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| **Ergonomics Program – Office Environment** | **Revision Date**: 12-2019 |
| **Purpose**: To aid in reducing discomfort and injuries that are a result of ergonomic risk factors in the work environment. | **Topics Covered**   * Responsibilities of Staff * Definitions * Program Elements * Sample Evaluation Reports |

An effective ergonomics program can aid in reducing the discomfort and injuries that are a result of ergonomic risk factors in the work environment. [ORGANIZATION NAME] is committed to maintaining a safe and comfortable workplace for our employees. Our [TITLE OF RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYEE is responsible for implementing this program at all company sites in addressing the issue of musculoskeletal disorders.

Under this program, the safety manager will complete an ergonomics hazard assessment to evaluate jobs or processes that have exposure to repetitve motion injuries (RMIs) through a worksite evaluation, claims history data, and observation.

This office ergonomics program will address the following areas:

* **Responsibilities**
* **Definitions**
* **Program Elements**
  + Worksite Evaluations
  + Evaluations request by a Physician
  + Ergonomic Evaluation Report
  + Workstation Ergonomic Handbook
  + Controls to Correct Exposures
  + Training
  + Recordkeeping
* **Attachment A** (Ergonomic Evaluation Report)
* **Attachment B** (Workstation Handbook)

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| Responsibilities |

***Risk Management***

Risk Management, lead by [NAME], will assist each department in evaluating RMI exposures and conducting assessments for physician requested evaluations. Risk Management will also ensure ergonomic training is available for all employees, and provide monitoring of the effectiveness of this program.

***Department Leadership***

Each department leader will be responsible to ensure that the requirements of this program are implemented throughout their department. Including:

* Allocating budgeting and expeditures for resources necessary to implement and administer the program.
* Provide corrective action to modify or replace equipment, machinery, and tools.

***Supervisors***

All supervisors will assist in the implementation of the ergonomics program. This includes the following areas:

* Complete ergonomics training through Risk Management to recognize and minimize ergonomic risk factors.
* Conduct or participate in ergonomic worksite evaluations.
* Assist in the implementation of the control/corrective measures.
* Investigate all injuries that may lead to RMIs and ensure employees use the equipment and tools appropriately.
* Ensure employees understand the protocol for reporting perceived ergonomic injuries.

***Employees***

All employees should follow the written ergonomics handbook procedures, use only approved equipment to perform your job duties, attend ergonomics training to apply the skills/knowledge to your job, and promptly report any discomfort or ergonomic hazards to your supervisor.

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| Definitions |

*Repetitive Motion Injury (RMI)* – result of excessive and forceful use that affects muscles, tendons, nerves and/or joints.

*Ergononmic Risk Factors* – Aspects of a job that impose stress on the employee which can contribute to a musculoskeletal disorder (MSD).

*Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD)* – Disorders of the muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, cartilage or spinal discs that develop gradually over time. Severity ranges from mild and intermittent to debilitating and chronic.

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| Program Elements |

***Worksite Evaluations***

Workstation evaluations are performed when any of the following conditions occur:

1. When new workstations are set up which have not been previously evaluated for potential hazards.
2. If after completing ergonomics training, the employee has attempted to correct deficiences with their workstation, without success.
3. When there is more than one RMI identified and diagnosed by a licensed physician, in which the RMIs were predominantly caused (50% or more) by a repetitive job, process or operation within the last 12 months.
4. A licensed physician has recommended a workstation/worksite evaluation.

***Evaluations Requested by a Physician***

Employees who receive a written request from their physician to have an ergonomic evaluation completed, the Risk Manager shall be promptly notified. Risk management will conduct an evaluation for the employee or choose to have a qualified third party consultant conduct a comprehensive evaluation, including provide a written report.

***Ergonomic Evaluation Report***

The Ergonomic Evaluation Report (Attachment A) assists the evaluator in obtaining information regarding the tasks, equipment, duration of work, schedule, and exposures.

All reports shall be submitted to the Risk Manager within 15 days of conducting the evaluation. Reports may also be distributed to the claims department (or the third party administrator), the employee’s physician, and the employee’s supervisor***.***

***Workstation Ergonomic Handbook***

The Handbook is a tool developed to educate employees and supervisors about the dangers associated with RMIs, correct posture, work habits, adjustments to equipment, and placement of work material. Each employee will receive a copy. Material provided in this resouce will be covered in the employee and supervisor training sessions.

***Controls to Correct Exposures***

It is [ORGANIZATION NAME]’s goal to correct identified ergonomic exposures that may lead to injury, in a timely manner. The following engineering and administrative controls will be evaluated:

1. Workstation redesign
2. Adjustable fixtures
3. Ergonomically designed tools
4. Additional training
5. Job rotation
6. Work pacing
7. Alternative work breaks

The department will also consider other reasonable, cost effective controls.

***Training***

All employees, including managers/supervisors, will be provided with training that includes the following key elements:

* [ORGANIZATION NAME]’s Ergonomics Program
* Risk factors, symptoms and consequences of injuries that are caused by RMIs.
* Posture guidelines to avoid injury
* Best work practices (breaks, exercises, alternate tasks) to minimize RMIs
* How to properly adjust workstation equipment (if applicable)

Importance and process of reporting symptoms to your supervisor early

Training is administered as follows:

* New employees
* Employees re-assigned to a different workstation for which training has not been previously received
* All employees, every 3 years

***Recordkeeping***

Each department leader shall keep copies of ergonomic evaluation reports for a minimum of 3 years. Risk Management will maintain copies of all evaluation reports for at least 3 years. Ergonomic training records will be kept on file by risk management.

ATTACHMENT A

**Ergonomic Evaluation Report – All Other**

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| **Evaluator:** |  | | **Department:** |  | | **Date:** |  |
|  | | | | | |  | |
| **Job/Title:** |  | | |  |  | | |
| **Task #1:** |  | | | **Equipment Used:** |  | | |
| **Duration:** |  | | | **Schedule:** |  | | |
| **Contributing Factors** | | **Reasons for CF** | | **Comments** | **Ergonomic Improvements** | | |
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| **Evaluator:** |  | | **Department:** |  | | **Date:** |  |
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| **Job/Title:** |  | | |  |  | | |
| **Task #2:** |  | | | **Equipment Used:** |  | | |
| **Duration:** |  | | | **Schedule:** |  | | |
| **Contributing Factors** | | **Reasons for CF** | | **Comments** | **Ergonomic Improvements** | | |
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**Contributing Factors**: Awkward posture (e.g. twisting, extending arms away from body, lifting above shoulder height), forceful exertion, repetitive motion, pinch points, static posture

**Ergonomic Evaluation Report – Office Workstation**

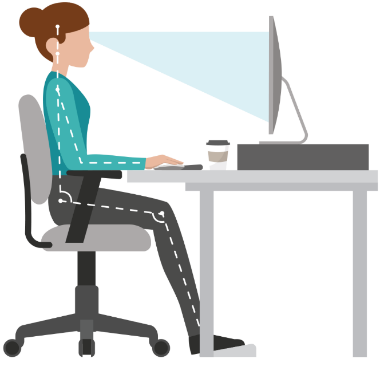
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| **Evaluator:** | |  | | | **Department:** | | |  | | **Date:** | |  |
| **Job/Title:** | |  | | | **Employee Name:** | | |  | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **REVIEW WITH EMPLOYEE** | | | | | | **YES** | **NO** | | **CORRECTIVE ACTION TO TAKE (If response is No):** | | | |
| **CHAIR** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chair’s backrest supports inward curve of lower back | | | | | |  |  | | Adjust backrest height/tilt to improve comfort | | | |
| Feet are flat or supported by footrest | | | | | |  |  | | Adjust chair height or provide footrest | | | |
| Thighs are parallel with the floor | | | | | |  |  | | Adjust chair height and/or seat pan (level) | | | |
| Minimum 1 inch between edge of seat and back of knees | | | | | |  |  | | Adjust/slide seat pan depth forward or back. | | | |
| Armrests are at or below elbow height (shoulders relaxed) | | | | | |  |  | | Adjust armrests up/down | | | |
| **WORK SURFACE** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Shoulders relaxed, elbows bent at 90 angle while typing | | | | | |  |  | |  | | | |
| Wrists should be “flat” (no bending up or down) | | | | | |  |  | | Adjust chair height and/or provide keyboard wrist rest | | | |
| Keyboard is at same height as elbows | | | | | |  |  | | Adjust chair height (or keyboard tray, if applicable) | | | |
| **KEYBOARD/MOUSE PLACEMENT** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Keyboard: upper arms kept close to torso | | | | | |  |  | | Move keyboard closer to employee | | | |
| Mouse: immediately next to keyboard | | | | | |  |  | | Move mouse next to keyboard | | | |
| Wrists not making contact with hard surface (i.e. desk) | | | | | |  |  | | Provide mouse wrist rest (gel, max. ¾” in height) | | | |
| **MONITORS** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Top of monitor(s) positioned 2 inches above eye level | | | | | |  |  | | Raise or lower monitor height to improve comfort | | | |
| Dual monitors (same size), positioned in inverted shallow V | | | | | |  |  | | * Reposition/center monitors * If employee has “dominant” monitor (used >60% of the time), place dominant monitor 3-4” over center | | | |
| **PHONE** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Phone is placed within easy reach | | | | | |  |  | | Move/relocate so that no reaching/twisting is needed | | | |
| Headset or speakerphone is used for long conversations | | | | | |  |  | | Provide headset or phone with speakerphone | | | |
| Phone is not held between neck and shoulder | | | | | |  |  | | Provide headset | | | |
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| **Recommendations:** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Footrest | |  | Wrist Rest –  Keyboard  Mouse | |  | Monitor Riser (adj. height) | | | |  | |

ATTACHMENT B

**Simple Ergonomic Strategies for Desk Jobs**

Sitting at a computer has become a daily activity for most of us, whether we do it for work or pleasure. Not surprisingly, computer-related injuries are more common than ever. If you are going to sit in one position for hours at a time, make sure you are doing it right! Use good workstation strategies to help reduce your risk of injury:

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| 1. **Chair** |

* Adjust the chair’s back to support the inward curve of your lower back.
* Adjust your seat height so your thighs are parallel with the floor.
* Make sure there is at least 1 inch between the edge of the seat and the back of your knees.
* Adjust your armrests so that your arms sit comfortably at your sides with your shoulders relaxed.

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| 1. **Feet and legs** |

* Sit with your feet flat on the floor.
* Use a footrest if you elevate your chair.
* Avoid crossing your legs.

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| 1. **Elbows** |

* With shoulders relaxed, bend your elbows to comfortably reach the keyboard. Your elbows should naturally bend to form a 90° angle.

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| 1. **Keyboard position** |

* Your keyboard should be at the same height as your elbows. (May need to adjust chair height.)
* Make sure your keyboard is close enough that you do not need to reach out to touch the keys.

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| 1. **Mouse** |

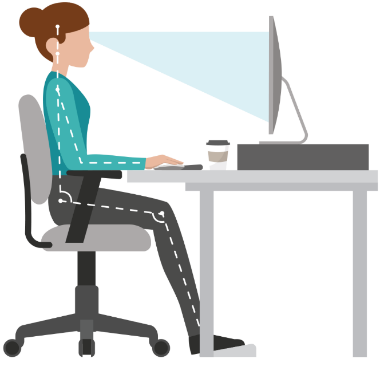


* Place your mouse immediately next to the computer keyboard, close to the front of the desk.

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| 1. **Wrist position** |

* Make sure that your wrists are straight and parallel to the floor.
* Avoid flexing your wrists upward or bending them downwards.
* Avoid rotating wrists inward and outward during keystroke entry and mouse use.

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| 1. **Monitors** |

* Top of monitor(s) positioned 2-3 inches above eye level.
* Dual monitors (same size), position in inverted shallow “V” to reduce neck rotation.

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| 1. **Phone** |

* Put your phone within easy reach.
* Use a headset or speaker phone for long conversations.
* Avoid bending your neck between your shoulder and ear while talking and multitasking.

This Tribal First Risk Control Consulting fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice. For more information on this topic, please contact Tribal First Risk Control Consulting at (888) 737-4752 or riskcontrol@tribalfirst.com.