

ERGONOMICS PROGRAM

REVISION HISTORY

- 1) Issued: February 2018

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2 POLICY STATEMENT

BCIT is committed to improve all employees' comfort and well-being by identifying and correcting ergonomic risk factors on the job.

3 PURPOSE OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The purpose of program is to eliminate or, if that is not practicable, minimize the risk of musculoskeletal injury (MSI) at work and comply with Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, Part 4 section 4.46-4.53.

This program establishes a requirement for all work groups at BCIT campuses to prevent work-related MSI's by ensuring that the workplace is assessed for risks leading to musculoskeletal injury and by requiring that appropriate controls be implemented.

This program applies to BCIT employees at all campuses.

4 DEFINITIONS

4.1 *Musculoskeletal injury or MSI*

Means an injury or disorder of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves, blood vessels or related soft tissue including a sprain, strain and inflammation, that may be caused or aggravated by work.

Note: The definition of "musculoskeletal injury" includes reference to a sprain, strain, and inflammation that may be caused or aggravated by work.

- **Sprain** is a joint injury in which some of the fibers of a supporting ligament are ruptured but the continuity of the ligament remains intact.
- **Strain** is an overstretching or overexertion of some part of the musculature.
- **Inflammation** is a localized response to injury or trauma that is marked by increased blood flow, redness, heat, pain, swelling, and often a loss of function

4.2 *Physical risk factors for MSI*

- **Force** — exerting force on an object as part of a task
- **Repetition** — doing a task that uses the same muscles over and over with little chance for rest or recovery
- **Work posture** — the position of different parts of the body when taken outside of the comfortable range of motion (awkward posture); usually combined with static posture (i.e., holding a posture for a long time)
- **Local contact stress** — a hard or sharp object coming in contact with the skin

For each of these risk factors, it is important to consider magnitude, frequency, and duration of exposure.

5 REFERENCE MATERIALS & APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

- Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, Part 4 section 4.46-4.53
- CSA Z412 Office Ergonomics

6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Management

- Support and steward the ergonomic program
- Commit adequate resources including training the workforce, consultant fees, and recommended equipment purchases

6.2 Supervisors

Supervisors will consult with OHS division and may request an ergonomic assessment, when:

- an employee reports an occurrence of work related discomfort
- the supervisor suspects that an employee has developed a sign or symptom of MSI
- the supervisor suspects that risks that may contribute to MSI's are present in the work area
- choosing furniture, equipment or tools, that vary from established standards; and
- planning, designing or renovating workspaces that may not conform to ergonomic standards

Supervisors will:

- review ergonomic requirements with OHS and, in the case of a medical request for workplace accommodation, also consult with the HR Advisor
- implement ergonomic changes necessary to prevent, eliminate or mitigate risk(s); and
- ensure that employees receive training and education in the ergonomically correct use of furniture, equipment and tools

6.3 Employees

- Report to their supervisors all work related discomfort/MSI occurrences
- Report to their supervisors any concerns relating to the ergonomic fit of their workstation, equipment or tools required to do their job
- Follow established safe work practices and participate in ergonomic training and education
- Provide medical documentation to their supervisor when requesting medically prescribed ergonomic accommodations, including sit/stand desks and non-standard chair

6.4 Joint/Sub Health & Safety Committee

- Through pro-active workplace inspections and accident reports, Health and Safety Committees can assist in identifying the presence of ergonomic hazards on campus and may make recommendations for change where the JHSC deems it is necessary.

6.5 OHS Division

- Coordinate the ergonomics program
- Provide ergonomics training
- Perform ergonomic evaluations
- Assistance with accident and incident investigations

7 RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 Risk identification

At BCIT, Workstation evaluations – conducted by the OHS Division at the request of worker/supervisor - are the primary type of risk assessment used to identify and control MSI risks.

Additionally, the following can be used to identify potential MSI problems.

- Routine risk assessments (Joint Committee or worker/supervisor)
- Worker reports to first-aid with MSI related issues
- Job is identified as having forceful exertions in awkward postures, frequent heavy lifting etc. and job safety analysis is requested by worker and/supervisor.
- Review workers compensation claims

7.2 Office Work - Workstation Evaluation

The OHS group provides ergonomic assessments to all BCIT employees and will make purchase recommendations for equipment.

7.3 Physical Labour Jobs – Job Safety Analysis

If physical labour jobs are identified as high risk for developing MSI, The OHS Division will complete a job safety analysis. The JSA is a systematic method of identifying and controlling risks.

7.4 Hazard Prevention and Control

7.4.1 Engineering Controls

When designing or setting up a new office space Departments are encouraged to seek feedback from the OHS division to ensure the office space meets ergonomic standards.

7.4.2 Work Practices

Work practices for safe computer use and safe lifting technique are on the ergonomics homepage on the SSEM website.

7.4.3 Administrative Controls

Providing frequent breaks or job rotation can reduce repetitive movements. Providing employees with short breaks at least once an hour, will help to reduce or avoid stress and back strain.

8 TRAINING AND EDUCATION

BCIT must ensure that a worker who may be exposed to a risk of MSI is educated in risk identification related to the work, including the recognition of early signs and symptoms of MSIs and their potential health effects.

BCIT must ensure that a worker to be assigned to work which requires specific measures to control the risk of MSI is trained in the use of those measures, including, where applicable, work procedures and ergonomic equipment..

- All employees upon hire are informed of the ergonomics programs and resources during new hire orientation training
- Employees have access to ergonomic training/self-assessment on the ergonomics home page on the SSEM website
- Management staff are informed of their responsibilities regarding ergonomics in the workplace

9 DOCUMENTATION

- Documentation related to the training and instruction must be maintained for a minimum of 3 years
- The OHS Division is required to maintain copies of risk assessments and work procedures for a minimum of 3 years

10 PROGRAM REVIEW

- The OHS Division will monitor the effectiveness of the measures taken to comply with the Ergonomics (MSI) Requirements and ensure they are reviewed at least annually
- The annual review may be conducted in consultation with the Joint Health & Safety Committee