



Policy Name: Ergonomics and Workplace MSDs Policy	Policy No: S600-06
Committee approval date:	-
Council approval date:	May 4, 2015
Revision date(s):	-
Department/Division:	Health and Safety

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to mitigate the risk of employee injury when lifting, carrying, or moving materials, articles, or things, and promote the regular use of ergonomic layout and usage techniques in the workspace.

2. Policy Statement

Employers/supervisors shall analyze job tasks and physical demands, shall provide information to employees on proper lifting techniques, exercise conditioning, back care, and injury prevention through tailgate or safety meetings.

Where the weight, size, shape, or other characteristics of the load or the nature of the lift may endanger a worker, the load shall be moved by more than one employee, or by assistive devices if possible (e.g. hoist).

Employer/supervisor/JHSC shall investigate reported incidents of repetitive strain, static loading or awkward postures, overhead work, vibration, etc. and shall intervene to reduce ergonomic hazards.

3. Definitions

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs): injuries caused to the muscles, nerves, tendons and joints which develop slowly over time from repetitive tasks that put stress and tension on the body because of a lack of rest time for muscles and tissues to heal properly.

Ergonomics: the science concerned with the design of equipment and work processes to achieve the highest possible levels of safety, efficiency and productivity.



4. General Provisions

Employer Responsibilities:

- Ensure all employees are given information and training on signs, symptoms, and preventative measures;
- Ensure all supervisors and employees are aware of the importance of, and process for, early reporting of signs and symptoms of MSDs.
- Ensure proper ergonomic layout and usage techniques are enforced and in effect in the workplace;
- Work with the JHSC to ensure policies and procedures are put in place to take every reasonable precaution to protect all employees from MSD injuries;
- With the JHSC, assess the workplace and workspaces to prevent any potential MSD hazards;
- Ensure proper ergonomic layout and design of computer desk stations to avoid any potential for MSD injury;
- Ensure all employees are trained and familiar with hazard identification, proper ergonomics to accommodate any such hazards, and proper lifting techniques;
- Ensure that employees are aware that assistive devices are available for their use whenever necessary/required;
- Ensure all employees are trained and familiar with proper lifting techniques and are aware that assistive devices are available for their use whenever necessary/required

Supervisor Responsibilities:

- Ensure that a worker optimally utilizes the proper ergonomic layout and desk design as set in place by the employer to avoid any potential for MSD injury;
- Ensure that a worker uses the equipment and techniques set in place to reduce repetitive motion and/or prevent any incidence of MSD injury;
- Ensure that a worker is trained in hazard recognition and subsequently works in a manner that demonstrates understanding of proper body movements and placement in relation to such hazards;
- Actively seek, identify and advise a worker of the existence of any potential or actual danger;
- Provide workers with written instructions of appropriate operating procedures to be taken for the protection of a worker from MSD injuries, including but not limited to the following: a) the use of equipment or tools; b) the procedure for any given task; and c) the reporting of early signs and symptoms of MSDs;
- Take every precaution reasonable for the given circumstances for the protection of a worker.



Employee Responsibilities:

- Educate themselves on the signs, symptoms, and effects of MSD's as well as the benefits to having proper ergonomic layout and usage techniques in effect in a workplace;
- Stay up to date and abide by all policies and procedures put in place by the employer and the Joint Health and Safety Committee in order to minimize or prevent work-related musculoskeletal injuries from occurring;
- Report/address any potential risks to supervisor/employer and/or a member of the JHSC;
- Take all preventative measures and ensure all co-workers do the same;
- Inform your immediate supervisor and/or a member of your JHSC of any work related discomfort or injuries and seek medical attention immediately to minimize the change of severe or permanent disability;
- Suggest potential changes/solutions to workplace MSD hazards that are apparent in the workplace;
- Actively participate in training to gain the ability to assess your workspace, and recognize any potential MSD hazards.

5. Attachments

None.