Ergonomics Program

Keene State College Policies and Procedures

Ergonomics Program

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1.1 General Policy

Keene State College has implemented this ergonomics program to address the problem of cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs). CTDs have become an issue of increasing concern because they continue to rise in occurrence, especially in office settings.

Our goal through this Ergonomics Program is to prevent the occurrence of workrelated Cumulative Trauma disorders by controlling or eliminating the risk factors that cause them. This program ensures that all affected employees are aware of job-related risk factors and provides information and solutions to eliminate them. Keene State College promotes continuous improvement for the efficiency, comfort, and well being of all employees through a team effort of administrative and employee involvement.

1.2 Responsibilities

All Keene State College employees are responsible for understanding and complying with the policy in this section.

1.3 Scope and Applications

Cumulative Trauma Management

We encourage all employees to immediately report any symptoms of discomfort that may be associated with their job duties. This should be reported to the employee’s supervisor, Human Resources and to the Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator.

All reported cases will receive an evaluation by the EHS Coordinator, with those results forwarded to the employee’s supervisor. It is the supervisor’s

responsibility to respond to and implement the EHS Coordinator's recommendations for improvement. Keene State College encourages a proactive approach to reduce work hazards and reduce risk of future injury.

Supervisors and the EHS Coordinator will record and file written reports from the first observation of illness or injury through all subsequent follow-up activities.

Identifying Problem Jobs

If a job is thought to be a problem job, either in the office or physical plant, the EHS Coordinator will look at the following factors to evaluate need for improvement:

- Rate and number of repetitions: performance of the same motion or motion patterns every few seconds for more than two hours at a time.
- Postures and limb positions: fixed or awkward work postures such as overhead work, twisted or bent back, bent wrist, stooping, or squatting, for more than a total of two hours.
- Vibration: use of vibrating or impact tools or equipment for more than a otal of two hours.
- Loads/lifted: lifting, lowering, or carrying of anything weighing more than 25 pounds (11.34 kg) more than once during the work shift.
- Loads/static: holding a fixed or awkward position with arms or neck for more than ten seconds.
- Muscle forces: continually pulling or pushing objects.
- Work pace: piece rate or machine paced work for more than four hours at a time (legally required breaks cannot be included when totaling the four hour limit).
- Time spent doing that particular job.
- Condition of equipment
- Adjustability of environment

Supervisors and employees shall participate in evaluating new equipment and processes for potential risk factors. They also should participate in evaluating hand tools to determine if the designs are ergonomically suitable for the

intended use and appropriate for the workers who use them.

Solutions

For each problem job that has been changed, we maintain a file of the improvements and changes completed. The file contains documentation of the ergonomic-related illnesses or injuries, the actual changes made, and any similar incidents that occurred after the changes were implemented.

Employee Training

The EHS Coordinator offers general ergonomics training which covers how to recognize what causes a CTD, signs and symptoms of CTDs, and how to report a CTD.

This college will not implement any policy or practice which discourages reporting or which results in discrimination or reprisal against any employee who makes a report.

1.4 Definitions

Ergonomics – Ergonomics involves the arrangement of the work environment to fit the person. The use of ergonomic principles on the job helps to reduce stress and eliminate many potential injuries and disorders associated with overuse of muscles, bad posture, and repetitive motions.

CTD – Cumulative Trauma Disorder. A musculoskeletal disorder that occurs as a result of repeated long term improper motions such as

- Repetitive motions.
- Forceful exertions.
- Vibrations.
- Sustained or awkward postures

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is considered a CTD.