

Computer Workstations Policy

General

These guidelines for “Computer Workstations” have been developed to comply with Maine Department of Labor regulations and establish a baseline for the safe use of computers by University of Maine personnel.

"Computer Workstations" include not only the elements necessary for the use of a computer (i.e. computer monitor, keyboard, input devices, chairs, and working surfaces) but also the working environment. Other optional components such as footrests, documents holders, phones, scanners, printers, etc. may also be covered by these guidelines.

Regulatory Guidance

- Maine Revised Statutes, Title 26, Chapter 5, Section 252

Requirements

All UMaine employees using a computer workstation for more than four (4) hours per day are required to assess their workstation and receive training, annually. Employees and supervisors, together, ensure that workstations do not adversely affect the health of employees through adjustments, modifications or purchases of equipment, as appropriate.

Annual Workstation Assessments:

Employees using computer workstations are required to annually complete a Computer Workstation Checklist to assure that the ergonomics of the workstation are safe and appropriate. The Computer Workstation Checklist is designed to provide employees with guidance in identifying necessary workstation modifications and also provides a convenient record of training. Follow the general instructions listed in the computer checklist and answer all questions that apply to your computer workstations. Copies of completed checklists should be provided to the area supervisor.

Workstation Modifications:

Employees should attempt to adjust their workstation as outlined in the Computer Workstation Checklist during their annual workstation evaluation and whenever experiencing physical discomfort while working at the computer. If unable to comfortably adjust the workstation, the employee's supervisor should be notified as soon as possible so that equipment modifications or purchases of ergonomic equipment can be made before a more serious condition develops.

Medical Intervention:

Employees who continue to experience pain or discomfort while working at a computer workstation even after ergonomic modifications and/or purchasing ergonomic workstation equipment, should receive a medical evaluation. In addition, employees that experience any type of reoccurring discomforts, should immediately report their injury / symptoms and obtain a medical evaluation.

Training and Recordkeeping:

All employees whose job requires them to operate a Computer Workstation (Video Display Terminal) for more than four (4) consecutive hours on a daily basis must be trained within the first month of employment and annually thereafter.

Training is available on-line and includes the following elements:

- An explanation or description of the proper use of terminals.
- The protective measures that the operator may take to avoid or minimize symptoms or conditions that may result from extended or improper use of terminals.
- Instruction related to the importance of maintaining proper posture.
- A description of methods to achieve and maintain proper posture, including the use of any adjustable work station equipment used by the operator.

Upon completion of the on-line portion of the training, employees conduct an individual self assessment using the Computer Workstation Checklist. The checklist is provided to the area supervisor who discusses any necessary modifications and provides the employee with information outlined on the form. Both the Employee and Supervisor sign the checklist which is retained as a record of training.

Responsibilities

Safety and Environmental Management

- Provide assistance by offering resources, learning tools, and computer workstation assessment checklists.
- Upon injury, assist departments in appropriate and ergonomic computer workstation selection.
- Assist supervisor with workstation evaluations and provide recommendations for workstation setup.

Department Chairs or Directors

Provide the appropriate ergonomic workstations and where necessary ensure that a workstation evaluation is performed.

Supervisors

- Maintain copies of individual workstation evaluations and provide reasonable equipment that meets computer operator's needs.
- Annually review results of work station evaluations and discuss with employees actions necessary to implement reasonable modifications in a timely manner to ensure proper posture and minimize ergonomics hazards.
- Ensure employee training is conducted and documented.
- Encourage employees to report signs and symptoms for proper medical treatment.
- Complete an Illness/Injury Report form and send it to SEM for any employee that experiences a work related injury.

Individual

- Complete a Computer Workstation Checklist, when required.

Annually participate in Computer Workstation / Video Display Terminal training.

For Additional Information

- Contact your Department Safety Coordinator or Safety and Environmental Management at 207-581-4055.
- *Computer Workstation Training* at <http://sem.umaine.edu/safety-training/>
- Computer Workstation Checklist (MF07221)

Document History

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