

The Safety and Health at Work Act, 2005

Workplace (Visual Display Unit and Workstation) Regulations, 2007

The Minister in exercise of powers conferred on him by section 108 of the Safety and Health at Work Act makes the following Regulations:

- Citation** 1. These regulations may be cited as the Workplace (Visual Display Unit and Workstation) Regulations, 2007.
- Application** 2. (1) These regulations apply to all premises that are workplaces within the meaning of the Safety and Health at Work Act.
- (2) Notwithstanding paragraph 1 of this regulation these regulations shall not apply to:
- (i) drivers' cabs or control cabs for vehicles or machinery;
 - (ii) computer systems on board a means of transport;
 - (iii) computer systems mainly intended for public use;
 - (iv) 'portable' systems not in prolonged use at a workstation;
 - (v) calculators, cash registers and any equipment having a small data or measurement display required for direct use of the equipment;
 - (vi) typewriters of traditional design, of the type known as 'typewriter with window'.
- Definitions** 3. For the purpose of these regulations unless the context otherwise requires:
- (1) 'display screen equipment' means an alpha numeric or graphic screen regardless of the display process employed;
- (2) 'workstation' means an assembly comprising display screen equipment, which may be provided with a keyboard or input device and /or software determining the operator/machine interface, optional accessories, peripherals including the diskette drive, telephone, modem, printer, document holder, work chair, work desk or work surface, and the immediate work environment.

- (3) 'operator' means an employee who is required to use a visual display unit during his normal duties for more than 30 hours per week or for more than six hours per day.

Obligations of Employers

- 4. (1) Employers shall perform an analysis of workstations on their premises in order to evaluate safety and health risks to their employees particularly with regard to eyesight, physical disorders, mental stress and noise.
- (2) Employers shall take appropriate steps to remedy the risks arising out of the evaluation referred to in paragraph (1) of this regulation, taking account of the additional and or combined effects of the risks so found.
- (3) An employer shall ensure that every worker receives appropriate training in the use of his workstation particularly with regard to seated posture and seating adjustment before commencing work and whenever the organisation of the workstation is substantially modified.

Assessment of Eyesight

- 5. An employer shall:
 - (i) advise all persons who use prescription glasses or contact lenses to consult an optometrist to verify whether their glasses or contact lenses are appropriate before they commence work as an operator;
 - (ii) advise operators to consult a medical practitioner if they experience recurring visual problems
- 6. (1) Where a person
 - (i) is an operator in the undertaking in which he is employed; or
 - (ii) is to become an operator in the undertaking in which he is employed,the employer shall, if requested by the operator or the person who is to become an operator, ensure that an appropriate eyesight test is carried out on him by an optometrist or a medical practitioner within the time frame specified in paragraph (2).
- (2) The time frame referred to in paragraph (1) is
 - (i) in the case of a person mentioned in paragraph (1) (i), as soon as practicable after the request; and
 - (ii) in the case of a person mentioned in paragraph (1) (ii), before he becomes an operator.

(3) The costs of tests carried out pursuant to this regulation shall in no way be borne by the worker.

**Assessment
Records**

7. (1) Following any assessment of eyesight, the employer shall ensure that the appropriate records are kept for a period of no less than five years until a further assessment is made.
- (2) Assessment records shall at all times be open for inspection by an inspector and the person keeping any such records, shall send to the Chief Labour Officer such extracts therefrom or copies thereof as the inspector may from time to time require for the purpose of execution of his duties under the Act.
- (3) Assessment records on each individual shall be made available to the concerned individual for inspection or to such other person authorised by him.

**Display
Screen**

8. (1) The characters on the display screen shall be well-defined and clearly formed, of adequate size and with adequate spacing between the characters and lines.
- (2) The image on the display screen shall be stable, with no flickering or other forms of instability.
- (3) The brightness and/or the contrast between the characters and the background shall be easily adjustable by the employee.
- (4) The display screen must be free of reflective glare and reflection.

Keyboard

9. (1) The keyboard shall be tiltable and separate from the screen.
- (2) The space in front of the keyboard shall be sufficient to provide support for the hands and arms of the employee.
- (3) The keyboard shall have a matt surface.
- (4) The symbols on the keyboard shall be adequately contrasted and legible from the design working position.

- Work Surface** 10. (1) The work surface shall have a sufficiently large, low reflectance surface and allow a flexible arrangement of the screen, keyboard, document and related equipment.
- (2) Where applicable a document holder shall be provided and, it shall be stable and adjustable and positioned so as to minimise the need for uncomfortable eye and head movements.
- Work Chair** 11. (1) The work chair shall be stable and allow the employee easy freedom of movement and a comfortable position;
- (2) The seat shall be adjustable in height;
- (3) The seat back shall be adjustable in both height and tilt;
- (4) A foot rest shall be made available where necessary.
- Standing** 12. Where an operator performs a substantial part of his work while standing, either a footrest of approximately 15 centimetres to 20 centimetres in height or an anti-fatigue mat shall be provided , when requested by the employee.
- Work/Rest Schedule** 13. Work at the visual display screen shall be organised such that:
- (1) an employee shall be allowed a rest break from work at the visual display unit after two hours of continuous work;
- (2) a rest break of not less than ten (10) minutes duration from work at a visual display unit shall be given by the employer and taken by the employee;
- (3) an employer may delegate alternative tasks during the rest break; and
- (4) rest breaks shall not be combined nor taken at the beginning or end of the work day.

14. Where the nature of a work process renders regulation 13 (1) and (2) impracticable, then, other alternatives suitable to the work process shall be developed by the employer in consultation with his employees in accordance with the provisions of Section 103 of the Safety and Health at Work Act 2005.

- Lighting**
15. (1) Where the nature of the task requires the ambient lighting level shall be adjusted.
- (2) Workstations shall be free of glare and reflection.
- (3) Adjustable window coverings shall be provided for workers who operate a visual display unit that may be affected by a source of natural light.
- Task lighting**
16. Appropriate task lighting shall be provided where necessary and, that lighting shall be capable of adjustment by the employee with regard to:
- (i) Position; and
 - (ii) Intensity.
- Date of compliance**
17. Employers shall have five years, after proclamation of these regulations to become fully compliant.

Made by the Minister this day of 2007.