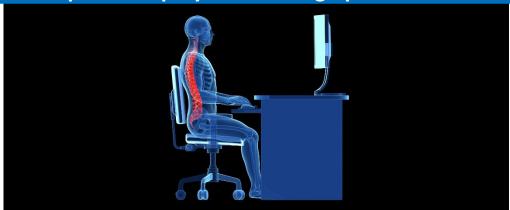
# **Ergonomic Tips for Employees - Setting up a Home Workspace**



Employees who telework will benefit from taking some time to adjust their home workstation. Please note that purchases made to set up a home telework area are not reimbursed by most departments.

The recommended sequence for adjusting your home workstation is:

- 1. Adjust your chair so your feet are fully resting on the floor.
- 2. Sit in a relaxed manner with your hands in your lap and your elbows at your side.
- 3. Adjust the height of the keyboard so your elbows and shoulders will remain in this relaxed position when you are typing. A keyboard tray may be needed.
- 4. Position the keyboard and monitor so you are looking straight ahead.

your knees. Slightly leaning back is better than leaning forward.

### Desk

Use a desk or table surface and do not work from a couch or bed.
Chose a desk that has a height low enough so you can sit with both feet fully on the floor at all times.

### Chair

laptop.

Use a padded chair that is adjusted in height so your entire foot surface touches the floor.
These tips will help if you are not able to sit in a chair before buying:
Standard chairs usually adjust 18" to 22" high, and have a seat cushion 18-19"deep.
Shorter persons may prefer a seat height 15"-17" so their feet can touch the ground.
Taller persons may prefer a seat more than 22" high, with a cushion 23" deep so that their entire thigh is supported.
A padded "office chair" is better than a padded kitchen chair because the kitchen chair often has a wood frame that can compress blood flow in the thighs.
Locate the chair so your legs are under the desk surface. Your knees should be under the keyboard or

☐ Sit up straight so your shoulders are above your hips — avoid leaning over such that your shoulders are above

Shorter persons often find that the desk surface is too high when they sit in a chair with their feet fully on the floor. A footrest is your last choice. First see if a lower desk can be obtained, or if a keyboard tray can be installed under the desk.

## **Keyboard and Mouse**

Sit in a relaxed manner with your hands in your lap and elbows next to your torso. Put the keyboard at a
height where your elbows remain relaxed at your torso, and your hands are still close to your abdomen. This
keeps your shoulders relaxed. Shorter persons may be more comfortable with a keyboard tray.

- Use an external mouse instead of the built-in mousepad on your laptop. This gives you a larger range of motion.
- ☐ Keep the mouse on the same level of the keyboard. This prevents one shoulder from being held up higher than the other. Keep shoulders relaxed.
- ☐ Avoid resting your wrist or forearm on the edge of a table.

## **Monitor**

- Use the laptop's monitor screen if you are comfortable. If the height is too low and you feel hunched over, then place the laptop on a higher surface and connect an external keyboard so you are still typing with your elbows close to your torso and forearms parallel to the floor.
- ☐ Sit directly in front of the monitor so that you are looking straight ahead. Avoid turning your head to the side.

**Reimbursement**: Purchases made to set up a home telework area are not reimbursed by most employers. Contact your supervisor to see if borrowing a surplus chair from the office is an option.

# **Desk Examples**

A standard desk height is between 28.5 to 30 inches. Kitchen tables are typically 31 inches high. Shorter persons may be more comfortable with a desk or keyboard tray 25-27 inches high.



Height adjusts from 22 to 32 inches



Height from floor 29.5 inches



Height 28 inches

#### **Resources**

DLS bulletin "Office Ergonomics: Tips for Employees" download (mass.gov)

Watch this video for tips on adjusting their home workspace: <u>Ergonomics Expert Explains How to Set Up Your</u> Desk | WSJ - YouTube

Use the OSHA e-tool https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/positions.html

For more information visit, www.mass.gov/dols/wshp