

Occupational Safety and Health Administration is amending Part 1910 of title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations as follows:

§1910.90 Ergonomics Program Standard

The purpose of this standard is to reduce the number and severity of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) caused by exposure to risk factors in the workplace. This standard does not address injuries caused by slips, trips, falls, vehicle accidents, or similar accidents. Employers must:

1. Provide each current and each new employee basic information about:
 - a. Common musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and their signs and symptoms.
 - b. The importance of reporting MSDs and their signs and symptoms early and the consequences of failing to report them early.
 - c. How to report MSDs and their signs and symptoms in the workplace.
 - d. The kinds of risk factors, jobs and work activities associated with MSD hazards; and
 - e. A short description of the requirements of OSHA's ergonomics program standard
2. Make available to the employee a summary of the requirements of this standard.
3. Provide the information in written form or, if all employees have access, in electronic form.
4. Provide the information to new employees within 14 days of hiring.
5. Post the information in a conspicuous place in the workplace (e.g., employee bulletin board or, if all employees have access, electronic posting).

Ergonomics is the science of fitting jobs to the people who work in them. The goal of an ergonomics program is to reduce work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) developed by workers when a major part of their jobs involve reaching, bending over, lifting heavy objects, using continuous force, working with vibrating equipment and doing repetitive motions. Workers suffering from MSDs may experience less strength for gripping, less range of motion, loss of muscle function and inability to do everyday tasks. Common symptoms include:

Painful joints

Pain in wrists, shoulders, forearms, knees

Pain, tingling or numbness in hands or feet

Fingers or toes turning white

Shooting or stabbing pains in arms or legs

Back or neck pain

Swelling or inflammation

Stiffness

Burning sensation

MSDs are injuries and illnesses that affect muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints or spinal discs.

Carpal tunnel syndrome
Rotator cuff syndrome
De Quervain's disease
Trigger finger
Sciatica
Epicondylitis
Tendonitis
Raynaud's phenomenon
Carpet layers' knee
Herniated spinal disc
Low back pain
Hand-arm Vibration Syndrome
Tension neck syndrome

Workplace MSDs are caused by exposure to the following risk factors:

Repetition. Doing the same motions over and over again places stress on the muscles and tendons. The severity of risk depends on how often the action is repeated, the speed of the movement, the number of muscles involved and the required force.

Forceful Exertions. Force is the amount of physical effort required to perform a task (such as heavy lifting) or to maintain control of equipment or tools. The amount of force depends on the type of grip, the weight of an object, body posture, the type of activity and the duration of the task.

Awkward Postures. Posture is the position the body is in and affects muscle groups that are involved in physical activity. Awkward postures include repeated or prolonged reaching, twisting, bending, kneeling, squatting, working overhead with the hands or arms, or holding fixed positions.

Contact Stress. Pressing the body against a hard or sharp edge can result in placing too much pressure on nerves, tendons and blood vessels. For example, using the palm of the hand as a hammer can increase the risk of suffering an MSD.

Vibration. Operating vibrating tools such as sanders, grinders, chippers, routers, drills and other saws can lead to nerve damage.

OSHA's standard requires employers to respond to employee reports of work-related MSDs or signs and symptoms of MSDs that last seven days after the employee reports them. If the employer determines that the MSD, or MSD signs or symptoms, can be connected to the job, the employer must provide the employee with an opportunity to contact a health care professional and receive work restrictions, if necessary. The wages and benefits of the employee must be protected for a period of time while on light duty or temporarily off work to recover. The employer must analyze the job and if MSD hazards are found, must take steps to reduce those hazards.

If you have signs or symptoms of MSDs.....

If MSD signs and symptoms are not reported early, permanent disability may result. It is important that you report MSD signs and symptoms right away to avoid long-lasting problems. Your employer is required to respond promptly to those reports. Contact the following person to report MSDs, MSD signs or symptoms or MSD hazards:

Name

Phone

TABLE W-2 COMPLIANCE TIME FRAMES
REQUIREMENTS AND RELATED RECORDKEEPING
TIME FRAMES
Paragraph (e), (f): Determination of Action Trigger
Within 7 calendar days after it is determined that the employee has experienced an MSD incident.
Paragraphs (p),(q),(r),(s): MSD Management
Initiate within 7 calendar days after it is determined that a job meets the Action Trigger.
Paragraph (h) & (i): Management Leadership and Employee Participation
Initiate within 30 calendar days after it is determined that a job meets the Action Trigger.
Paragraph (t)(4)(i): Train Employees involved in setting up and managing the ergonomics program
Within 45 calendar days after it is determined that a job meets the Action Trigger.
Paragraph (j): Job Hazard Analysis
Initiate within 60 calendar days after it is determined that a job meets the Action Trigger.
Paragraph (m)(2): Implement Initial Controls
Within 90 calendar days after it is determined that a job meets the Action Trigger
Paragraph (t)(5)(ii): Train current employees, supervisors or team leaders
Within 90 calendar days after it is determined that the employee's job meets the Action Trigger.
Paragraph (m)(3): Implement Permanent Controls
Within 2 years after it is determined that a job meets the Action Trigger, except that initial compliance can take up to 4 years and 60 days after the date of publication, whichever is later.
Paragraph (u): Program Evaluation
Within 3 years after it is determined that a job meets the Action Trigger

Appendix D-2 to §1910.900: VDT Workstation Checklist

Using this checklist is one, but not the only, way an employer can comply with the requirement to identify, analyze and control MSD hazards in VDT tasks. This checklist does not require that employees assume specific working postures in order for the employer to be in compliance. Rather, employers will be judged to be in compliance with paragraph (k) and (m) of OSHA's standard if they provide the employee with a VDT workstation is arranged or designed in a way that would pass this checklist.

If employee exposure does not meet the levels indicated by the Basic Screening Tool, the employer may STOP HERE.

WORKING CONDITIONS	Y	N
The workstation is designed or arranged for doing VDT tasks so it allows the employee's . . .		
A. Head and neck to be about upright (not bent down/back).		
B. Head, neck and trunk to face forward (not twisted).		
C. Trunk to be about perpendicular to floor (not leaning forward/backward).		
D. Shoulders and upper arms to be about perpendicular to floor (not stretched forward) and relaxed (not elevated).		
E. Upper arms and elbows to be close to body (not extended outward).		
F. Forearms, wrists, and hands to be straight and parallel to floor (not pointing up/down).		
G. Wrists and hands to be straight (not bent up/down or sideways toward little finger).		
H. Thighs to be about parallel to floor and lower legs to be about perpendicular to floor.		
I. Feet to rest flat on floor or be supported by a stable footrest.		
J. VDT tasks to be organized in a way that allows employee to vary VDT tasks with other work activities, or to take micro-breaks or recovery pauses while at the VDT workstation.		
SEATING	Y	N
The chair . . .		
1. Backrest provides support for employee's lower back (lumbar area).		
2. Seat width and depth accommodate specific employee (seat pan not too big/small).		
3. Seat front does not press against the back of employee's knees and lower legs (seat pan not too long).		
4. Seat has cushioning and is rounded/ has "waterfall" front (no sharp edge).		

5. Armrests support both forearms while employee performs VDT tasks and do not interfere with movement.		
KEYBOARD/INPUT DEVICE	Y	N
The keyboard/input device is designed or arranged for doing VDT tasks so that . . .		
6. Keyboard/input device platform(s) is stable and large enough to hold keyboard and input device.		
7. Input device (mouse or trackball) is located right next to keyboard so it can be operated without reaching.		
8. Input device is easy to activate and shape/size fits hand of specific employee (not too big/small).		
9. Wrists and hands do not rest on sharp or hard edge.		
MONITOR	Y	N
The monitor is designed or arranged for VDT tasks so that . . .		
10. Top line of screen is at or below eye level so employee is able to read it without bending head or neck down/back. (For employees with bifocals/trifocals, see next item.)		
11. Employee with bifocals/trifocals is able to read screen without bending head or neck backward.		
12. Monitor distance allows employee to read screen without leaning head, neck or trunk forward/backward.		
13. Monitor position is directly in front of employee so employee does not have to twist head or neck.		
14. No glare (e.g., from windows, lights) is present on the screen that might cause employee to assume an awkward posture to read screen.		
WORK AREA	Y	N
The work area is designed or arranged for doing VDT tasks so that . . .		
15. Thighs have clearance space between chair and VDT table/keyboard platform (thighs not trapped).		
16. Legs and feet have clearance space under VDT table so employee is able to get close enough to keyboard/input device.		
ACCESSORIES	Y	N
17. Document holder , if provided, is stable and large enough to hold documents that are used.		
18. Document holder , if provided, is placed at about the same height and distance as monitor screen so there is little head movement when employee looks from document to screen.		
19. Wrist rest , if provided, is padded and free of sharp and square edges.		
20. Wrist rest , if provided, allows employee to keep forearms, wrists and hands straight and parallel to ground when using keyboard/input device.		

21. Telephone can be used with head upright (not bent) and shoulders relaxed (not elevated) if employee does VDT tasks at the same time.		
GENERAL	Y	N
22. Workstation and equipment have sufficient adjustability so that the employee is able to be in a safe working posture and to make occasional changes in posture while performing VDT tasks.		
23. VDT Workstation, equipment and accessories are maintained in serviceable condition and function properly.		
PASSING SCORE = "YES" answer on all "working postures" items (A-J) and no more than two "NO" answers on remainder of checklist (1-23).		
