



## **Delaware State University**

**University Area Responsible:** Risk and Safety Management

**Policy Number and Name:** 7-10: Ergonomic Program

**Approval Date:** 7/28/11

**Revisions:** 8/8/2013

**Reviewed:** 7/25/2013

**Related Policies and Procedures:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this program is to prevent and minimize employee injuries and illnesses resulting from repetitive motion.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all Delaware State University employees.

### **3. Definitions**

**3.1 Ergonomics** is the study of the relationship between people and the work they perform.

**3.2 Four-pronged comprehensive approach** to ergonomics (OSHA ) the approach designed to quickly and effectively address musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) in the workplace. 1. Develop task-specific guidelines, 2 Enforcement under (General Duty Clause), 3 Outreach and assistance and 4 Identify gaps in research to the application of ergonomics and ergonomic principles in the workplace via the National Advisory Committee.

**3.3 General Duty Clause (OSHA)** - Employer's are obligation to "furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees." (This clause from the OSHA Act is utilized to cite serious hazards where no specific OSHA standard exists to address the hazard, as is the case with ergonomic stressors.)

**3.4 Repetitive Motion Injury (RMI)** is any physical disorder that develops from or is aggravated by the cumulative application of biomechanical stress to the musculoskeletal system.

**3.5 Science of Ergonomics** addresses the importance of designing workstations (i.e. office furniture or industrial work areas and equipment) in such a way so as to eliminate or limit as many ergonomic hazards as possible in an effort to reduce cumulative trauma disorders.

#### **4. Policy**

Delaware State University will comply with the requirements of OSHA's General Duty Clause, which calls for employers to provide employees with a work environment that is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to its employees. In this case it is meant to address occupational injuries resulting from repetitive motion.

#### **5. Procedure**

##### **5.1 Safety/Risk/Manager is responsible for:**

- 5.1.1** Administering and implementing the Ergonomic Program.
- 5.1.2** Developing and implementing training programs.
- 5.1.3** Keeping the training records of all employees.
- 5.1.4** Evaluating all accident or injury reports.
- 5.1.5** Arranging and carrying out ergonomic worksite evaluations.

- 5.1.6 Identifying effective engineering and administrative controls to reduce or eliminate RMI's.
- 5.1.7 Making sure that all "worksite evaluation" recommendations are implemented.
- 5.1.8 Encouraging supervisors to allow for stretching at the worksite throughout the day.

**5.2 DSU Purchasing Department:**

- 5.2.1 Make sure that all workstation chairs purchased comply with State and DSU procurement laws and regulations.
- 5.2.2 Identify vendors that offer good quality ergonomic chairs and accessories.

**5.3 Department Supervisors:** Are expected to recognize ergonomic hazards in their departments, and to contact the Safety/Risk Manager for guidance and assistance.

**5.4 Employees will:**

- 5.4.1 Attend and complete required ergonomic training.
- 5.4.2 Try to vary their work tasks throughout the day as much as possible.
- 5.4.3 Stretch at their workstations throughout the day.
- 5.4.4 Inform their supervisor of RMI symptoms they may be experiencing.

**5.5 Worksite Evaluations** - The Safety/Risk Manager will perform worksite evaluations upon request or if a trend of Repetitive Motion injuries is identified. Once a trend is identified the Safety Risk Manager will evaluate the job, process or operation where the trend has been identified.

- 5.5.1 If allowed by available resources, equipment will be provided to affected employees, which represent good ergonomic design for their job.
- 5.5.2 Best work practices and techniques and administrative controls will be recommended by the Safety/Risk Manager.

**5.6 Exposures**

- 5.6.1 The Safety/Risk Manager will evaluate all Accident Reports indicating an RMI.
- 5.6.2 The Safety/Risk Manager will review all exposures resulting in an RMI.
- 5.6.3 Exposures leading to an RMI will be corrected or minimized to the extent feasible.
- 5.6.4 Medical treatment will be made available for employees who are suffering from an RMI.

**5.6.5** The recommendations of the health care will be followed, to the extent possible, once an injured employee returns to work.

**5.6.6** Employees will be allowed to stretch at their workstations periodically throughout the day.

**5.7 Training** will inform all employees who may be at risk of an RMI about:

**5.7.1** DSU's Ergonomic Program.

**5.7.2** The types of exposures associated with an RMI.

**5.7.3** The symptoms and consequences of injuries caused by repetitive motion.

**5.7.4** The importance of reporting symptoms and injuries to their supervisor.

**5.7.5** Methods used to minimize RMI's.

**5.7.6** Administrative controls such as, job-rotation, work pacing and work breaks.

**5.7.7** Engineering controls such as workstation redesign, adjustable fixtures & redesign.

**5.7.8** Stretching /exercises to prevent RMI's.