



Ergonomics and the Workplace

What Is Office Ergonomics?

Ergonomics is the discipline that looks at the design of office equipment, devices and processes in order to fit the capabilities of the human body and to improve the interaction of people and the things around them. Simply stated, Office Ergonomics is about fitting the workspace to the worker. For an office setting and non-traditional workspaces (including working from home), that means considering the relationship between you and your work environment, including your job tasks, chair, computer, and the accessories in your workspace.

Repetition and the length of time in which we unconsciously engage in poor ergonomics can lead to painful and chronic conditions over time. Help protect employees from workplace injuries by increasing their awareness of ergonomics.

Background/Research:

Incorporating good ergonomic techniques into our daily routines, has the capability of making our jobs easier and healthier. In Fiscal Year 2020, 12% (386) of new workers' compensation claims were related to a workplace ergonomic injury, with more than half of injuries experienced by office workers. The average ergonomic claim expense was \$6,794. Most ergonomic claims require an ergonomic evaluation (74%) and ergonomic equipment (65%), while a smaller, but significant number of employees require out-patient hospitalization (23%) and temporary disability benefits (18%) to address their injuries. The most common job classifications reporting ergonomic injuries that result in claims include Senior Eligibility Worker, Senior Clerk, and Senior Hospital Eligibility Worker. Benefit expenditures to address these claims was \$1.88M in Fiscal Year 2020 for all City departments.

What are the Benefits of Proper Ergonomics in My Work Environment?

[NIOSH reports](#) strategic rest can reduce musculoskeletal problems without impact to productivity. Movement breaks have even greater benefits. A [recent study found](#) that movement increased 81% of participants' creativity and walking outside produced a higher quality of focus.

Small changes in our behaviors can make a big difference in preventing injury and chronic pain. It is important that employers engage their workforce in understanding the benefits of a proper setup and taking active breaks. There are things we can do in our workspace to keep ergonomics top of mind. Use the [Setup and Go Toolkit](#) and the [Work From Home Guide](#) to start promoting ergonomics awareness for your workforce.