

Workstation Ergonomics Policy

Policy · US · Updated 2026-07-13 · Square brackets are placeholders to replace with your own details.

A workstation ergonomics policy is the written standard for how computer workstations are set up, adjusted, and used at your organization — chair, monitor, keyboard, mouse, and the habits around them — plus the promise that matters most: report discomfort early and something will actually happen. It covers office desks, front-desk and point-of-sale stations, and the kitchen-table workstations of remote staff.

Musculoskeletal discomfort from computer work builds slowly and announces itself late. By the time wrist, neck, or back pain is constant, the fix is harder and the absence longer — but almost every case starts as a niggles that a workstation adjustment, made early, would have resolved. The policy exists to catch problems at the niggles stage, which requires people to know how to set up their station and to believe reporting discomfort leads to help rather than eye-rolling.

This template gives you the setup standard, the self-assessment and adjustment routine, the breaks and variation rules, the early-reporting pathway, and the remote work arrangements — ready to adapt to your equipment and roles.

Purpose and scope

This policy sets out how [Your company] sets up, assesses, and improves computer workstations. It applies to every employee who uses a computer for a significant part of their working day — in the office, at front-desk and point-of-sale stations, and when working remotely — and to the managers who respond when someone reports discomfort.

[Name/role] owns this policy, the workstation self-assessment, and the equipment budget line that makes fixes possible. A policy that identifies problems it cannot fund fixes for teaches people to stop reporting.

Policy statement

[Your company] provides workstations that can be adjusted to fit the person using them, trains people to make those adjustments, and treats early reports of discomfort as maintenance requests, not complaints. Nobody should work in pain while waiting for it to become official.

Every workstation user completes a self-assessment [at hire, when moving desks, and at [frequency]], and every reported issue gets a response from [name/role] within [days]. The aim is unglamorous and effective: chairs adjusted, monitors raised, and problems caught while they are still cheap.

Workstation setup standard

Set up in this order — chair first, because everything else is positioned relative to a properly seated person. The self-assessment at [location/system] walks through the same sequence:

- Chair: seat height so feet rest flat on the floor (or a footrest) with thighs roughly level; back supported by the backrest with the lumbar curve met; armrests, if present, supporting relaxed shoulders — not pushing them up or forcing elbows out.

- Keyboard and mouse: directly in front of you, close enough that elbows stay near the body and bend at roughly a right angle; wrists straight, hovering or lightly supported — not bent up, down, or sideways.
- Monitor: about an arm's length away, top of the screen at or slightly below eye level, directly in front of you. Dual screens: the primary screen centered, or the pair meeting at your midline if used equally.
- Desk: enough clearance for knees and thighs, and the items you use constantly within easy reach — repeated stretching to a far phone is a shoulder problem on layaway.
- Laptops: fine for short spells; for sustained work, use a riser or stand with a separate keyboard and mouse, because a laptop's screen and keyboard cannot both be in the right place at once.
- Lighting and glare: screen positioned to avoid reflections from windows and overhead lights, at brightness comfortable against the room — squinting and craning are posture problems wearing a lighting costume.

Breaks and variation

Static posture is the underlying problem — no setup is good enough to hold for hours without moving. [Your company] expects screen-based staff to build variation into the day, and managers to schedule work so they can:

- Take short, frequent posture breaks: stand, move, or stretch briefly at [interval], and change position often between breaks.
- Rest your eyes regularly by looking away from the screen to something distant — brief and frequent beats long and rare.
- Vary tasks where the role allows: calls standing, printing and filing as movement, walking meetings for one-to-ones.
- Never eat lunch at the desk as a norm — the midday break is also a posture break.

Reporting discomfort early

Anyone who notices aching, tingling, numbness, or stiffness in their hands, wrists, arms, shoulders, neck, or back that they associate with their workstation reports it to [name/role or system] — at the niggles stage, not the "cannot sleep" stage. Early reports are the policy working, and they are never held against anyone.

On receiving a report, [name/role] responds within [days]: review the self-assessment, watch the person working at their station, fix the obvious (chair, monitor height, mouse position), provide equipment from the approved list at [location] where needed, and refer to [occupational health provider/healthcare] where symptoms persist. Work-related musculoskeletal disorders that meet OSHA's recording criteria are recorded per the injury and illness reporting procedure.

Remote and home workstations

The setup standard applies wherever the work happens. Remote employees complete the same self-assessment for their home workstation, and [Your company] provides [list what you provide — e.g. a keyboard, mouse, laptop riser, and a contribution toward a chair] so the standard is achievable outside the office.

Managers check in on remote setups at [frequency] and treat reported discomfort identically to office reports — a home workstation injury is still a work injury, and the kitchen chair is the most common culprit in the file.

Records and review

Completed self-assessments, discomfort reports, responses, and equipment provided are logged at [system/location] for [period]. The log is the policy's memory: patterns across desks, roles, or buildings show where the next fix belongs.

This policy is reviewed [frequency, e.g. annually], after any recordable musculoskeletal case, and when workstations, equipment, or remote arrangements change. Owner: [name/role]. Next review due: [date].

How to use this template

1. Adapt the setup standard to your actual equipment: name the chair models, riser stock, and approved accessories people can request, and where they live.
2. Turn the setup standard into a one-page self-assessment and run everyone through it in the first month — most fixes surface immediately and cost nothing.
3. Name the responder and fund them: a small pre-approved budget for keyboards, risers, and mice removes the approval delay that turns niggles into claims.
4. Decide the remote package honestly — what you will provide, contribute to, or expect the employee to arrange — and write it in.
5. Watch the reporting rate, not just the reports: zero discomfort reports in a screen-heavy company means people are not reporting, not that nobody aches.

Official guidance

- › [OSHA — Ergonomics](#)
- › [OSHA — Computer workstations eTool](#)
- › [CDC NIOSH — Workplace safety and health](#)

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