**CHECKLIST**

**in occupational health and safety for telework[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**For a healthy and safe work environment**

Telecommuting is a work arrangement that offers benefits to workers and Employers. In terms of occupational health and safety, teleworking can be associated with certain types of hazards, including ergonomic hazards and psychosocial hazards.

The ergonomic risks generated by teleworking are mainly related to the layout of the workstation: prolonged drooping, awkward posture, equipment and furniture not adapted to the task.

The psychosocial risks associated with teleworking are due in particular to the difficulties in establishing a clear boundary and balance between private life and the professional sphere (e.g., time management, connected all the time) as well as isolation (e.g., feelings of lack of support or recognition). They can also be linked to the nature or organization of the work (e.g., harassment or violence). Although psychological health refers to a multifactorial concept and that work is not always the predominant cause of problems, there are organizational factors that affect psychological health and are recognized as a source of psychosocial risks.

It is important to be able to quickly detect people who will be particularly affected by psychosocial risks. The signs and symptoms of psychological distress, which is an early indicator of psychological health impairment, can be of four kinds: physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioural. To be significant, these symptoms must be accompanied by a change in habits and behaviours, dysfunction at work, and absence of improvement.

Employers have an obligation to take the necessary measures to protect the health, safety and physical well-being of workers. As for workers, it is their responsibility to take the necessary measures to protect their health, safety or physical well-being and to participate in the identification and elimination of the risks of occupational accidents and diseases in the workplace.

* Inform staff about each other's roles, obligations and responsibilities in terms of occupational health and safety, publicize the policy on psychological or sexual harassment and disseminate the company's policy on telework, if applicable.

NOTE:

1. **Psychosocial risks**

* Inform staff about psychosocial risks and the preventive measures put in place to reduce and control them. Provide examples of psychosocial risks, such as difficulties to establish a clear boundary between private and professional life (e.g., time management, hyperconnection) and isolation (e.g., feelings of lack of support or recognition).

NOTE:

* Recall expectations for respect, civility, and conflict management. Provide examples of behaviours that are deemed inappropriate and may manifest virtually, such as digital incivility, harassment, or bullying.

NOTE:

* Train and inform workers about high-risk situations of assault or harassment, as well as harassment policy, protection and prevention strategies.

NOTE:

* Educate workers on the importance of raising any problems or concerns they encounter with their immediate supervisor and reporting any unacceptable behaviour.

NOTE:

* Promote healthy interpersonal relationships between staff members and with their managers.

NOTE:

* Create ways of sharing to encourage social support.

NOTE:

* Make it clear that no form of violence or harassment is tolerated within the organization, whether from staff (colleagues, supervisors, subordinates) or from outside (customers, users, suppliers, subcontractors) and communicate this directive.

NOTE:

* Respond to concerns and questions with respect and openness.

NOTE:

* Notify the immediate supervisor or the person identified by the employer for the management of conflict and harassment, if applicable, when there is a situation of aggression, violence or harassment.

NOTE:

* Discuss the situation with the team or worker who has experienced violence or harassment in order to determine the actions required, keeping in mind that a private and confidential meeting may be the preferred means, depending on the situation.

NOTE:

* Educate staff on the warning signs and symptoms of psychological health damage. In the event of psychological distress, workers are referred to a support service, such as an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), or resources available in the area.

NOTE:

1. **Ergonomic Hazards**

* Provide a workstation ergonomic fit guide to inform staff of good workstation fit practices.

NOTE:

* Inform staff about ergonomic hazards and the correct posture to adopt in order to avoid an awkward posture.

NOTE:

* Instruct staff to conduct periodic inspections of their workstations to ensure that they are following good ergonomic practices.

NOTE:

* Remind people of the importance of working together to report problematic situations.

NOTE:

* Use the services of an ergonomist for workstation analysis when a worker raises a problem.

NOTE:

* Inform staff of the importance of taking short breaks and active breaks.

NOTE:

* Provide a list of ergonomic exercises to mitigate the effects of prolonged sitting work.

NOTE:

* Inform workers of the influence of light sources on posture (work in a well-lit room, preferably with a window, ensure that there are no reflections on the screen, etc.).

NOTE:

1. **Other Risks**

* Inform workers that they must clear the environment and their workspace and eliminate clutter.

NOTE:

1. **Telework Workplace Inspection Grid**

This grid is used to identify risks related to the health and safety of the workplace. In the event that the answer identifies a risk, corrective action should be taken.

**Floors**

Are there any obstacles or debris on the floor?

Is the floor slippery?

**Stairs and corridors**

Are stairs and hallways clean and uncluttered?

Is there a ramp along the stairs?

**Work Equipment/Furniture**

Is the furniture (filing cabinets, work desk, work table) in good condition?

Are there sharp edges or metal protrusions?

Is the task chair used strong and resistant?

Is the phone within reach?

**Emergency Equipment**

Is a smoke detector present and functional?

**Emergency measures**

Is the identified emergency exit accessible and unobstructed?

**Office equipment and workspace storage**

Is the workspace uncluttered?

Are there items stacked on desks or filing cabinets?

Are the shelves overloaded or overcharged?

Are the heaviest items found in the bottom drawers of filing cabinets or desks?

Are the drawers closed when not in use?

Are electrical and telephone wires covered, fixed to the ground and placed in non-traffic areas to prevent falls?

Does the location of certain objects (baskets, stools) pose a tripping hazard?

**Ambient Temperature and Brightness**

Is the room temperature at least 20 degrees?

Is the lighting sufficient?

1. Reproduction authorized by the Commission des normes, de l’équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail, 2021. Translation made by Groupe Mission with MS Word. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)