

## HSSE Regulatory Update



### *Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health for Seating at Work 2024* *Garis Panduan Keselamatan dan Kesehatan Pekerjaan untuk Tempat Duduk di* *Tempat Kerja 2024*

#### Summary

The new Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health for Seating at Work 2024, issued under the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994 (OSHA), establish comprehensive requirements for workplace seating arrangements. These guidelines supersede previous workplace seating recommendations and aim to address the increasing concerns about musculoskeletal disorders and other health issues related to prolonged sitting at work.

The guidelines are intended to ensure that employers provide appropriate seating facilities, conduct ergonomic risk assessments, and implement proper seating management systems to protect employees from adverse health effects.

Due to the rising number of reported musculoskeletal disorders and other health issues related to poor seating arrangements across various sectors, the Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) has introduced these guidelines to establish better seating standards applicable to all workplaces under OSHA's purview.

The guidelines are accompanied by detailed technical specifications and best practices that provide practical guidance for employers, employees, safety and health practitioners and to manufacturer, designers and suppliers of industrial and office furniture.

#### Basic Info & Links

Agency	:	Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH)
Publish Date	:	11 November 2024
Superseded Guidelines	:	Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health for Seating at Work 2003
Full Guidelines	:	<a href="#">DOSH Website</a>
Ergonomic Risk Assessment Guidelines	:	<a href="#">DOSH Website</a>
OSH Act 1994	:	<a href="#">Federal Legislation Website</a>

## Review/ Q&A

### Who do these guidelines apply to?

*These guidelines apply to all workplaces covered under the Occupational Safety and Health (Amendment) Act 2022 where employees perform tasks in seated positions, particularly jobs where employees remain seated for more than 30 minutes continuously. This includes office workers, assembly-line employees, vehicle operators, and other professions requiring seated work for extended periods*

### What are the key responsibilities of employers under these guidelines?

*The key responsibilities of employers under the Guidelines are as follow:*

- *Provide ergonomically designed seating and workstations.*
- *Ensure adjustability of seating features.*
- *Conduct ergonomic risk assessments.*
- *Train employees on proper seating practices.*
- *Encourage regular movement and breaks.*
- *Monitor and address employee complaints.*

### What technical specifications should be considered when selecting workplace chairs?

*Key considerations to include when selecting workplace chairs are as follow:*

- *Adjustability of seat height, backrest, and armrests.*
- *Ergonomic design for posture support.*
- *Proper lumbar support for lower back comfort.*
- *Durable materials and build quality.*
- *Stable base with suitable castors for mobility.*
- *Breathable seat material for comfort.*
- *Ease of use for adjustment mechanisms.*

### How often should seating assessments be conducted?

*The guidelines do not specify a mandatory frequency for ergonomic assessments. Regular assessments should be carried out to evaluate workplace seating arrangements, particularly when new seating is introduced, work processes change, or employee complaints arise. Employers are encouraged to promote proactive reporting of discomfort so that ergonomic assessments can be conducted promptly, ensuring seating arrangements and workstations continue to meet ergonomic standards and support employee health and safety.*

### Are there penalties for non-compliance with these guidelines?

*While the guidelines themselves do not impose direct penalties, non-compliance with OSHA 1994 requirements can result in legal consequences.*

<b>Section in OSHA 1994</b>	<b>Non-Compliance</b>
<b>Section 15</b> describes the duty of every employer to ensure; so far as is practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all his employees.	Fine not exceeding RM500,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or both.
<b>Section 17</b> requires employers and self-employed individuals to conduct their work in a way that, as far as practicable, does not expose themselves or others (who are not their employees) to health and safety risks.	Fine not exceeding RM500,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or both.
<b>Section 20</b> describes the duties of a person who designs, manufactures, imports, or supplies any article for use at work.	Fine not exceeding RM200,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or both.
<b>Section 24</b> describes the duty of every employee while at work.	Fine not exceeding RM2,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or both.