

KATHERINE TOWN COUNCIL

WORKPLACE ERGONOMICS PROCEDURE



TITLE: WORKPLACE ERGONOMICS PROCEDURE
ADOPTED BY: COUNCIL
RESPONSIBILITY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 01/03/2019

Version	Decision Number	Adoption Date	History
1		28/02/2017	
2			
3			
4			

1. WORKPLACE ERGONOMICS PROCEDURE

The Workplace Ergonomics Procedure (Procedure) relates to Katherine Town Council (Council).

Ergonomics is the assessment and design of the relationship between people and their work, objects, tools, equipment and environments. The working environment may include:

- Workstations (sitting and standing).
- Equipment layout and operation.
- Computer systems.
- Maintenance tasks performed on plant and machinery.

2. COMMENCEMENT OF PROCEDURE

The Procedure will commence from 01/03/2017; it replaces all other procedures, if any, relating to Workplace Ergonomics (whether written or not).

3. SCOPE

This procedure relates to:

- All Council workers and any person who is engaged by, or performing work at the direction of Council, including contractors, sub-contractors, volunteers, work experience, consultants, agents and temporary staff.

4. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to reduce the risk of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD) occurring in the workplace by:

- Identifying risk factors in work design that contribute to MSD work related injuries;
- Providing a procedure for evaluation and assessment of working environments, and;
- Controlling any risks associated with work design, workstation set up and operation.

This Procedure should also take into consideration how an operator will safely operate machinery or plant. If the operator is to be seated, this could involve ergonomic considerations such as the type of seating and the ease with which controls can be reached and operated.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Manager Responsibilities

- Ensuring ergonomic hazards relating to poor design of tools, equipment, work station or work practices are identified and the associated risks controlled.
- Ensuring that all workers have been provided with adequate equipment for tasks undertaken.
- Ensuring that all workers have been provided with relevant information, instruction and/or training in the use of equipment and work practices.
- Encourage and reinforcing proper working techniques.

- Ensuring that resources are utilized and control hazards associated with ergonomics (e.g. manual handling) and reviewing suggested risk controls to ensure they are implemented and effective.
- Maintaining records of the ergonomic risk assessment procedure (Attachment A . Work Station Self Assessment Checklist).

5.2 Worker Responsibilities

- Participating in training as provided.
- Completing ergonomic self-assessments and reporting task-related and equipment-related hazards as required.
- Participating in the identification and assessment of ergonomic hazards.
- Identifying and documenting controls to eliminate or reduce ergonomic hazards in the workplace.
- Correctly using equipment (e.g. trolleys, stepladders, laptop support stands, adjustable equipment, etc.) where provided.
- Following proper working techniques including safe work instructions.

6. PROCEDURE

6.1 Workstations

It is important to remember that good posture is essential for maintaining proper ergonomic practices. There is a workstation self-assessment included in this procedure.

6.2 Ergonomic Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

If a worker identifies an ergonomic issue associated with a work station, work process, plant design or operation, it is to be reported to their Line Manager and/or Health and Safety Representative (HSR).

The Line Manager and/or HSR will assess the concerns and assist the worker to complete an appropriate Risk Assessment for the situation. The Line Manager may utilise the services of an Occupational Therapist or Rehabilitation Specialist to assist with assessing ergonomic risks for more complex situations.

6.3 Risk Control

Controls are to be established for any ergonomic hazards identified during the assessment. The HSR and/or Line Manager, in consultation with the worker, will identify appropriate controls to eliminate or reduce hazards as part of the risk assessment process. It is the responsibility of the Line Manager or HSR to review the controls and make sure they are implemented and monitored.

The Line Manager or HSR will document and maintain records of all agreed controls.

Examples of ergonomic controls may include:

- Eliminating the task.
- Changing the nature of the task to remove repetition.
- Changing chairs that do not adjust to more suitable alternatives.
- Providing flat screen monitors to increase desk space.

- Adjust the distance and positioning of screens, keyboards, mouse, phone, etc.
- Providing information to workers on the importance of rest breaks and stretching.

6.4 Review of Controls

Line Managers and HSRs are responsible for reviewing ergonomic hazard controls in consultation with workers. This review is to be documented and kept with the original Risk Assessment. If the worker is not satisfied with the implemented controls, the worker may request an additional risk assessment taking into account the changes to the work environment. Any unresolved grievances should be followed as per the Complaint Handling Procedure.

6.5 Work Practices

Strategies to prevent occupational overuse injuries will need to include elements of:

- Job design
- Supervision and training
- The role of the individual
- The ergonomic design of the workstation

Positions should incorporate a variety of tasks which allow variation in movement and posture. A mix of repetitive or static work, and non-repetitive work should be included so that recovery from any muscle fatigue is possible.

No worker should be required to continually type or enter data for more than 5 hours per day. Where the job involves a major component of keyboard work, or other task using the same muscle group, frequent rest breaks should be taken. This structuring of the job should be a matter of discussion between the worker and their Line Manager.

6.6 Short Rest Breaks

Short rest breaks provide an opportunity for muscles that have been active in a single task/position to rest and recover and muscles which have been fixed such as shoulder or leg muscles to move.

Short pause break activities can be as simple as collecting a document from the printer, getting a cup of tea or water, visiting a colleague rather than phoning or emailing them, etc.

Where a variety of alternative tasks are not available, it is important to have more breaks away from the task. The length of these and how often depends on the work, the person and other factors, however it is important to note that frequent short pauses are preferable to infrequent longer pauses.

Doing exercises during breaks can provide a variety of postural changes and movement for muscles during periods of intense work. These exercises may be useful where there are no alternative tasks available. Exercises should be gentle stretches which provide rest for frequently used muscles and movement for muscles which have been static. The best exercise is usually to get up from a seated position and move around.

7. APPLYING THIS PROCEDURE

1. Workers will be informed of this procedure through the Induction process.
2. Council encourages and supports suggestions to create a safe working environment as a result of all possible preventative measures being taken.

8. REVIEWING THIS PROCEDURE

Management will review this procedure every two (2) years, unless legislative changes trigger an earlier review or Council identifies necessary changes, in consultation with workers:

- to assess the effectiveness of the procedure;
- by reviewing our overall health and safety performance; and,
- by monitoring the effectiveness of policies and procedures.

9. COMMUNICATING THIS PROCEDURE

All workers, contractors and others affected by our business or undertakings will be provided with access to this procedure through their manager/supervisor or the workgroup Health and Safety Representative.

New workers will be provided with a copy as part of their induction.

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge:

- *receiving the Procedure;*
- *that I will comply with the Procedure; and*
- *that there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply, which may result in the termination of my employment.*

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

11. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Workstation Self-Assessment Checklist

Backrest	Is the backrest angle and height adjusted so that the lumbar support fits into the curve of your lower back? . refer to 9 on the above diagram.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Does the backrest support the upper back region where the user is tall in stature?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Seat tilt	Is the seat tilted so that your hips and top of your thighs are at right angles?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Seat length	Is the seat deep enough to support your thighs? - refer to 8 on diagram above.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Chair & Posture	Instructions		Action Taken or Required
Armrests	Do armrests interfere with access to the desk? If so, either lower them or have them removed. <i>Note: Armrests are not recommended for keyboard work however may provide support for other activities or purpose.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Desk, keyboard and mouse			
Desk	Is the desk height adjusted so that the forearms are horizontal or angled slightly downward? <i>Note: If the desk is fixed, the chair adjustments are relied upon to meet the user and task requirements.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Are frequently used items within easy reach and is there sufficient space for documents, completed work or writing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Is there a headset provided where tasks involve high volume of telephone calls?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Leg clearance	Is there sufficient space beneath the desk to allow free leg movement without obstruction?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Document holder	Is a holder provided for tasks that require frequent reference to hard copy documents and data entry to the computer?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Is the holder positioned between the keyboard and the screen where possible to reduce repetitive head, neck and eye movement?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Keyboard	Does the keyboard sit flat and close to the desk edge directly in front of you? <i>Note: Refer to 11 in the diagram above for extended laptop use.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Mouse	Is the mouse positioned close and directly beside your keyboard on your preferred side? <i>Note: Mouse should not be used with an outstretched arm over prolonged periods.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Does the mouse move easily on the desk surface?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Does the mouse fit comfortably in the palm of the hand?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Monitor			
Height	Is the screen positioned so that it is level with your eyes when looking straight ahead, sitting in an upright position?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Distance	Is the screen at least an arm's length away and images easily legible from the seated position? <i>Note: For dual screen use, position the main screen directly in front and the less used screen immediately to the right or left, at the same height and distance away.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Reflection/glare	Has the monitor screen been placed so that it does not face a window, catching reflections from the window, or have a window directly behind it causing glare from the window?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Has the monitor screen brightness and contrast controls been adjusted where the screen is too bright or images are too dark?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Rest Breaks	
Regular rest breaks	Take short 1-2 minute stretch breaks every 20-30 minutes. After each hour of work, take a break or change tasks for at least 5-10 minutes. Always try to get away from your computer during lunch breaks to reduce static posture.

Additional Comments:

I acknowledge I have completed this Workstation Self-Assessment

<i>Worker Name:</i>	<i>Position:</i>
<i>Sign off on Self-Assessment::</i>	<i>Date:</i>

Forward a copy of this completed assessment to your supervisor.

PART B: Line Manager Action (Discuss findings with the worker and tick the appropriate box below. Retain completed forms on the worker's Personnel File).

I have discussed the findings and any action/s required with the worker and their workgroup HSR and have approved actions for completion (retain evidence of action taken);

OR

I have referred this worker who has an injury or medical diagnosis to an Occupational Therapist / Rehabilitation Consultant for further early intervention advice. If appropriate, the worker has been informed to submit an injury report.

Additional Comments:

<i>Line Manager Name:</i>	<i>Position:</i>
<i>Sign off on action taken:</i>	<i>Date:</i>