

---

## 2F. Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance

The Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance provide for the safety and health protection to employees in workplaces, both industrial and non-industrial.

This ordinance covers almost all workplaces. In addition to factories, construction sites and catering establishments, other places, such as offices, laboratories, shopping arcades, educational institutions also come under the ambit of the law. Under this ordinance, all employers, occupiers and employees have a role to play in creating a safe and healthy workplace.

Employers should contribute to safety and health in their workplaces by:

- ✦ providing and maintaining work systems that do not endanger safety or health;
- ✦ making arrangement for ensuring safety and health in connection with the use, handling, storage or transport bulky or heavy substances (eg. changing distilled water bottles);
- ✦ providing all necessary information, instruction, training, and supervision for ensuring safety and health (eg. participating in fire drills);
- ✦ providing and maintaining safe access to and egress from the workplaces (eg. keeping all corridors and fire exits clear of obstacles);
- ✦ providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment (eg. ensuring the office is well-lit and well-ventilated).

For an overview of the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, please visit the Labour Department website <http://www.labour.gov.hk> > Labour Legislation > Overview of Major Labour Legislation > Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance  
<http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/legislat/content4.htm>

Following are publications from the Occupational Safety & Health Council website <http://www.oshc.org.hk> > Publications > Leaflets in relations to providing a safety and healthy workplace to employees:

- Act Before Fire Strikes  
<http://www.oshc.org.hk/others/bookshelf/CL167C.pdf>
- Fire Safety at Workplace  
<http://www.oshc.org.hk/download/publishings/3/817/CB391C.pdf>
- Ergonomics & Occupational Safety and Health in Office  
[http://www.safetydirectory.hk/info\\_list019\\_e.htm](http://www.safetydirectory.hk/info_list019_e.htm)
- Influenza Prevention in Workplace  
<http://www.oshc.org.hk/download/publishings/3/2137/Workplace%20Influ%20leaflet%2009%20New.pdf>
- Improving Indoor Air Quality  
<http://www.oshc.org.hk/others/bookshelf/CL165E.pdf>
- Office Lighting/Design of Office Work Station  
<http://www.oshc.org.hk/others/bookshelf/CL162C.pdf>
- Prevention of Occupational Diseases  
<http://www.oshc.org.hk/others/bookshelf/CL154C.pdf>
- Safe Manual Handling – Office  
<http://www.oshc.org.hk/others/bookshelf/CL176E.pdf>

- 
- Safe Operation of Office Equipment/Safety in the Office  
<http://www.oshc.org.hk/others/bookshelf/CL160E.pdf>
  - Safety & Health Guide for Retail Industry  
<http://www.oshc.org.hk/download/publishings/3/823/CB134C.pdf>

## 2F.1 Occupational Safety and Health (Display Screen Equipment) Regulation

This Regulation aims at protecting the safety and health of employees who use display screen equipment (DSE) at work for prolonged periods of time.

As a result of prolonged DSE work, users could suffer discomfort and other short-term health problems like upper limb pains and discomfort, eyestrain, fatigue and stress. Whilst many of these problems are temporary and may go away after work, they can and should be avoided. If the temporary ailments are ignored, such symptoms can deteriorate into chronic health problems requiring long-term treatment which is expensive to both employers and employees, and ultimately to the health care service at large.

In any workplace, there may be workstations which are set up for use by different persons for different purposes. For the sake of protecting the safety and health of users, those workstations that fulfill the following conditions fall within the scope of the Regulation:

- ✦ provided by a person responsible for the workplace (employer or occupier of the workplace, as the case may be) to be used by users for work;
- ✦ not intended for use by the public; and
- ✦ normally used or intended to be normally used by users.

The following DSE applications that would pose minimal health risks are excluded from regulatory control:

- ✦ DSE that is used mainly to show pictures, television or films;
- ✦ Drivers' cabs or control cabs for vehicles or machinery;
- ✦ DSE on board a means of public transport;
- ✦ Portable systems not in prolonged use;
- ✦ Calculators, cash registers or any equipment having a small data or measurement display required for direct use of the equipment; and
- ✦ Window typewriters.

The person responsible for a workplace shall:

- ✦ perform risk assessment of workstations;
- ✦ keep records of all risk assessments;
- ✦ take steps to reduce any risk identified in a risk assessment;
- ✦ ensure that the workstations in the workplace are suitable having regard to the safety and health of users of those workstations; and
- ✦ ensure users employed by them is provided with necessary safety and health training in the use of workstations.

---

A person responsible for a workplace or an employer who fails to comply with the relevant provisions of the Regulation commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000. These offences are offences of strict liability.

A user who fails to comply with the relevant provision of the Regulation commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000.

For detailed information about Occupational Safety and health (Display Screen Equipment) Regulation, read the following leaflets available from the Labour Department website <http://www.labour.gov.hk> > Publications > Occupational Health:

- ✦ Section A : Guides to Legislation and Codes of Practice >
  - A Brief on the Occupational Safety and Health (Display Screen Equipment) Regulation <http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/oh/dser.pdf>
  - Code of Practice for Working with Display Screen Equipment <http://www.labour.gov.hk/tc/public/pdf/oh/OHB90.pdf>
- ✦ Section B : General Guides on Occupational Health and Hygiene >
  - A Health Guide on Working with Display Screen Equipment <http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/oh/HG-DSE.pdf>
  - A Guide to Work with Computers <http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/oh/DisplayScreen.pdf>

For the OSH Guides for Computer Workstation, visit the Occupational Safety & Health Council – website <http://www.oshc.org.hk> > Publications > Leaflets <http://www.oshc.org.hk/others/bookshelf/cl234c.pdf>

To know more about Safe Use of Display Screen Equipment, visit the Occupational Safety & Health Council – Hong Kong Occupational Safety & Health Products & Services – website <http://www.safetydirectory.hk> > OSH Information > Safe Use of Display Screen Equipment [http://www.safetydirectory.hk/info\\_list3\\_e.htm](http://www.safetydirectory.hk/info_list3_e.htm)

