

Working from Home - OHS Checklist

The following check-list provides guidance on completing an OHS risk assessment (Step 3 of the **ohsrm** Program) when working from home.

Most of the work undertaken at home will be clerical or computer based. Refer to the University's *Office Ergonomics Guidelines* when considering this type of work, both at home and on University premises.

The Physical Activity Required

- ❑ Repetitive actions are not continued for long periods without appropriate breaks.
- ❑ Breaks involve stretching and changing of posture, and possibly alternating activity.
- ❑ Posture is comfortable and in accordance with the *Office Ergonomic Guidelines*.
- ❑ Any lifting, pushing, or carrying type task is well within the physical capacity of the person.
- ❑ Trolleys or other mechanisms are used for moving heavy and awkward items.

The Work Environment

- ❑ Level of illumination and location of lighting fixtures are suited to the activity.
Note: lighting level should be sufficient for visual tasks to be completed without eye strain. Greater illumination is generally needed for very fine visual tasks. Natural and artificial light sources should not create glare via reflection on the computer screen or working surface.
- ❑ Worker enjoys sufficient ventilation and thermal comfort, regardless of the season, as per the *Guidelines for Indoor Thermal Comfort and Ventilation*.
- ❑ Location, height and other physical characteristics of furniture and computer are suited to the task and take into consideration other factors eg., egress routes, direction of light sources...
- ❑ Walk-ways are clear of clutter and trip hazards such as trailing electrical cords.
- ❑ The work area is segregated from other hazards in the home eg., hot cooking surfaces in the kitchen.

Emergency egress

- ❑ Path to the exit is reasonably direct.
- ❑ Path to the exit is sufficiently wide and free of trip hazards and obstructions to allow unimpeded passage.

The Nature of the Hazard itself

- ❑ Security is sufficient to prevent unauthorised entry by intruders.
- ❑ When working in isolation at home, a "call-in" procedure has been established to periodically confirm with the Department that the home worker has not been injured.

Electrical

- ❑ Power outlets are not overloaded with double adapters and power boards.
- ❑ Earth leakage circuit protection is in place for work related equipment.
- ❑ Electrical equipment used for work is properly tagged and tested as per the *Policy for Electrical Testing and Tagging*.

The Individual Involved

- ❑ The worker's fitness and health are suited to the task to be undertaken.
- ❑ Any special needs to ensure health and safety are accommodated.

Other

- ❑ Telephone or other suitable devices are readily available to allow effective communication in emergency situations.
- ❑ Emergency contact numbers and details are known ie., 000 for fire, ambulance or police, specific numbers for University contacts.
- ❑ First Aid supplies are available (Type C kit minimum requirement, to be supplied by the Department). Refer to Appendix 1 of the *Policy on First Aid*
- ❑ Smoke detectors are installed in the work area and properly maintained to provide early warning of fire.
- ❑ A properly maintained dry-chemical or carbon dioxide fire extinguisher is on-hand and the home worker is trained how to use this equipment to extinguish minor fires.
- ❑ Incidents are reported promptly to the supervisor using the University's standard *Incident Report Form*.

Safety Equipment Check-list

- ❑ First-aid kit, Type C or better.
- ❑ Fire extinguisher, dry chemical or carbon dioxide.
- ❑ Smoke detector, properly serviced.

References

ohsrn Program documents

http://www.usyd.edu.au/risk/ohs_manual/ohsrn.shtml

Office Ergonomic Guidelines

http://www.usyd.edu.au/risk/ohs_manual/ergonomics/ergoguide.shtml

Guidelines for Indoor Thermal Comfort and Ventilation

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/risk/policies/ohs/IndoorThermalComfort.shtml>

Policy for Electrical Testing and Tagging (awaiting finalisation and publication)

Policy on First Aid

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/risk/policies/ohs/firstaid.shtml>

Incident Report Form

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/risk/report/index.shtml>