back, arms and shoulders; reduce weight of loads to avoid injury to ankles - 'don't twist, move your feet'.</li> </ul>	<p>Date put in place</p>
<p><b>Slips, trips or falls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- obstructions caused by linen or other furniture/objects in work area</li> <li>- insufficient lighting</li> <li>- poor access</li> </ul>	<p><b>Medium</b></p> <p>Probability of muscular or joint stress or strain from over exertion or fall</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use other forms of bed covering/linen to eliminate/reduce slip or trip hazard</li> <li>• Make sure work area is clear of obstructions</li> <li>• Provide adequate lighting</li> <li>• Improve access to work area</li> </ul>	<p>Date put in place</p>

# RISK ASSESSMENT RECORD

TASK/ACTIVITY: Cleaning bathrooms		Date assessment conducted and by whom		
Hazards identified	Level of risk	Date assessment reviewed and by whom		
Hazards identified	Level of risk	Risk controls to be put in place		
Hazards identified	Level of risk	Person responsible for putting risk control in place and by when		
Hazards identified	Level of risk	Date put in place		
<p><b>Slips, trips or falls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- wet/slippery floors</li> <li>- restricted or cramped work area</li> <li>- uneven floors or steps</li> <li>- insufficient lighting</li> <li>- worn rubber seals on shower screens (may allow leakage of water onto bathroom floor)</li> </ul>	<p><b>High</b></p> <p>probability of muscular or joint stress or strain from over exertion or fall</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure surfaces are dry and slip resistant</li> <li>• Make sure work area is clear of obstructions</li> <li>• Improve access to work area</li> <li>• Provide appropriate shoes with good grip</li> <li>• Provide adequate lighting</li> <li>• Make sure rubber seals on shower screens are maintained</li> <li>• Develop and train staff in safe work procedures for cleaning bathrooms</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Manual handling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- frequent bending and twisting postures</li> <li>- repetitive movements associated with dusting, mopping and wiping areas</li> <li>- reaching into bath/shower with fixed screens that hinder full access to all cleaning areas</li> </ul>	<p><b>High</b></p> <p>probability of muscular or joint stress or strain from over exertion or repetitive nature of tasks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit number of bathrooms cleaned per day or per week</li> <li>• Modify task requirements to reduce bending/ twisting/ reaching postures and repetitive movements</li> <li>• Train staff on how to recognise and control manual handling risks, safe manual handling methods; safe use of mechanical aids (trolleys)</li> <li>• Improve the way work is planned</li> <li>• Put in place an equipment maintenance program</li> <li>• Improve work environment by designing safer rooms</li> <li>• Improve work practices - eg. kneeling reduces strain on back, arms and shoulders; reduce weight of loads to avoid injury to ankles: 'don't twist, move your feet'.</li> </ul>		

# RISK ASSESSMENT RECORD

TASK/ACTIVITY:		Date assessment conducted and by whom	Date assessment reviewed and by whom
Hazards identified	Level of risk	Risk controls to be put in place	Person responsible for putting risk control in place and by when
			Date put in place

# RISK PRIORITY CHART

This chart can assist you with prioritising the risks to determine which ones you should address first.

First, determine how severely someone could be hurt by selecting one of the following consequences for each hazard identified under the 'Severity' column.

Second, determine how likely it is that an incident will occur in relation to the hazard identified under the 'Likelihood' column.

Now match the 'Severity' and 'Likelihood' of exposure on the Risk Priority Chart below to rank risks in terms of their priority.

Severity	Likelihood			
	Very Likely <i>could happen anytime</i>	Likely <i>could happen occasionally</i>	Unlikely <i>could happen, but only rarely</i>	Very Unlikely <i>could happen, but probably never will</i>
<b>X</b> kill or cause permanent disability or ill health	1	1	2	3
<b>!!!</b> long-term illness or serious injury	1	2	3	4
<b>!!</b> medical attention and several days off work	2	3	4	5
<b>!</b> first aid treatment needed and no time off work	3	4	5	6

The numbers 1-6 in the Risk Priority Chart indicate the level of risk and how important it is to do something about each risk.

**1-2 = HIGH**  
Do something about these risks immediately

**3-4 = MEDIUM**  
Do something about these risks as soon as possible

**5-6 = LOW**  
These risks may not need your immediate attention.