



### Introduction:

The District is committed to providing all employees and customers with a safe and healthy environment in which to work and conduct business. As a component of the District's Office Ergonomics Program, the Office Ergonomics Equipment Guide is intended for the exclusive use of District approved ergonomics vendors. Within this guide are multiple categories of products each intended to assist employees in obtaining maximum adjustability, comfort and productivity. At the time of the last revision of this document, the District receives preferring pricing on common office accessories and equipment using centralized purchasing through **Office Depot**. Wherever possible, vendors are asked to select product/equipment from suppliers that offer competitive pricing to the District.

#### 1. Recommended Items - Ergonomics Equipment & Furniture Ordering:

- a. Not all equipment is available to all employees – certain products may only be appropriate for certain locations. Please refer to the equipment listing for recommendation details
- b. All items recommended by the evaluator must be ordered by the authorizing manager or the manager's designee

#### 2. Special Needs and Medical Accommodation:

- Certain equipment or product may be requested as a medical accommodation.
- **Furniture or equipment cannot be** brought from home for use at work, taken home from any District location or purchased with the employee's own funds
- All items recommended by the evaluator must be ordered by the Office Ergonomics Program Administrator or designee

#### 3. Excluded Items:

Any product that is not included in this guide is not to be purchased. Certain items are specifically excluded from this guide and employees are prohibited from purchasing them. Additionally, some items are considered special needs items and are to only be recommended where alternatives would be ineffective.

- a. **Back belts/braces** Prohibited. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) research study "Workplace Use of Back Belts: Review and Recommendations" (Publication No. 94-122), there is no conclusive evidence that they reduce the frequency and extent of Back injury. NIOSH believes that the solution is the establishment of an ergonomics program that focuses on redesigning the work environment job tasks to reduce the hazards of lifting, training and education on proper ergonomics and safe lifting. Adhering to proper ergonomics in the workplace eliminates the use for a Back belt/brace. In some cases, the Back belt/brace acts as a hindrance more than a help, and therefore are not recommended in the workplace.
- b. **Exercise balls** Prohibited. The major concern regarding the use of exercise balls as seating is the safety of our employees. Exercise balls were designed to be utilized just as their description intends, for exercise. Exercise balls are not intended to be used as seating due to their lack of stability. Studies have shown that when using an exercise ball as seating, over the course of a work shift muscle fatigue can lead to unsafe positions and potential falls. If adjusted properly, the current chairs available to Client employees

provide adequate lumbar support and have appropriate stability given their contact with the floor, thus preventing potential injury resulting from tipping. Additionally, the exercise ball chairs do not meet the flammability requirements for upholstered furniture required in the State of California.

- c. **Kneeler chairs:** Prohibited. Kneeler chairs cause the following problems: getting in and out of the chair is difficult and creates a potential trip and fall exposure; they cause the shins to bear body weight and cause over-flexing of the knees and ankles; they limit the number of possible sitting positions an individual can use and may cause fatigue to develop; they can also cause clothing to ride up legs thus reducing the range of reaches.
  
- d. **Wrist braces/gloves:** Are not considered Ergonomic Equipment. Wrist braces/gloves are not included in our ergonomics program because they are considered a medical or personal item. Braces and gloves are intended to provide short-term relief and should not be a substitute for proper body mechanics. Studies have shown that prolonged use of gloves and/or braces may be harmful (e.g. putting stress on tendons/ nerves and weakening the immobilized muscles by over compensating for the restriction the glove or brace provides, thus causing over extension). However, it is acceptable for a physician to recommend a wrist brace to an employee for immobilization. If an employee needs the brace for medical reasons, a medical professional or health care provider will prescribe the use of such a brace. The wearer is expected to comply with the guidelines outlined by the medical professional to ensure proper use.

#### **APPROVED EQUIPMENT LIST:**

#### **Ergonomics Equipment Selection Guide**