

## Federal Occupational Health

# Telework Safety and Health Services

An agency's duty to provide a safe and healthy workplace includes alternate work sites used by authorized teleworking employees. These employees face many of the same health and safety risks as they might face working in a standard agency office. Federal Occupational Health (FOH) Teleworking Consultation Services can help protect your employees who work outside the traditional workplace.

### If an employee is injured at an alternate worksite, is it still considered a work-related injury and is the federal government liable in such a case?

Yes. Injuries and illnesses that occur while an employee is working at home—including working in a home office—are considered work-related if the injury or illness occurs while the employee is performing work for pay or compensation in the home, and the injury or illness is directly related to the performance of work. The federal government is liable for work-related injuries and/or property damage at alternate worksites.

### How can FOH help protect my employees at alternate worksites?

- ▶ Reviews of safety self-certification checklists
- ▶ Onsite safety inspections and ergonomic assessments
- ▶ Remote ergonomic assessments via telephone and digital images
- ▶ Preventive ergonomic training seminars in-person and online
- ▶ Consultation on workstation equipment, furniture, and space planning – Return-to-Work and Reasonable Accommodation consultations

### Why would I want an alternate worksite evaluated by an FOH occupational safety & health professional?

Managers and teleworking employees might be uncomfortable with a supervisor or agency employee visiting an alternate worksite. FOH's experienced and certified specialists are objective third party representatives who can identify, evaluate, and recommend controls of risks that may not be recognized by teleworking employees or their supervisors.

### How does FOH meet individual employee needs?

FOH consultants analyze employees' job requirements, work practices, and workstations to enhance productivity and safety, and to minimize the risk of injury.

### Can FOH help my agency accommodate employees with disabilities?

FOH can assist in evaluating accommodation requests and meeting U.S. Rehabilitation Act requirements. Our comprehensive onsite assessment will be followed by written recommendations concerning modifications, work process changes, adaptive devices, and other measures to enable disabled employees to perform essential job functions.

## BENEFITS

- ▶ **Practical, economical, and customized ergonomic solutions** that enhance employee health and productivity
- ▶ **Expert staff** that provides training and consultation that empowers managers and employees
- ▶ **Simple and flexible** service delivery method using the Interagency Agreement (IAA)



**The assistance provided by FOH over the past eight years has been immeasurable. I am truly grateful to be working with FOH.**

Program Manager, USDA

## FAST FACTS

- ▶ 6% of all federal employees teleworked in 2010.
- ▶ 72% of federal agencies have integrated telework into their Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning.
- ▶ 18% of federal agencies purchase all necessary equipment for employees who telework.

