

SECTION 1: MINIMIZING ERGONOMIC-RELATED INJURIES

I. Minimizing Ergonomic-Related Injuries Through Employee Participation, Training, and Program Evaluation:

The University's goal is to minimize ergonomic-related injuries through participation by employees, training provided, and by EH&S program evaluation, outlined below in detail. Communication of the Ergonomics Program is provided through training sessions, new hire training, participation in employee health and wellness fairs, articles in the University's internal news publications, and other resources such as the EH&S web page and pamphlets.

- A. Employee Participation:** Strive for early reporting of MSDs and active involvement by employees and their representatives in the implementation and evaluation of the Ergonomics Program.

When employees experience an MSD sign or symptom, it should be reported to their supervisor. Staff is involved with the selection and implementation of ergonomically designed equipment including furniture, carts, tools and lifting equipment.

- B. Providing Training:** Training resources are provided by EH&S for managers, supervisors, and employees on the ergonomics program and their role in it; the recognition of MSD signs and symptoms; the importance of early reporting; the identification of ergonomic hazards in the workplace; and the methods to control ergonomic concerns.

Training is provided to staff members through such programs as New Hire Orientation, MyPath on-line training, on-request ergonomics training provided by EH&S, workstation assessments conducted by EH&S at no cost to the employee or his/her department (however, any recommended equipment must be purchased by the employee's department), pamphlets, and the EH&S website.

- C. Program Evaluation:** EH&S conducts reviews of training materials, annually reviews reported ergonomic incidents, tracks the number of ergonomic assessments given, and performs other evaluation as needed. These metrics are reported annually internally through the Department Annual Report.

II. Responsibilities:

All U of R staff and faculty members are responsible for contributing to a safe and healthy work place. Employees are encouraged to review information and to participate in education and training opportunities that can enable them to contribute to a healthy work environment. Since non-work activities can cause or contribute to discomfort and/or injuries, employees are urged to apply ergonomic principles outside the workplace as well.

A. Managers/Supervisors:

Managers play a leading role in the implementation of strategies to control MSDs in the workplace.

This includes:

- Learning about MSD causes and control options;
- Providing resources to implement ergonomic solutions and remediation;
- Purchasing furniture that has maximum adjustment flexibility and complies with standards established by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and UR furniture guidelines;
- Restructuring job tasks to reduce risk factors which contribute to MSDs;
- Connect employees to training resources;
- Promptly [reporting](#) all employee injuries and/or employee complaints regarding repetitive motion or overuse injury symptoms;
- When necessary, seeking assistance from EH&S regarding ergonomic issues including ergonomic requests;
- Providing adequate recovery time by allowing employees engaged in highly repetitive tasks the opportunity for frequent, short breaks and alternative work activities where feasible.

B. Employees:

Employees must promptly report ergonomic problems to their supervisors. Prompt implementation of workplace changes can significantly reduce the potential for severe injuries or illnesses. Employees are required to:

- Report work-related MSD signs and symptoms to their supervisor and [submit](#) an ergonomic request as needed for computer users;
- Follow safe work practices;
- Make effective use of recovery periods;
- Follow ergonomic recommendations;
- Adjust and use their workstation and equipment as outlined in the ergonomic guidelines or self-assessment (see appendices).

C. Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S):

- Coordinates the Ergonomics Program to reduce ergonomic-related injuries at UR;
- Provides assistance in using [Employee Incident Reporting System](#) (Cority) and encourage its use, including the ergonomic self-assessment;
- Provides guidance on modifying the workplace to minimize the potential for injuries and illnesses;
- Provides ergonomics training for employees, supervisors, and managers;
- Reviews employee incident reports on an ongoing basis to track MSDs;
- Evaluates individual and departmental workstations and work areas as requested;
- Provides assistance and advice on the selection of ergonomically appropriate office furniture and equipment.

D. Human Resources Department:

The Human Resources Department manages the Workers' Compensation Insurance and Return to Work Programs. The Return to Work (RTW) Program is designed to help University employees reach full recovery following illness or injury by providing timely and appropriate treatment while the employee continues in worthwhile and meaningful work. Refer to [University Policy # 271](#).

E. UR Procurement Department:

EH&S will normally list recommended vendors in the written ergonomic assessment for computer workstations. The UR Procurement Department can provide more specific assistance and advice on Vendor information where needed. They can be reached at 275-2002 or from their [website](#).