

ERGONOMICS

Remote Workers and the Repetitive Motion Injury Standard, Title 8 Section 5110

Source: Keenan and Cal/OSHA

There have been some questions on what type of workplaces fall under the Repetitive Motion Injury Standard, in particular, teachers working remotely. Below is the scope and requirements of the regulation. More detail on the regulation can be found in this [link](#).

The scope and application of the standard - Title 8, Section 5110 states:

- a) Scope and application. This section shall apply to a job, process, operation where a repetitive motion injury (RMI) has occurred to more than one employee under the following conditions:
 - (1) Work related causation. The repetitive motion injuries (RMIs) were predominantly caused (i.e. 50% or more) by a repetitive job, process, or operation;
 - (2) Relationship between RMIs at the workplace. The employees incurring the RMIs were performing a job process, or operation of identical work activity. Identical work activity means that the employees were performing the same repetitive motion task, such as but not limited to word processing, assembly or, loading;
 - (3) Medical requirements. The RMIs were musculoskeletal injuries that a licensed physician objectively identified and diagnosed; and
 - (4) Time requirements. The RMIs were reported by the employees to the employer in the last 12 months but not before July 3, 1997.
- b) Program designed to minimize RMIs. Every employer subject to this section shall establish and implement a program designed to minimize RMIs. The program shall include a worksite evaluation, control of exposures which have caused RMIs and training of employees.

Does the Title 8, Section 5110, Repetitive Motion Injuries, apply to teachers working remotely?

According to Cal/OSHA, employers are still subject to the ergonomic standard, even if employees are teleworking. The regulation **does** apply since teachers are performing some of the same job functions and repetitive motion tasks while working from home as they do in a classroom which would fall under the scope and application of the standard. Even if they are not in the same location.

What additional steps can employers do to meet the standard for those working remotely?

1. Develop a Remote/Teleworking Policy/Program
2. Have employees sign a telework agreement that includes an inspection list and self-assessment
3. Have employees sign that their home office meets general safety requirements

Resources

Keenan has a complete Remote Worker Program that includes resources from workstation setup flyers, virtual ergonomic evaluations and trainings, to a sample Telework Policy development. Some of these resources are available on Risk Advisor. Contact your local Loss Control Consultant for assistance in putting together a program or if you need more information.