

TITLE: Maximum Acceptable Weight of Lift		NUMBER: OPS 2.4
	CENTRAL LYON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT <i>Policy</i>	
	ISSUE DATE: September 10, 2026	REVISION DATE:
	REVIEWED DATE:	EXPIRATION DATE:

2.4.1 SCOPE

The scope of this Standard Operating Procedure applies to all Central Lyon County Fire Protection District (Central Lyon Fire) employees, including volunteer members.

2.4.2 PURPOSE

This policy establishes Maximum Acceptable Weight of Lift (MAWL) standards and safe manual handling practices for all employees to reduce musculoskeletal injury, promote health and safety, improve operational readiness, and ensure safe, consistent, effective lifting. Emergency services and support positions require heavy or awkward-load activities; identified training, equipment, and procedures are necessary to reduce injury risk while maintaining response capability.

2.4.3 POLICY

2.4.3.1 General Policy

- A. No employee shall lift, carry, lower, push, pull, transfer, or reposition a load beyond individual capability or this policy's parameters without additional personnel, mechanical assistance, or another approved risk-reduction method. MAWL is a risk-based standard, not one absolute threshold; consider weight, posture, frequency, distance, environment, awkward position, patient condition, fatigue, and available assistance.
 1. This policy does not prohibit immediate life-protective action beyond normal lifting guidance. Personnel shall use available assistance, equipment, communication, and risk-reduction measures whenever possible.
- B. The following standards shall guide manual lifting and patient handling decisions. These standards do not authorize unsafe lifting and do not replace individual judgment, supervisor direction, mechanical assistance, or the need to request additional personnel when conditions warrant.
- C.

Condition	Guide	Required Control
Occasional compact object	Up to 100 lb	Only when load, footing, posture, access, and employee capability permit safe control.
Load above 100 lb	More than 100 lb	Use added personnel, mechanical assistance, or another risk-reduction method.
Patient handling	Any elevated-risk lift/transfer	Use two or more personnel, powered cot, stair chair, transfer aids, or added resources whenever practical.
Bariatric/high risk	Above 250 lb; stairs, confined area, extended carry, or unstable footing	Automatically consider added personnel, specialized equipment, or an alternative movement plan.
Repetitive lifting	Any weight	Reduce individual exposure, rotate personnel when practical, and use team or mechanical assistance.
Emergency exception	Immediate life threat	May exceed normal guidance to protect life while using available risk-reduction measures.

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2.4.3.2 Occasional 100-Pound Lift

- A. Personnel may occasionally lift up to 100 pounds only when the load is compact, stable, controllable, and, when practical, positioned knee-to-waist; neutral posture and proper mechanics are maintained; footing and path are clear; twisting, excessive reaching, and prolonged static holding are avoided; and the employee determines the lift is safe considering fatigue, injury status, and conditions.

2.4.3.3 Risk Assessment.

- A. Before lifting or transferring, assess urgency; actual or estimated weight; stability, balance, and center of gravity; patient condition, cooperation, and medical urgency; personnel/equipment availability; movement distance and direction; stairs, slopes, ditches, beds, floors, or uneven ground; heat, cold, ice, mud, smoke, blood, traffic, lighting, or confined space; employee fatigue, capability, injury status, and operation duration; and team communication, including a lift leader when needed. If you cannot control the risk, obtain resources or revise the plan before proceeding unless an immediate life safety exception applies.

2.4.3.4 Safe Movement.

- A. Employees shall use proper mechanics, lift with the legs and neutral spine, keep loads close, avoid twisting/jerking/sudden or one-handed movement under load, communicate and follow team commands, stop and reset unsafe lifts, and request help before exceeding capability or creating unreasonable risk. Employees shall not lift merely to avoid delay or asking for help, exceed physical capability, continue after pain, instability, grip loss, or unsafe footing, or use equipment beyond its rating or their training

2.4.3.5 Mechanical Equipment

- A. The District shall reasonably provide and maintain injury-reducing equipment, and personnel shall use available aids when practical and appropriate, including powered cots/loading systems; stair or tracked chairs; transfer devices, slide sheets, scoop/soft stretchers; wheeled station/operational carts; rescue systems, rigging, winches, apparatus-mounted equipment; and other manufacturer-approved devices.

2.4.3.6 Training

- A. Covered personnel shall receive documented, assignment-appropriate training that may include safe lifting, ergonomics, manual handling, patient movement/transfers, equipment-specific use, team communication/command, fatigue and overexertion recognition, early musculoskeletal-injury signs, and refresher training determined by the Training Division or operational need.

2.4.3.7 Reporting

- A. Promptly report lifting or suspected overexertion injuries, lifting-related musculoskeletal discomfort, near misses, and equipment failures. Early reporting supports medical evaluation, rehabilitation, corrective action, and recurrence prevention

2.4.3.8 Medical Restrictions / Accommodation

- A. Employees shall follow provider restrictions and return-to-work requirements. Qualified individuals who request accommodation may receive reasonable accommodation under applicable law and District policy.

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2.4.3.9 Supervisor Responsibilities

- A. Promote and enforce safe practices; ensure appropriate equipment and training; support assistance requests without penalty or stigma; evaluate emergency and non-emergency hazards; review injuries, near misses, and equipment concerns for corrective action; and reinforce injury prevention, readiness, and disciplined execution

1.1.4 OTHER RELATED REFERENCES

- Central Lyon County Fire Protection District Job Descriptions
- Applicable District safety policies, return-to-work procedures, workers' compensation procedures, and training standards.

1.1.5 APPROVALS

District Chief	Date
Fire Board	Date