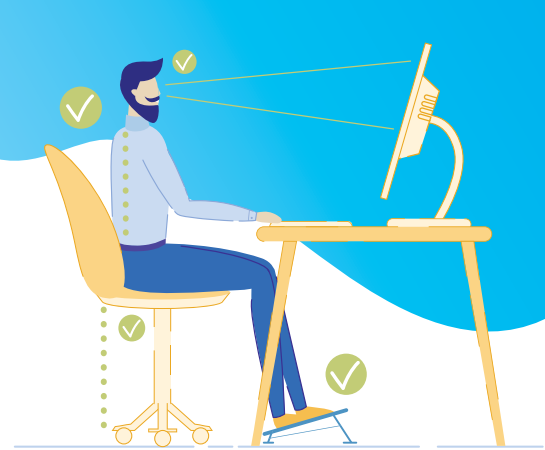# QBE

Global Risk Solutions

Guidelines for Working Remotely from a Personal Residence Home Office

Working Safely and Effectively from Home

Due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic, many office workers are being asked to work from home to protect themselves and others. Although working from home has benefits such as shorter commute times, there are safety and health and wellness factors to manage to ensure that the home office is a safe office.

Working safely and effectively from home involves workstation ergonomics, social, nutritional, wellness and physical and environmental considerations.

Ergonomics

There are many checklists and office ergonomic guidelines available for reference to help ensure that your office workstation is set up as safely as possible. **QBE ErgoSolve™ Office Ergonomic Checklist and program** is a great tool to help set up your at home workstation and provide guidelines on microbreaks and stretching exercises.

To view a 5-minute office ergonomics video *"Better Ergonomics for Better Health"* and other office ergonomic resources visit qbe.com/us and visit the Risk Solutions Center or call **888.560.2635.**

Key ergonomic elements to consider include:

- Adjustable chairs
- Lighting
- Desk height
- Maintaining neutral hand, back, arm and neck postures
- Taking micro breaks and doing stretches every 45-60 minutes
- The couch and coffee table will not work as a workstation

Home Office Environment

- For working comfort, maintain room temperature between 68-75 degrees Fahrenheit at 20-60% humidity. (Source: National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health)

- To prevent glare, utilize blinds and shades to offset natural light glare but to also take advantage of natural light. Position desk and workstation monitors so that indoor lighting does not create glare.

- Slip, trip and fall accidents at home can be a significant type of loss under normal conditions. With an increase in exposure by working from home, these types of losses can also increase. Making sure that walking areas are clear and not wet or slippery can greatly improve your home safety.

  – Organize your workstation area so that phone cords and electrical wires are not tripping hazards.

  – Take a picture of your workstation as it should be as a reminder to continually maintain your ideal set up so that improvements can continually be made. Implement 5 S strategy: Sort, Set in order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain.

  – QBE GRS Consultants can further assist with office ergonomics by contacting the QBE GRS Solutions Center.

- **Being prepared:** In a worst-case scenario, you and your family should be prepared for being able to shelter in place. Consider your and your families own preparedness plan to include food, water, medical supplies, and emergency communications and contacts.

Click each document to find the full version on the Risk Solutions page in the Technical Tools section.

Routine and Wellness

- Pace yourself, there is no bus or subway to catch; dress in your work clothes.

- Take microbreaks to do stretching; 20-minute lunchtime walk.

- Establish task lists and mini goals to keep yourself on track for accomplishing daily objectives and ensuring work fulfillment.

- Reward yourself with coffee breaks, but don't over-caffeinate.

- Stay hydrated.

- Keep your refrigerator/freezer well stocked with healthy proteins and your food storage with healthy long-lasting nonperishable foods. Purchase and use the newly purchased food first maintaining your stored food as a resource should food supplies become limited.

- Consume smaller, more frequent meals throughout the day to help maintain blood sugar and mental focus.

  – Snacks to consider consist of proteins and carbohydrates: cheese and crackers, yogurt and fruit, peanut butter toast.

- Having an after-work activity can be a motivator to maintain consistent productivity through the day.

Communication with your company and others

- Schedule time each day to speak with your manager on work assignments, priorities and updates on any changes in company protocols.

- Maintain communication with co-workers, customers and others to keep informed on general information just like you would in the office.

- Equipment: Make sure your communication systems are working properly and that you have access to IT assistance and equipment that is right for the job and working properly, e.g. comfortable headsets with microphones, not cheap earbuds.

- Ensure that cyber security protocols established by your company are being followed while working remotely.

- Make sure that you have back up communication capability should company systems go down or there are power failures. Identify neighbors or other possible back ups.

- Any injury or illness, no matter how small that occurs while working should be reported to human resources or your manager the same day.

- Limit face to face communication (social distancing) when CDC guidelines say to do so.

- Print copies of important company protocols and emergency information so they are available if your systems are not working.

- Use video chat to stay in touch with your colleagues to avoid feeling isolated.