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**Status** Final

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**Policy Type** [University](#)

**Contact Office**

[Environmental Health and Safety](#)

**Oversight Executive**

[Vice President for Research](#)

**Applies To**

Academic Division The Medical Center

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**Reason for Policy**

To help prevent musculoskeletal injuries to faculty, staff, and students caused by such factors as:

- using computers or other office related equipment;
- material handling activities; and
- patient care activities.

**Definition of Terms**

**Cumulative Trauma Disorder (CTD)**

Wear and tear on tendons, muscles and sensitive nerve tissue caused by continuous use over an extended period of time. Keyword “cumulative.” Disorder most commonly occurs in wrists and backs. Also called RSI – Repetitive Stress Injury

**Ergonomic Issues**

Points of concern regarding ability to fit the workplace to the worker's needs.

**Musculoskeletal Conditions**

Circumstances that cause muscle aches and pains usually due to working in awkward positions.

**Worksite Evaluations**

Assessment of the workplace in order to improve the fit between the worker and the work environment.

## **Policy Statement**

The University will strive to provide a workplace that meets the worker's needs. Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) and the University Ergonomics Task Force are available to assist departments in the Academic Division (Agency 207) and Hospital Employee Health & Safety is available to assist departments in the Medical Center (Agency 209) with:

- Identifying Ergonomic issues.
- Training faculty, staff and student members on the Ergonomic issues identified and subsequent recommended practices.
- Providing resources for up-to-date information.

### **1. Responsibilities for Departmental Management:**

Departments are responsible for developing and implementing an Ergonomics Program appropriate to meeting the needs of the department's faculty, staff, and student members who perform day-to-day operations. Departments in the Academic Division (Agency 207) can request assistance from Environmental Health & Safety and departments in the Medical Center (Agency 209) can request assistance from Hospital EHS for resources and services that will increase awareness of the following:

- Musculoskeletal injuries caused by awkward posture and body alignment and material handling.
- Eye strain and headaches as a result of extended use of equipment that can cause such problems (i.e., video display terminals, microscopes, etc.)
- Accommodations that can be made as a result of worksite evaluations.

Departments can obtain guidance from EHS/Hospital EHS to help them perform Worksite Evaluations and observations to ensure workstations meet the needs of the user. Departments should make reasonable accommodations to provide equipment that is recommended to meet the user's needs. Reasonable accommodations must be provided for disabled employees as required by the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).

### **2. Responsibilities for Faculty, Staff and Students:**

Equipment provided by the department must be used correctly, thus training using the proper work techniques should be provided. Cooperation and communication between departmental management and their respective faculty, staff and students is necessary to identify and correct ergonomically related issues.

### **3. Compliance with Policy:**

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion in accordance with relevant University policies.

Questions about this policy should be directed to [Environmental Health and Safety](#).

## **Procedures**

Departments in the Academic Division (Agency 207) should contact [Environmental Health & Safety](#) for assistance at 243-1711 or 982-4913.

Departments in the Medical Center (Agency 209) should contact Hospital Employee Health & Safety for assistance at 924-2611.

**Major Category** [Safety, Security and Environmental Quality](#)

**Next Scheduled Review** Monday, August 4, 2014

**Revision History** Added Compliance section 7/21/21; Updated 8/4/11.

**Applies To Text**

Academic Division and the Medical Center.

**Supersedes Policy Text**

Ergonomics XIV.F.1.

**Last modified** February 5, 2024 - 3:11pm

**Approved By** Policy Review Committee

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