Steps to Protect Your Work-from-Home Employees

We want to ensure that employees' homes are safe for day-to-day operations. We recommend that employees comply with the health and safety policies of your SU/SD.

1. **Be on the lookout for hazards.** These can include exposed extension cords. Be sure to recommend that the residence has adequate fire extinguishers and smoke detectors.
2. **Recommend designating a dedicated work area.** If possible, a specific room or area of their home (with a door if possible) for working. This helps minimize the likelihood of injury claims. It also encourages the employee to set boundaries at home that will motivate them to remain productive. Ideally, a space with a window for natural light which can help with overall wellness and gives the opportunity to focus the eyes outside and away from the screen.
3. **Focus on cybersecurity.** Ensure that all employee devices including laptops, tablets, and desktops are protected from intrusion. Connections with weak or no security leave your SU/SD open to hacking. This can put your entire SU/SD at risk. Work with your in-house IT personnel to put together technology policies and processes for remote workers. Consider providing training on remote logins, accessing files, use of collaboration tools, instant messaging, and video conferencing.
4. **Stay in direct contact**. Unless you check in with offsite employees regularly, you won't know if they are having difficulties. Stressed workers tend to be less productive and can be prone to accidents. Make sure you have the right telecommuting tech tools in place to communicate and collaborate with your work from home employees. Check in daily and consider setting up weekly or biweekly video calls. This will enable you to see them in their home work environment.
5. **Create Work-From-Home expectations.** Be sure to include specific work hours, taking regular breaks, and adhering to safety procedures. Also, include employee rights such as your workers' compensation coverage.

Understand your responsibilities as an SU/SD of offsite employees. You want to help protect them and yourself from the liabilities inherent in working from home.

The following checklist is designed to assess the overall safety of your Work-from-Home environment. Please read and complete the self-certification safety checklist. Have your employees fill out a working-from-home safety survey. Check that furnishings and equipment are ergonomically designed so that the employees can work safely. You'll also want to see that lighting and ventilation are sufficient.

Safety Guidelines for the Home Work Space

For your safety we recommend employees use the following guidelines to assist them in a survey of the overall safety and adequacy of their Home Work Space. The following are only recommendations, and do not encompass every situation that may be encountered.

SU/SD Employee Work-From-Home Safety Check List

	General	Yes	No
1	Workspace is away from noise, distractions, and is devoted to your work needs?		
2	Workspace accommodates workstation, equipment, and related material?		
3	Floors are clear and free from hazards?		
4	File drawers are not top-heavy and do not open into walkways?		
5	Phone lines and electrical cords are secured under a desk or along wall, and away from heat sources?		
6	Temperature, ventilation, and lighting are adequate?		
7	All stairs with four or more steps are equipped with handrails?		
8	Carpets are well secured to the floor and are free from frayed or worn seams?		
	Fire Safety	Yes	No
9	There is a working smoke detector in the workspace area?		
10	A home multi-use fire extinguisher, which you know how to use, is readily available?		
11	Walkways aisles, and doorways are unobstructed?		
12	Workspace is kept free of trash, clutter, and flammable liquids?		
13	All radiators and portable heaters are located away from flammable items?		
14	You have an evacuation plan so you know what to do in the event of a fire?		
	Electrical Safety	Yes	No
15	Sufficient electrical outlets are accessible?		
16	Computer equipment is connected to a surge protector?		
17	Electrical system is adequate for office equipment?		
18	All electrical plugs, cords, outlets, and panels are in good condition? No exposed/damaged wiring?		
19	Equipment is placed close to electrical outlets?		
20	Extension cords and power strips are not daisy chained (connected) and there is no permanent extension cord in use?		
21	Equipment is turned off when not in use?		
	Computer Workstation	Yes	No
22	Chair casters (wheels) are secure and the rungs and legs of the chair are sturdy?		
23	Chair is adjustable?		
24	Your back is adequately supported by a backrest?		
25	Your feet are on the floor or adequately supported by a footrest?		
26	You have enough leg room at your desk?		
27	There is sufficient light for reading?		
28	The computer screen is free from noticeable glare?		
29	The top of the screen is at eye level? If wearing progressive lenses or bifocals, your head/neck are in a neutral position.		
30	There is space to rest the arms while not keying?		
	Other Safety/Security Measures	Yes	No
31	Files and data are secure?		
32	Materials and equipment are in a secure place that can be protected from damage and misuse?		
33	If applicable, you use up-to-date anti-virus software, keep virus definitions up-to-date, and run regular scans?		