

HAND ARM VIBRATION POLICY



***99 Titchfield Street
Kilmarnock KA1 1QY***

***Telephone (01563) 524014
Fax (01563) 572395***

E-Mail: adminoffice@galleoncentre.com

Web: www.galleoncentre.com

Scottish Charity Number: SC 00 8314

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HAND ARM VIBRATION POLICY

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1. Introduction

The Kilmarnock Leisure Centre Trust (KLCT) has responsibility for compliance with the Health and Safety at work etc. Act 1974 and all associated legislation to ensure the safety of all visitors to the Galleon Centre including all employees, contractors and customers.

Failure to follow appropriate guidelines and adopt adequate safe working practices, in accordance with the Health and Safety at work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 is likely to lead to prosecution. Associated Legislation is the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 (the Vibration Regulations)

This policy has been developed to identify when exposure to hand-arm vibration may cause harm and what steps can be taken to protect employees from the risk.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 The Policy will apply, without exception, to the Centre as a whole and all individuals employed or contracted by KLCT.
- 2.2 Responsibility for the implementation of this Policy will rest with the General Manager.
- 2.3 This Policy will follow the guidance and recommendations in the publication issued by the Health and Safety Executive – Hand-arm vibration at work; A brief guide.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the Galleon Centre at Titchfield Street, Kilmarnock, KA1 1QY and takes into account all employees, contractors and self-employed people.

4. Definition

Hand-arm vibration is vibration transmitted into workers' hands and arms. This can come from use of hand held power tools such as grinders, chainsaws, drills, sanders polishers etc.

Regular and frequent exposure to hand-arm vibration can lead to two forms of permanent ill health known as;

- Hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS)
- Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS)

Symptoms and effects of HAVS include

- Tingling and numbness in the fingers which can result in an inability to do fine work (for example, assembling small

components) or everyday tasks (for example, fastening buttons)

- Loss of strength in the hands which might affect the ability to do the work safely.
- The fingers going white (blanching) and becoming red and painful on recovery, reducing the ability to work in cold or damp conditions eg outdoors or in an Ice Rink.

Symptoms and effects of CTS can also occur and include;

- Tingling, numbness, pain and weakness in the hand which can interfere with work and everyday tasks and might affect the ability to do work safely.

Symptoms of both may come and go, but with continued exposure to vibration they may become prolonged or permanent and cause pain, distress and sleep disturbance. This can happen after only a few months of exposure, but in most cases it will happen over a few years.

5. Compliance

In order to comply with current legislation KLCT will ensure that;

- Risks from vibration are controlled
- Information, instruction and training on the risk, and the action being taken to control the risk, will be provided.
- Suitable health surveillance will be provided.

The Vibration Regulations include an Exposure Action Value (EAV) and an Exposure Limit Value (ELV) based on a combination of the vibration at the grip point(s) on the equipment and the time spent gripping it.

KLCT will ensure that the risks from vibration are reduced to the lowest level practicable (if around the EAV) and no employee will be subjected to an ELV.

Compliance with the Vibratory Regulations 2005 will prevent disability from HAVS and CTS.

Certain cases of HAVS and all cases of vibration related CTS must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR).

Controlling Risks from HAVS

Exposure to vibration can be reduced by reducing both the vibration transmitted to the hand and the time spent holding the vibrating equipment.

The type of equipment, duration of use and reported signs and symptoms of HAVS or CTS are all good guides to the likelihood of vibration risk. Once the

likelihood of risk has been established the employees at risk should then be looked at with a view to how the risks can be reduced.

This assessment of risk will include;

- A brief survey of the workplace
- Ascertaining who is exposed to hand-arm vibration
- Ascertaining what is causing that exposure
- Estimating the time spent holding the equipment while it is vibrating. Begin to set priorities.
- Asking users if they feel tingling or numbness during or after their exposure to vibration.
- Always maintaining equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Considering vibration emissions when purchasing or hiring equipment.
- Planning work schedules to minimise vibration exposures and making sure exposures are well below the ELV.
- Helping employees maintain good circulation, for example, by providing appropriate clothing to keep them warm and dry.
- Always looking for ways of working that will avoid or reduce the need to hold vibrating equipment.

6. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier if research, evidence or a change in practice or legislation requires a review to be undertaken.