

Preventing Musculoskeletal Injuries in Housekeepers



California has adopted a regulation to protect housekeepers:

- The regulation is intended to control the risk of musculoskeletal injuries in housekeepers working in lodging establishments.
- Hotels, motels, resorts, bed and breakfast inns, and other lodging establishments must comply with the standard.

What is a musculoskeletal injury?

- A musculoskeletal injury is an injury caused by a traumatic event or by repeated exposure over weeks, months, or years to repetitive motion, force, vibration, or awkward positions.
- Examples of events and activities that can cause musculoskeletal injuries include slips, trips, falls, extreme reaches above the shoulder, lifting, bending, twisting, kneeling, squatting, pushing, pulling, being struck by falling objects, and pressing hard against an object or surface.
- Working too quickly without adequate breaks between tasks can increase the risk of musculoskeletal injuries.
- These injuries can affect a person's muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, bone, back, or blood vessels. They can cause pain in the back, wrist, shoulder, neck, or other parts of the body.

Employers must have an effective written program that includes:

- Procedures for identifying and evaluating housekeeping hazards through a worksite evaluation.
- Procedures to investigate musculoskeletal injuries to housekeepers.
- Methods or procedures for correcting hazards identified in the worksite evaluation or in the investigation of musculoskeletal injuries to housekeepers.
- Training for housekeepers and their supervisors on the signs, symptoms, and risk factors associated with musculoskeletal injuries and on safe practices including the use of appropriate tools and equipment to prevent injuries.

Housekeepers' rights include:

- Participating in designing and conducting worksite evaluations and being informed of worksite evaluation results.
- Providing input during the investigation of a musculoskeletal injury on whether a control measure, procedure, or tool would have prevented the injury.
- Participating in identifying and evaluating possible ways to correct hazards identified in a worksite evaluation or in the investigation of a musculoskeletal injury to a housekeeper.
- Having the housekeepers' union representative involved in the activities listed above.
- Receiving training in a language that is easily understood. The training must include an opportunity for interactive questions and answers with a person knowledgeable about hotel housekeeping equipment and procedures.



Incorrect Posture Correct Posture



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For additional information, go to www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/3345.html to read the new standard, or contact Cal/OSHA Consultation Services at 800-963-9424 or infocons@dir.ca.gov if you have questions.