

## THE LION GROUP

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# SPECIAL TLG CLIENT BULLETIN

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## Ergo Alert!

A proposed standard that specifically requires employers to act on ergonomic challenges has just been issued by the present administration.

The standard is to be enforced by The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Several business groups have made statements that they will challenge the standard. The Ergonomic Standard will take effect in January 2001 and will require complete adherence by October 2001.

The standard requires if a worker reports symptoms of a musculoskeletal disorder, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, back pain and tendinitis, the employer **MUST** determine whether the problem is related to the employee's job tasks. If there is a relationship between the employee's problem and their job tasks, the employer must provide medical care and allow for time off if deemed necessary. The employer then is required to examine the job tasks, including other and related employees, and institute changes that will minimize further potential ergonomic challenges. The number of risk factors can be numerous and complex.

### *TLG Opinion / Recommendation:*

*TLG has addressed the Ergonomic Standard in a number of previous Client Bulletins. Clients should have the following in place:*

- *An internal policy/procedure/standard that is specific as to ergonomics in the workplace.*

- *A documented and detailed Job Safety Assessment / Job Hazard Assessment program that includes a process that identifies ergonomic challenges for every worker's job tasks.*
- *A process that documents how potential ergonomic injuries are to be handled and specific responsibilities related to each documented reaction step.*
- *A detailed employee training program and a method to document each employee's attendance and their understanding of the subject matter.*

The challenges to the standard will have little impact. OSHA can proceed with enforcement actions without a specific ergonomic standard as they have in the past.

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