

## INFORMATION PAPER

DATE: 8 September 2008

SUBJECT: Ergonomics Plan

**PURPOSE:** To provide information pertaining to the Fort Meade Ergonomics Plan.

**GENERAL:** This plan prescribes policy, procedures, and responsibilities for the enforcement of the Ergonomics program for the Fort George G. Meade (FGGM) community as described in AR 40-5, Preventive Medicine, and FGGM Regulation 40-1, Safety Ergonomics Program. FGGM is committed to improve our employees' comfort and well-being by identifying and correcting ergonomic risk factors on the job. This program applies to FGGM military and civilian garrison and tenant worksites analysis, hazard prevention, control, health care management, and education and training programs. The Installation Ergonomics Officer (IEO), Mr. Tony Simms, FGGM Installation Safety Office (ISO), is responsible for reviewing the FGGM's Ergonomics Program and provides guidance, as needed.

**FACTS:**

a. Under this plan, staff members of the FGGM ISO will evaluate jobs which they have identified as having "problem areas" and develop and implement solutions to reduce job-related worker injury and illness.

b. Our goal through this Ergonomics Plan is to prevent the occurrence of work-related musculoskeletal disorders by identifying, reducing or eliminating the risk factors which causes them. This plan ensures that all affected employees are aware of job-related risk factors and provides information and solutions to elevate them. FGGM promotes continuous improvement for the efficiency, comfort, and well-being of all employees through a team effort of management and employee involvement.

c. The Installation Safety Office partnered with Ergonomics Consultants to obtain Ergonomic Chairs, tables, keyboard trays, and other equipment. This supplements the existing model ergonomic work station at the safety office in a cost efficient manner. Safety has therefore expanded its ability to advise and consult all tenants on Ft Meade. Many partner/tenant organizations are visiting, selecting equipment and ordering equipment to either eliminate or reduce ergonomic deficiencies within their work areas. The ISO has also identified software in the Microsoft Windows XP suite that can support alternate keyboard layouts to accommodate personnel who are injured or hampered by work-related musculoskeletal disorders (West's) such as carpal tunnel. POC Tony Simms 7-4227

d. If, after reading this plan, you find that improvements can be made, please contact the FGGM IEO, Mr. Tony Simms at 301-677-4227. We encourage all suggestions because we are committed to the success of our Ergonomics Program. We strive for clear understanding, safe and efficient work practices, and involvement in the program from the entire FGGM Community.

**ERGONOMICS TEAM:** Mr. Simms, FGGM ISO is responsible for our Ergonomics Program. The staff members of FGGM ISO have developed objectives for ergonomic improvements within the FGGM working community and methods for identifying and resolving these problem areas. For more detailed information, refer to FGGM Regulation 40-1, which has been distributed throughout the installation and is also available on the FGGM ISO's website located at:

<http://www.ftmeade.army.mil/pages/safety/Safety.html>.

**INJURY/MEDICAL MANAGEMENT:** Occupational Health Clinic, Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center (KACC), 2480 Llewellyn Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, is the health care provider that provides medical treatment for our employees with injuries or illnesses relating to ergonomic factors. They are familiar with our specific workplace job procedures and the job risk factors.

We encourage all employees to immediately report any symptoms of discomfort that may be associated with their job duties. In most cases, employees are to report to their immediate supervisor. Those supervisors are responsible ensuring their employees report to the Occupational Health Clinic/contacting the IEO for an ergonomic evaluation of their work area.

**IDENTIFYING PROBLEM JOBS:** There are several methods used to identify problem jobs which are most likely to result in ergonomic disorders. The Ergonomics Team initially reviewed and periodically monitors FGGM's injury and illness records such as the Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses and workers' compensation data to identify patterns of ergonomic-related injuries and illnesses.

In addition, jobs are evaluated for the following risk factors:

- Rate and number of repetitions: performance of the same motion or motion patterns every few seconds for more than two hours at a time.
- Postures and limb positions: fixed or awkward work postures such as overhead work, twisted or bent back, bent wrist, stooping, or squatting, for more than a total of two hours.
- Vibration: use of vibrating or impact tools or equipment for more than a total of two hours.
- Loads/lifted: lifting, lowering, or carrying of anything weighing more than 25 pounds (11.34 kg) more than once during the work shift.
- Loads/static: holding a fixed or awkward position with arms or neck for more than ten seconds.
- Muscle forces: continually pulling or pushing objects.
- Work pace: piece rate or machine paced work for more than four hours at a time (legally required breaks cannot be included when totaling the four hour limit).

Our Ergonomics Team has identified the following jobs at our facility as having these ergonomic risk factors:

- Child Development Centers
- Commissary/PX/Shoppette Workers
- Video Display Terminal Users
- Vehicle Operators (Bus/Truck Drivers)
- Employees working with hand tools

Ergonomics Team members participate in evaluating new equipment and processes for potential risk factors. They also evaluate hand tools to determine if the designs are ergonomically suitable for the intended use and appropriate for the workers who use them.

### **Employee Training**

Supervisors will receive a copy of this written ergonomics plan and FGGM's policy (FGGM Regulation 40-1, Safety Ergonomics Program regarding ergonomics in our workplace. We train each employee who works at a job with exposure to specific risk factors and each employee in a job where a work-related musculoskeletal disorder has been recorded.

These are the ergonomic elements we teach to all employees:

- How to recognize workplace risk factors associated with work-related musculoskeletal disorders and the ways to reduce exposure to those risk factors.
- The signs and symptoms of work related musculoskeletal disorders, the importance of early reporting, and medical management procedures.
- Reporting procedures and the person to whom the employee is to report workplace risk factors and work-related musculoskeletal disorders.
- The process FGGM is taking to address and control workplace risk factors, each employee's role in the process, and how to participate in the process.
- Opportunity to practice and demonstrate proper use of implemented control measures and safe work methods which apply to the job.

Each employee involved in job analysis will be trained in job analysis methods, especially as they relate to identifying workplace risk factors, and evaluation and implementation of control measures.

The ISO will not implement any policy or practice which discourages reporting or which results in discrimination or reprisal against any employee who makes a report.

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