

State of California

MEMORANDUM

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Handbook*

DATE: March 26, 1997

TO: PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT LIAISONS

REFERENCE CODE: 97-011

THIS MEMORANDUM SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED TO:

Personnel Officers, Return-to-Work/Claims Coordinators,
Health and Safety Coordinators and Wellness Coordinators

FROM: Department of Personnel Administration
Benefits Division

SUBJECT: New Computer User's Handbook

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The Department of Personnel Administration (DPA) published the first "Video Display User's Handbook" in July of 1993. The purpose of this handbook was to assist agencies in providing an ergonomically safe and healthy workplace for all employees. It substantially complied with the 1992/95 Bargaining Agreement between the State of California and the California State Employees Association (CSEA), Unit 4 (Office and Allied).

DPA in cooperation with the California Highway Patrol, CAL/OSHA, Caltrans, Corrections, CSEA, Education, Employment Development Department, Motor Vehicles, Prison Industry Authority, State Compensation Insurance Fund and Youth Authority developed an updated handbook titled, the "Computer User's Handbook". The main difference in the updated handbook is an emphasis on comfort.

There is considerably more information available that indicates good ergonomic workstations, work habits and frequently changing positions can prevent Cumulative Trauma Disorders (CTDs). A stretching and general exercise program is an equally important prevention strategy. New sections include "When it Hurts", "Teleworking at the Home Office", "Laptop Tips" and an expanded stretching exercise section.

Initially, DPA anticipated including the Ergonomic Regulation in the updated handbook. Unfortunately, despite several attempts, CAL/OSHA has been unable to promulgate a regulation that management, labor and the Office of Administrative Law can agree upon. When the regulation is promulgated, we will provide agencies with additional information.

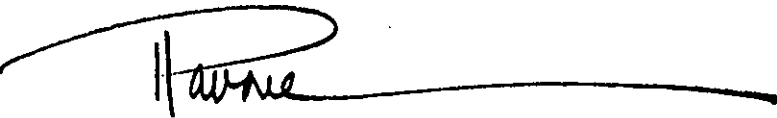
The California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 3203 requires that we have a system to ensure that employees comply with safe and healthy work practices as do the bargaining agreements. Since we have had CTD injuries, we have an obligation to do something to prevent future occurrences. The "Computer User's Handbook" is intended to assist departments in training employees on how to prevent CTDs related to computer use.

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DPA requests that you distribute copies of the new handbook (Attachment A) to all computer users in your department. A sample policy that you might include in a cover memo to staff is attached. Supervisors should be required to review the new handbook with their employees. It should also be included as part of your Injury and Illness Prevention Program.

We are distributing an initial copy that can be duplicated for your employees. A supply of handbooks should be available at the Department of General Services Stores in the near future. This document will also be available on DPA's web page at www.dpa.ca.gov on the Internet.

If you have any comments or questions about the new handbook, please call or e-mail the contact person. Thank you for your cooperation.



Patricia Pavone, Chief
Benefits Division

Attachment

SAMPLE POLICY

The health and safety of our employees is important. Injuries negatively impact personal lives. Therefore, (department name) has established an Ergonomics Program as part of the Injury and Illness Prevention Program to effectively reduce the risk of injuries related to computer use. The key objective is to provide a safe and healthy environment for all employees. Through the cooperative efforts of all employees, this objective can be achieved. The success of this program depends on the active and earnest support of each employee.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

Labor Code 6400 states, "Every employer shall furnish employment and a place of employment which are safe and healthful for the employees therein."

Labor Code 6401.7 states, "Every employer shall establish, implement, and maintain an effective injury prevention program. The program shall be written, except as provided in subdivision (e), and shall include, but not be limited to, the following elements:". The remaining information describes in detail what should be in the program.

California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 3203 states, "Effective July 1, 1991, every employer shall establish, implement and maintain an effective Injury and Illness Prevention Program. The Program shall be in writing and, shall, at a minimum:" The remaining information describes in detail what should be in the program.

