

EMPLOYEE ERGONOMICS REVIEW PROCESS

Revision: 04 May 2015

Responsibility: Human Resources & Facilities Departments

Purpose

Fleming College is committed to the prevention of workplace injury, which includes musculoskeletal disorders (MSD). MSD is an umbrella term for a number of injuries and disorders of the muscles, tendons, nerves, etc.

Because there is the potential for debilitating injury which can incapacitate the worker, there is a shared responsibility by the worker and the College to prevent ergonomic injury through education and remedy of contributing conditions. Fleming College will promote employee and supervisor education and ensure that resources are provided to improve ergonomic working conditions.

Application & Scope

This process applies to all Fleming College employees. The following outlines the resources available to assist employees in preventing, identifying and addressing ergonomic concerns in the Fleming College workplace, including the steps to be taken when additional assistance is required. **Any situations involving medical documentation must immediately proceed to the HR Consultant for assessment of appropriate stage.**

Roles & Responsibilities

Employee:

- Follow work practices related to their jobs to reduce ergonomic risks
- Report early signs and symptoms of / change in musculoskeletal disorders to their supervisor, including notifying new supervisor of any arrangements in place (this includes when an employee changes jobs)
- Actively participate in the recognition, analysis, and reduction of ergonomic risks in their work area.
- Obtain medical documentation where required

Supervisor/Manager: Supervisor (including Deans, Directors, and Department heads) responsibilities related to the Workplace Ergonomics Program are to:

- Set a departmental climate which encourages early reporting of signs and symptoms of musculoskeletal disorders,
- Actively participate in the recognition, analysis, and reduction of ergonomic risks in work area under their responsibility
- Engage the support of the H&S Manager in risk prevention & assessment
- Engage the support of HR Consultant when accommodations involve medical documentation (including formal ergonomics assessment)
- Ensure that the proper level of ergonomics resources & training are provided to employees.
- Budgetary responsibility for ordering ergonomic equipment & furnishings under \$300.00.

College H&S Manager: Responsible for coordinating the Workplace Ergonomics Program (WEP) including:

- Educating supervisors and employees about ergonomic risk factors (through website resources, workshops, individual work site visits, etc)
- Prioritizing ergonomic evaluations based on available severity, prevalence and incident rates (where available)
- Performing ergonomic risk factor reviews and observations and communicating recommendations to supervisors and employees, including recommendations for formal ergonomics assessment

- Manage the Facilities Ergonomics budget, including Ergonomic Assessment suppliers and ordering ergonomic equipment & furnishings over \$300.00.

Facilities Manager: Participate in the timely procurement and installation of ergonomic equipment & furnishings as requested by Department Manager / College H&S Manager

Human Resources Consultant: Responsible for the facilitation of the College Return to Work & Medical or Disability Related Accommodations process.

Workstation Assessment Process - See procedure flow chart at Appendix A.

Stage 1. Employee/Supervisor Prevention: Utilized to ensure ergonomically safe workstations (new or existing), and to address the first symptoms of discomfort associated with workstation.

- 1.1 Prevention:** There are very common sources of discomfort that should be considered as a first step in addressing recurring pain. Employees should review resources located on the Health & Safety website (see flowchart below) to ensure their workstation follows basic ergonomic principles. These principles should also be taken into account when considering new equipment and furnishings. Any concerns should be immediately addressed with supervisor/manager.
- 1.2 Intervention:** Supervisor must be advised as soon as an employee notices any recurring pain associated with workstation / onset of symptoms of Musculoskeletal or Repetitive Strain Injury.
- 1.3 Analyze Work Station:** The supervisor and the worker are responsible for analyzing the workstation and implementing a prevention plan with measures to correct the problem. The supervisor/manager is responsible for making arrangements to obtain equipment / devices for these minor adjustments. Information to assist with this process can be found on the Ministry of Labour website [here](#).
- 1.4 Ongoing Review:** Once measures have been implemented, regular self-review by the employee should be conducted to monitor effectiveness. The employee must notify the supervisor if the steps in the Prevention stage are not successful in reducing/preventing discomfort within a reasonable period of time. Stage 2 should then be initiated.

Stage 2. Informal Assessment – Health & Safety Manager:

To be utilized to address situations requiring skilled ergonomic assessment of workstation and advice for adjustments. Recommended for general workstation setup where preventative measures have not been successful in reducing / preventing discomfort.

2.1 Notification: Upon an employee's request, the supervisor/manager emails the Health & Safety Manager to make arrangements for an informal workstation assessment to be conducted.

The assessment will be completed by Manager, Health & Safety who has training in "*A Participatory Approach to Musculoskeletal Disorder Prevention*".

Following the assessment, the Manager, Health & Safety will make recommendations to improve the ergonomic safety of the workstation.

- If equipment is not in stock through Facilities, supervisor approves the purchase of equipment through their operational budget within official Purchasing procedures (under \$300)

Stage 3. Formal Accommodation Process:

To be utilized in situations involving complex, multi-faceted accommodations where prevention & informal assessment strategies at Stages 1 & 2 have not been successful in relieving symptoms.

3.1 Notification: Initiated in two ways:

- a) Recommendation of H&S Manager to the supervisor and HR Consultant that a formal ergonomic assessment should be conducted or,
- b) Appropriate medical documentation (Functional Abilities Form) from a health care provider is provided to support the accommodation requirements and assist with identification of suitable accommodations.

3.2 Process:

- a) HR Consultant must be notified in all Stage 3 situations and will work with the employee and supervisor to facilitate the formal Medical Accommodation Action Plan (MAAP) process in accordance with the Return to Work & Medical or Disability Related Accommodations process located [here](#):
- b) If not already provided, acceptable medical documentation - Functional Abilities Form (FAF) required to clarify physical restrictions requiring accommodation to be obtained before proceeding. HR Consultant will facilitate this per the formal Accommodation process.
- c) FAF is reviewed by HR Consultant and manager to identify whether accommodations can be made utilizing the information provided or if a formal ergonomic assessment will be pursued. The H&S Manager may also be consulted to assist with this determination.
- d) If a formal Ergonomic Assessment is required, the HR Consultant will initiate contact to connect the employee & supervisor with the assessment provider to arrange an assessment. HRC emails H&S Manager to confirm assessment has been arranged.
- e) When the ergonomics assessment report has been received by HR Consultant from the provider, the invoice is sent to H&S Manager by HRC for processing for payment under Ergonomics Budget
- f) When necessary accommodations have been identified (through FAF only or formal ergonomic assessment), an accommodations meeting will be held per the Return to Work & Medical or Disability Related Accommodations process to develop a Medical Accommodations Action Plan (MAAP).
- g) The H&S Manager will be contacted by the supervisor to assist with ordering and implementation of ergonomic accommodations per the MAAP.
- h) The MAAP will contain a follow-up plan to assess effectiveness of accommodations and may include submission of a Functional Abilities form at set intervals.

Note: All formal ergonomic assessments should include a follow-up by assessment provider at an agreed upon time to assess effectiveness (normally one to two months following implementation of recommendations).

3.0 Costs of Ergonomic Assessments & Equipment:

- 3.1 Cost of Ergonomic Assessments are borne by the Facilities Ergonomics Budget. College H&S Manager must be advised in advance of all situations involving formal assessments.
- 3.2 Small cost items under \$300 (ex: palm rests, foot rests, stress mats, phone headsets, basic keyboard trays, mice, etc) will be acquired through the supervisor's departmental budget.
 - 3.2.1 Trials of alternative mouse options are available on temporary loan, from the Information Kiosk or main reception area at each campus at the recommendation of the Health & Safety manager
- 3.3 Approved higher cost items over \$300 (ex: work stations, ergonomic chairs, computer carts, specialized keyboard trays, etc) will be acquired by Facilities through the Ergonomics budget at the recommendation and approval of the College Health & Safety Manager. A review of the work station by the College H&S Manager is required before these items are purchased. Stage 3 review may be required depending on the level of accommodation (ex: sit/stand workstation request).
- 3.4 Furniture and equipment purchased through the Ergonomics budget shall be returned to Facilities should the employee leave Fleming or no longer require the equipment. Supervisor is responsible to notify the H&S Manager in these circumstances.
- 3.5 Costs for software associated with an ergonomic accommodation (example voice to text) is borne by the departmental budget. This level of accommodation may require a formal Stage 3 review.

APPENDIX A – ERGONOMICS PROCESS FLOW CHART

