

Operational Policy

Policy title:	Ergonomics		
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Purpose

The Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) are committed to providing all employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards. The agencies maintain an ergonomics program that fosters a healthy work environment and reduces work-related ergonomic hazards.

Description

This policy and its related guidelines and forms provide a framework for implementing an ergonomically sound work environment which will maximize employee safety, health and comfort while minimizing the risk of undue physical stress.

Applicability

This policy applies to all DHS and OHA staff including employees, volunteers, trainees and interns.

As keepers of the public trust, all agency employees have a responsibility to comply with state and agency policies, administrative rule, and state and federal law. The agency takes this responsibility seriously and failure to fulfill this responsibility is not treated lightly. Employees who fail to comply with state or agency policy, administrative rule, or state and federal law may face progressive discipline, up to and including dismissal from state service.

Policy

1. Ergonomic hazards exist when there is a mismatch between the physical capacity of an employee and their equipment, work environment or physical demands of their job.
2. When responding to ergonomic hazards the following measures shall be considered:
 - a. Engineering control measures are preferred over all other control methods because they involve designing the work environment to fit the individual, including:
 - A. Physical changes that control exposure to ergonomic hazards such as modifying or redesigning workstations and providing adjustable ergonomic chairs.
 - B. Acting on the source of the hazard and controlling employee exposure to the hazard, such as providing filters for overhead lighting, to reduce the likelihood of the employee taking self-protective action or intervention.
 - b. Administrative control measures shall always be used in combination with other controls to reduce the duration, frequency, and severity of exposure to ergonomic hazards.

3. Each DHS and OHA work site shall:
 - a. Implement and maintain a collaborative and proactive ergonomics program.
 - b. Perform workplace assessments to identify potential ergonomic hazards.
 - c. Implement control measures to reduce exposure to identified hazards utilizing a hierarchy of control.
 - d. Ensure the ergonomic guidelines are followed.
4. Employees shall have the opportunity to provide input and assistance with:
 - a. Identifying ergonomic risk factors.
 - b. Performing worksite evaluations.
 - c. Developing and implementing controls.
 - d. Training.
 - e. Reporting all identified ergonomic hazards.
 - f. Ensuring work is completed in a manner consistent with ergonomic principles.
5. Managers and employees shall focus collaboration efforts on:
 - a. Setting up work areas for new and current employees.
 - b. Making changes when identified risks include:
 - A. Physical factors such as:
 - i. Force
 - ii. Posture (awkward and static)
 - iii. Static loading or sustained exertion (physical exertion in which the same posture or position is held throughout the exertion)
 - iv. Fatigue
 - v. Repetition
 - vi. Contact stress
 - vii. Temperature impacts
 - viii. Vibration
 - B. Environmental factors such as:
 - i. Noise
 - ii. Lighting
 - iii. Glare
 - iv. Air quality
 - v. Temperature
 - vi. Humidity
 - C. Combined factors such as:
 - i. Highly repetitive work
 - ii. Forceful work with no job rotation
 - iii. Precision work done in a dimly lit room
 - c. Incorporating ergonomic principles into the design phase of a new facility or process.
 - d. The use of equipment or tools when other controls have been deemed to be ineffective.
6. Managers shall ensure:
 - a. Responsibilities for setting up and managing a proactive approach to ergonomics in the workplace are assigned and communicated.

- b. Employees coordinating the ergonomic program have the resources, information, and training necessary to meet their responsibilities.
 - c. A process is established for initial ergonomic set-up of work areas.
 - d. A response and recommended action plan is completed, when an ergonomic hazard is identified.
 - e. Regular communication takes place about the ergonomic program and ergonomic hazards.
7. The Safety, Health and Wellness Program shall conduct on-going monitoring and evaluation to:
- a. Ensure ergonomic issues are addressed.
 - b. Ensure new safety and health problems are not created through issue correction.
 - c. Identify ongoing training needs as it relates to ergonomics.

References

[Safety, Health and Wellness Ergonomics Intranet](#)

Forms referenced

[DHS|OHA MSC 2054 Ergonomic Action Plan](#)

[DHS|OHA MSC 2055 Office Assessor Guidelines and Worksheet](#)

[DHS|OHA MSC 0058 Self Assessment Worksheet](#)

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