

Altaira recognizes that our staff often work in clients' homes where modification of the work area may not be possible.

If this is the case, please follow the following guidelines for minimizing risk of injury.

- Tasks with high visual demands should be performed above elbow height and work surfaces may need to be tilted, for example, for tasks involving delicate or precise manipulation.
- Tasks where the hands make a narrow range of movements and can rest on the work surface should be performed at, or just above, elbow height (e.g. chopping vegetables)
- Light manipulative tasks (e.g. ironing) should be performed at just below elbow height.
- Tasks incorporating a range of arm movements using the shoulder should be performed at between hip and shoulder height, e.g. Hanging washing out
- Tasks requiring considerable muscular effort or use of the body for leverage, e.g. loading shopping into a car, should be performed at hip height and no higher.

Where possible, place items used in manual tasks so they are:

- in front of you
- between waist and shoulder height
- close to your midline and facing toward you
- on your preferred side
- positioned within comfortable reaching distance
- positioned to avoid double handling and to avoid moving loads manually over long distances.
- Displays and controls should be positioned to encourage comfortable head and neck postures, comfortable hand and arm reach and efficient use.

A seated work position is best for:

- work that requires fine manipulation, accurate control or placement of small objects
- close visual work that requires prolonged attention

A standing work position is best when:

- large, heavy or bulky loads are handled
- forceful movements are required
- reaching is required
- movements away from the working position are frequent
- there is no knee room
- there is limited space

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Pushing loads is preferable to pulling because it involves less work by the muscles of the lower back, allows maximum use of body weight, less awkward postures and generally allows workers to adopt a forward facing posture, providing better vision in the direction of travel.

Reduce the effort required to start the load in motion by:

- using motorised push/pull equipment where available
- using slide sheets to reduce friction when moving clients
- positioning trolleys with wheels in the direction of travel
- using large power muscles of the legs and whole body momentum to initiate the push or pull of a load.

Reduce the effort to keep the load moving by:

- for pushing, ensuring handles allow the hands to be positioned above waist height and with elbows bent close to the body
- for pulling, ensuring handles allow the hands to be positioned below waist height allowing a standing position to be adopted rather than being seated so the whole body can be used

Reduce the effort needed to stop the load by:

- indicating the place where loads need to be delivered
- planning the flow of work
- slow down gradually
- fitting brakes and speed limiters so speed can be controlled, particularly if there is a need to stop quickly so as to avoid other traffic.

A repetitive task is a task that you repeat more than twice per minute and/or hold for more than 30 seconds. If you are undertaking a repetitive task you should determine the duration of the task. Examples of this are vacuuming, mopping, wiping.

If you are undertaking a repetitive task:

- Take a break from the task every 15 minutes
- Rotate tasks e.g. do some mopping, then prepare some food before going back to mopping again

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