

COMPREHENSIVE ERGONOMIC POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

(_____) is committed to providing excellence in customer satisfaction. Optimal ergonomics is an integral part of overall operational performance. The management strives to provide effective leadership in maintaining optimal ergonomic conditions for our staff, as it does in maintaining a safe and healthy accommodations and experience for our guests. Optimal ergonomics and quality are organization priorities. Refer to our Health & Safety Policy for an overview of all the elements in the health and safety management system as they apply to this Ergonomic Policy.

ERGONOMIC RESPONSIBILITIES & ACCOUNTABILITY

Supervisors and managers are responsible for providing adequate job specific training, counseling, positive feedback, and supervision to associates in order to *ensure that the proper protocols and equipment are consistently followed and used*. Staff are expected to follow established work procedures and equipment designed to optimize ergonomics. All staff and management are responsible to the guests, each other, and themselves for remaining conscious of, practicing, and ensuring good ergonomic practices.

Associates are encouraged to relay concerns and suggestions on ergonomic hazards or improvements. Supervisors and managers must respond to these concerns in a positive manner. Supervisors shall ensure that the message is channeled to the Safety Committee, if necessary. Supervisors and/or the Safety Committee shall explore the potential of the hazard or viability of the suggestion, and take measures to implement the change, or explain to the associate initiating the concern or suggestion, why it is not implemented. The Safety Committee implements this Ergonomic Program. It is responsible for implementing the elements of this policy, including: assessing ergonomic hazards through data review, worksite analysis, equipment review and associate feedback; developing abatement methods and implementing them; determining abatement effectiveness; responding to associate complaints or inquiries; and monitoring the effectiveness of the overall Program.

DATA REVIEW

A review of the past several years' OSHA 300 Logs and accident/incident records is conducted periodically to quantify and identify trends, frequency, severity, and potential common causes of incidents. This serves to benchmark statistical performance over time, and more importantly, to help prioritize intervention activities based on the existing hazards that appear to contribute to the most frequency, and severity.

WORKPLACE ANALYSIS OR HAZARD ASSESSMENT

Inspection - Conduct a comprehensive ergonomic inspection of all work areas, and work procedures, including storage areas, stocking tasks, receiving, offices, kitchens, laundry, shower rooms, bathrooms, toilets, housekeeping, maintenance, laundry, construction, office tasks, etc. Review equipment and work practices and protocols for optimal ergonomics. Review logistics, work flow, storage placement of items, lay out, organization of how duties are to be executed and their interplay with different departments, and how they may affect each other, etc.

Interview Associates - They are the ultimate users. They are most qualified to determine what parts of the operation poses difficulties, and how best to resolve it with the most pragmatic solutions, usually.

Job Description Review - Review job descriptions for areas of potential ergonomic risks that may warrant closer supervision, more training and a continuing process for ergonomic improvement. Include the physical demands of the tasks necessary in the job description to ensure that applicants, and physicians who conduct fitness for duty examinations, can make informed judgment about their willingness and ability to do the job, respectively.

EQUIPMENT REVIEW

Equipment should be reviewed periodically, and before purchase to ensure optimal ergonomics for the end users. Adjustments to existing equipment, may be necessary, sometimes replacement may be warranted. The purchase of new equipment is an opportunity to bring in good ergonomic design and prevent poor work designs. In conducting the ergonomic assessments, refer to ergonomic guides for optimal ergonomic design. ***Always consult the end users before any major purchase or remodeling.***

Workstations, equipment, lift equipment, dollies, step stools, ladders, hand held tools, furniture, shelving, beds, associate uniforms, lifting space, floor area, furniture, etc. should all be assessed for potential risks they may pose to the users, and how their use may be improved. This involves assessing the entire job involved with each task. Review the size, shape, operation, method of use, place of use, transport, storage, etc. Review the placement or installation of shelving, equipment or items, the reach or body contortions necessary to utilize the equipment. Behavior aspects of work habits should be analyzed also. (For example, does one department overload certain equipment out of convenience that may pose an ergonomic hazard for the other department that must deal with it later?)

This assessment can be an on-going activity by the Safety Committee. It should begin with the more obvious hazards as seen from incident/injury data. As those are mitigated, the Committee can then systematically review other issues, or more persistent issues, over time. At some point, a comprehensive assessment of the property will have been achieved, and the Committee can streamline activities to a more maintenance-oriented program, with periodic ergonomic inspections, and focusing on new operations, or new issues brought up that had not been considered before, or that warrant reconsideration.

Consult with Other Qualified Experts

Utilize your existing resources in field service, loss control, health, and safety service representatives already available to you through the different types of insurance coverage you may carry. Otherwise, other non-fee consultants may include the OSHA Consultation Service. Fee based ergonomists, or health and safety professionals with specialty in ergonomics may also be sought. Physical therapists may also be consulted, preferably, those that specialize in occupationally medicine.

Consult with Associates

Consult the associates. This is mandated in the Standard. They are the ultimate users. Their feedback is very valuable in finding problems and the most convenient answers that will be *operationally pragmatic*. ***Always consult with end users for feedback before purchasing any new equipment or making any new changes to a work area or process.***

Too often, consultants are brought in to cope with a problem created by a new change or “improvement”. This usually results in make-do ergonomics abatement methods. Meanwhile, such situations could have easily been averted, or truly improved, if management, or the purchaser, had consulted the end users on the operational viability of the new piece of equipment or product purchased in the first place.

Always ensure that purchased equipment or product is selected not only based on pricing, vendor preference, warranty, service plans, etc., but also on user need, preference, and the potential risk of injuries to end users in the scheme of their *entire* job, not only the equipment, in and of itself. This relatively small investment of time, patience, and the cultivation of teamwork pays off greatly, in the end. It reduces wasted time and money, and the likelihood of injury, while increasing morale and productivity.

HAZARD ABATEMENT

Interdisciplinary abatement methods or solutions will be developed to include consideration of better: planning; organization; cooperation; communication; service plans; budgeting; personnel; assigned responsibilities; adequate expertise and authority; means to hold responsible persons accountable; teamwork; reinforcement; training; equipment; etc. These activities are interfaced with the Safety Committee (if the responsibility of the Ergonomic Program is meted out to a separate committee.)

FOLLOW-UP

Each hazard abatement intervention is followed-up by an assigned individual within a set period of time to ensure abatement has occurred and reviewed for effectiveness. When abatement does not achieve the desired or necessary results, the issue must be brought up for discussion. It should be determined why abatement was not successful. Efforts should continue in search of more viable alternatives and solutions.

ASSOCIATE TRAINING

Ergonomic training must be provided at least every 3 years, but preferably annually, to all associates, if only to refresh. Time spent for training, and the scope of training should reflect need for such time and scope based on accident/incident records and trends and observed behavior. Training must be interactive, and attendees must be able to ask questions and receive answers in real time.

Ergonomic training, both general *and job specific*, as needed, is provided to all new associates as part of their mandatory orientation. Job specific training is provided to *all* associates as necessary. Job specific training will be provided to associates who are transferred to a new department or position, and when new equipment or processes are implemented. Instruction and feedback in the form of counseling or positive reinforcement from supervisors during work, is on-going.

Training on early identification, reporting, and conservative treatment of cumulative trauma disorders is provided to all workers, supervisors and managers. Training material shall be presented in language and level of understanding appropriate for staff trained. Training should be designed, and implemented, by qualified persons. Ergonomic training and educational programs for *all* general associates consist of:

1. Explanation of the property’s Ergonomic Program

2. Overview of the Potential Risk of Back and other Musculoskeletal Injuries
3. Causes & Early Symptoms of Back & Musculoskeletal Injuries
4. Means of Prevention & Proper Lifting Methods
5. Treatment
6. An explanation of the medical management procedures, and any alternative duty and post injury return-to-work programs
7. An explanation of early recognition of the signs and symptoms associated with exposure, procedures to follow and when to report signs and symptoms
8. Staff physical fitness if encouraged.

Job Specific Training

Associates receive training from their own department on the: measures associates can take in their particular setting to reduce ergonomic risks, correct use and adjustment of the work station or area; fixtures that will prevent or minimize exposure; and proper work protocols to reduce ergonomic risks to themselves a coworker. The depth and frequency of training is dependent on the need as seen from incident/injury record and observed work behaviors.

Kitchen Department Job Specific Training (for those with kitchen service)

Back injuries in this department result from transferring full steaming pots, pulling loaded carts, materials handling in storage areas, and slips and falls. Training should include:

1. Proper storage of supplies and equipment (larger bulkier items to be stored at waist level within easy reach, or lower, and lighter smaller items above the shoulder).
2. Proper pot transfer and when to get help.
3. Vigilance in keeping the floors clean and dry as much as possible.
4. Proper body mechanics in stocking and retrieving materials in storage and freezers.
5. Proper body mechanics in loading and unloading trays.

Laundry Department Job Specific Training [For those with laundry services]

1. Proper storage of supplies and equipment (larger bulkier items to be stored at waist level within easy reach, or lower, and lighter smaller items above the shoulder).
2. Vigilance in keeping floors clean and dry.
3. Proper use of carts, especially in moving and unloading.
4. Simple accommodations (step stool) to create better working levels for folding tasks.
5. Proper work practice in transferring and moving large quantities of product (fluids).
6. Proper body posture in loading and unloading washers and dryers.

Housekeeping Department Job Specific Training

1. Proper storage of supplies and equipment (larger bulkier items to be stored at waist level within easy reach, or lower, and lighter smaller items above the shoulder).
2. Vigilance in keeping all floors clean and dry.
3. Proper use of carts.
4. Proper body mechanics, posture and use of equipment in reaching difficult areas to clean (under beds, far side of tubs, making beds, flipping mattresses, moving furniture, vacuuming, etc.)

Maintenance Department Job Specific Training

1. Proper storage of supplies and equipment (larger bulkier items to be stored at waist level within easy reach, or lower, and lighter smaller items above the shoulder).

2. Proper use of work tools including hand-grips.
3. Adjustments that may be made on work stations for better vision and comfort.
4. Proper body mechanics and postures in completing tasks in awkward places and positions, including climbing ladders, crawl spaces, etc.

Office Ergonomics

1. Proper storage of supplies and equipment (larger bulkier items to be stored at waist level within easy reach, or lower, and lighter smaller items above the shoulder).
2. Adjustments that may be made on work stations.
3. Stretches and adequate breaks.
4. Office safety (open drawers, looping cords, etc.)
5. Proper body mechanics and posture in retrieving supplies, sitting at the desk, and fixing the office machines (copiers particularly).

Management Associate Training

Managers, supervisors and other group leaders receive training comparable to that of all general associates in order that they can: set a role model, identify proper and improper work procedures; address both with counseling or positive reinforcement, respectively.

ASSOCIATE HEALTH

Encourage staff physical fitness (weight loss, exercise, stretching, healthy lifestyles). Refer to **Back Care Training Pamphlet Program** for back fitness training resources.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE & GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

An effective program for property and equipment maintenance is implemented which minimizes ergonomic hazards includes: a PM program for carts, dollies, furniture, hand tools, all equipment; timely maintenance response whenever associate report problems; sufficient spares exist for out of service equipment; implementation of housekeeping programs that minimize slippery work and surfaces and slips and falls; etc.

ERGONOMIC POLICY REVIEW

This written program is reviewed and updated at least annually and whenever necessary to reflect new or modified tasks, programs and procedures that affect associate exposure to ergonomic hazards.

Reviewed by:

Name	Title	Date
Name	Title	Date

Name

Title

Date