

Colorado State University

Office Ergonomics Procedures

Introduction

The CSU Office Ergonomics Procedure outlines the steps to ensure that workstations are set up ergonomically to promote employee health, comfort, productivity, and efficiency. Proper ergonomics can not only prevent musculoskeletal disorders but enhance human performance and improve overall health and well-being in the workplace.

Ergonomic Evaluation Request

All employees (faculty, staff, and employed students) can request an ergonomic evaluation, regardless of whether they are experiencing discomfort. All requests for evaluation can be made on the [ergonomics website](#). Employees experiencing significant discomfort can be prioritized if needed. These employees simply need to inform the ergonomics office so that their request can be expedited. Employees are also encouraged to notify their supervisor of their request for ergonomic evaluation and that there may be potential for changes to their workstation and work environment.

Evaluation Scheduling

All scheduling will take place online on the CSU [ergonomics website](#). Employees will be required to complete the ergonomic evaluation request form which provides useful background information to the ergonomist/ergonomics specialist who will perform the evaluation. This includes information about the employee's work habits, job task durations, and any existing discomfort, pain or other problems or inefficiencies they are currently experiencing. Upon completion of the ergonomic evaluation request form, the employee will be re-directed to an external scheduling site (MS Bookings) where they can schedule a time and day for the evaluation.

On-Site Evaluation

During the evaluation, an ergonomist/ergonomic specialist will conduct an on-site evaluation of the employee's workstation and work environment and will observe the employee performing regular work tasks to identify ergonomic risk factors. Various measurements of workstation components, such as desk height and monitor distance, will be obtained (where appropriate). Photos and/or videos will also be taken to document the ergonomic issues identified.

Two types of office ergonomic evaluations are currently offered and differ by the amount of detail provided.

Level 1 Ergonomic Evaluation

This evaluation involves the ergonomic specialist obtaining only very brief information from the employee regarding their work environment, workstation, tasks and tools. Identification of detailed injury risk factors is not comprehensive in this level of evaluation. Only a general discussion regarding the concerns identified and potential recommendations will take place.

During a Level 1 evaluation, the Ergonomic Specialist will observe and evaluate the employee while performing regular work for approximately 5 – 10 minutes. This allows for the identification of potential problems and the gathering of any necessary information. The specialist will (likely) take pictures to document any identified risk factors, equipment used, inefficiencies, or other potential issues.

Using the data and information collected, the ergonomic specialist will have a discussion with the employee to summarize their findings and discuss potential solutions. Thereafter, a basic report for the employee will be provided. Employees can then distribute their report to appropriate individuals in their department at their discretion.

This type of evaluation may also be useful for employees who:

- Have had an ergonomic evaluation of the same workstation in the past
- Have good adjustable/ergonomic equipment (e.g., height adjustable table, ergonomic chair, monitor arm, etc.)
- Have attended formal Office Ergonomics Training in the past

- Have confidence that their workstation is well set up ergonomically and need help with making minor adjustments
- Have a need for new furniture and would like to discuss workstation design and layout options (e.g., height adjustable table implementation)

Overall time = 15 – 60 minutes (approximately). Duration varies depending on several factors including questions from the employee, risk factors identified, etc.

It is not required to have a Level 1 evaluation prior to requesting a Level 2 evaluation. For a more detailed evaluation and report that includes Risks, Injury Risk Scores, and Injuries broken down by body type, request a Level 2 Ergonomic Evaluation.

To request an evaluation, please complete the – [Office Ergonomic Evaluation Questionnaire/Form](#).

Level 2 Ergonomic Evaluation

This evaluation involves a detailed ergonomic evaluation of the employee's workstation, work environment, tasks and tools used and will include detailed discussion regarding the injury risks and other concerns identified and potential recommendations will take place. Identification of injury risk factors is detailed and comprehensive in this level of evaluation. A Level 2 Ergonomic Evaluation is a quantitative and comprehensive evaluation that will take ~30 – 75 minutes. A Level 2 evaluation can be requested in place of a Level 1 ergonomic evaluation if an employee wishes to have a more detailed and comprehensive evaluation of their workstation.

During a Level 2 evaluation, the ergonomic specialist will begin by asking any additional questions not addressed in the ergonomic evaluation request form completed by the employee. Thereafter, the employee will be asked to perform regular work in real-time so that observation and analysis can take place, and measurements can be obtained. This observation time allows the specialist to identify any exposure to injury risk factors (including but are not limited to force, frequency, duration, awkward posture and contact stress), and gather any other necessary data (e.g., desk height, elbow height, eye height, monitor distance, illumination levels, etc.) to determine the level of exposure. Environmental factors such as lighting, noise, & temperature will also be evaluated (where applicable). A Level 2 evaluation can be requested in place of a Level 1 ergonomic evaluation if an employee wishes to have a more detailed and comprehensive evaluation of their workstation.

During the observation period, pictures and/or video of the job tasks performed *will* be taken which allows the specialist to document any identified risk factors, equipment used, inefficiencies, or other potential problems. Pictures are also used in the ergonomic evaluation report unless noted otherwise. Observation and evaluation of work performed, gathering of measurements, etc., lasts anywhere from 15 – 30 minutes (on average). (Observation times may vary depending on the situation and job tasks performed. In cases where the ergonomic evaluation is due to a work-related injury, the observation time may exceed 30 minutes and may exceed 60 minutes). During the observation period, the employee can perform regular work tasks.

When observation is completed and all and measurements have been obtained, the ergonomic specialist will reconvene with the employee to discuss their findings as well as briefly go over their ergonomic evaluation report. The specialist will discuss and educate the employee on the risks identified, the ergonomic risk evaluation scores (which are broken down into 6 areas of the body), the likely cause of exposure, as well as potential solutions which can help minimize the risk of injury.

Neck	Shoulder	Elbow	Wrists	Feet/Legs	Back	Contact Stress
High	Low	Medium	High	Medium	High	Present

Ergonomic Risk Rating Chart		Final Ergonomic Risk Assessment Score
0-15	Low	33
16-30	Medium	
31-44	High	
45+	Very High	

A Level 2 ergonomic evaluation is useful for employees who:

- Simply wish to have a more detailed evaluation of their workstation
- Have had a Level 1 evaluation in the past but need additional assistance
- Have discomfort or pain

A Level 2 evaluation can always be the default and is recommended for employees who are uncertain of which evaluation to request as it will cover each aspect of the workstation setup in detail and help ensure injury risks are minimized as much as possible. A Level 2 evaluation is also required in most cases where a work-related injury has taken place and the employee's physician has requested an ergonomic evaluation be completed.

Overall time = 30 – 75 minutes (approximately). Duration varies depending on several factors including questions from the employee, risk factors identified, etc.

*As mentioned above, along with observation, the ergonomist/ergonomics specialist will take photos/videos of the employee performing regular office job tasks. Photos are *extremely* valuable in documenting and illustrating an identified injury risk factor, the workstation setup, and work environment for future reference as well as to provide the employee and/or supervisor education and awareness. Photos will only be used by the ergonomic specialist and will be included in the ergonomic evaluation report. At the minimum, a photo of the desk, chair, etc. will be taken. Photos will not be used for other purposes unless prior consent is granted. (For preventive evaluations, if pictures are not preferred, please notify the ergonomic specialist *prior* to the evaluation. For evaluations that are due to a work-related injury, pictures are required).

To request an evaluation, please complete the [Office Ergonomic Evaluation Request Form](#).

Remote/Virtual Evaluation

Remote office ergonomic evaluations are also offered to CSU employees. These evaluations are nearly identical to in-person evaluations, other than the fact that they are conducted remotely (via MS Teams). Employees will need to complete certain steps for the virtual ergonomics evaluation to take place. Steps in the process are further detailed on the [virtual ergonomics evaluation website](#).

To request an evaluation, please complete the [Office Ergonomic Evaluation Request Form](#) and select the Virtual/Remote Options.

Discussion and Recommendations

As mentioned, at the completion of the evaluation, the ergonomist/ergonomics specialist will discuss findings with the employee and make recommendations for improvement. These solutions will be tailored to address identified risk factors.

The ergonomist/ergonomics specialist will also educate the employee on proper ergonomic principles and techniques to prevent discomfort and injury.

Report Generation

All formal Level 1 or 2 ergonomic evaluations will provide an ergonomic evaluation report, including findings, risk factors identified, recommendations for mitigation, employee, workstation, and environmental measurements.

The ergonomic evaluation report is provided solely to the employee, who can distribute this to appropriate individuals in their department at their discretion. This might be to a supervisor or department head for justification of equipment purchases or changes. Employees may also access their report online on the [ergonomics website](#).

Implementation of Recommendations

The department (employee, supervisor, manager and/or department head) are responsible for implementing recommended ergonomic changes. Procurement of ergonomic equipment or furniture, if needed, will be coordinated with the appropriate personnel within the department. Maintenance issues or facility/IT concerns should be addressed as quickly as possible to ensure optimal workstation conditions. The ergonomist/ergonomics specialist who provides the evaluation can assist where feasible with answering questions related to the evaluation, recommendation of equipment, etc., however, it is not within the scope of the ergonomist/ergonomics specialist to procure, install or setup, equipment for an employee/department. Departments should work with internal accounting personnel and/or the CSU procurement office to make necessary purchases as well as vendors, Facilities Management, IT Team, etc., for installation of products, equipment, or furniture.

Follow-Up

An automated survey will be sent ~12 weeks following the completion of the evaluation. Along with this, a personalized follow-up email will be sent to the employee to follow up on improvements made ~6-12 weeks post-evaluation. An in-person follow-up evaluation *may* be scheduled to assess the effectiveness of implemented changes (where feasible and necessary). Whether an employee needs additional help from the ergonomist/ergonomics specialist is largely up to that individual employee. If additional help and further evaluation is needed, employees are encouraged to contact the ergonomics office, ergonomist/ergonomics specialist and/or [request another ergonomic evaluation](#). Follow-up evaluations are highly encouraged but not required as part of the evaluation process.

Feedback from the employee regarding ergonomic evaluation improvements will be asked for during follow-up evaluations (whether via email, through online surveys, or in-person evaluations).

Documentation and Tracking

All activities related to ergonomic evaluations, recommendations, and follow-ups will be documented in a centralized online system. Documentation will include **all** aspects of the request, evaluation findings, recommendations, improvements made, and follow-up outcomes (if provided by the employee).

Training and Awareness

Training is available online and is on-demand. Sessions for both teleworking/working from home as well as within the traditional office on campus are available. Training sessions cover the importance of ergonomics and workstation setup, as well as related office ergonomics topics. All employees are highly encouraged to complete a training session that is appropriate for their working environment(s).

Training materials, resources, and guidelines are also available on the [ergonomics website](#) to promote proper ergonomic practices throughout the university.

Review and Revision

The Office Ergonomics Procedure will be reviewed periodically to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

Feedback from employees, supervisors, and specialists will be considered in revising the procedure to better meet the needs of the university.

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Last updated: 6/16/2026