Is there any legislation concerning Display Screen Equipment (DSE)?

YES! The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, (General Application) Regulations 2007, Chapter 5 of Part 2, must be adhered to in relation to Display Screen Equipment.

I am a manager, what do I need to do to comply with the Regulations?

1. Register and complete the Display Screen Equipment (DSE) and Managing Health and Safety in the Healthcare Setting training programmes available on HSELanD.
2. Identify those employees (commonly known as DSE users) to which the regulations apply; they are employees who:
   • have no choice but to use the DSE to carry their work or
   • normally use the DSE for continuous periods of more than one hour per day or
   • an employee who generally uses DSE on a daily basis
3. Provide those identified with the training currently available on HSELanD (on line e-Learning programme) and maintain certificate of training.
4. Conduct the DSE risk assessment of the employees’ workstation by consulting and observing the employee and using the risk assessment checklist. Responsibility is on the relevant line manager to undertake the DSE analysis/risk assessment as the Manager is best placed to determine and agree any necessary controls. However, there may be situations where the line manager is not in a position to undertake these assessments and it may be considered acceptable in such cases for a competent person to undertake these assessments on their behalf. In all instances the line manager retains full responsibility for the appropriate implementation of any control measures identified.
5. When conducting the risk assessment ensure that you;
   a. Observe the employee working at their workstation having regard to the employee’s posture and nature of work completed;
   b. Take into account the individual characteristics including body height;
   c. Observe the general environment at the workstation;
d. Talk to the employee in order to understand the nature of his/her work, to raise issues, as well as to seek feedback on other issues in the context of display screen equipment that they may have;
e. Identify and document any actions that need to be taken to remedy risks (e.g. use a monitor stand to raise height of monitor, etc.) and ensure that the actions are closed out.

6. Provide information to employees in relation to additional control measures that have been identified and will be implemented
7. Complete further risk assessment when an employee transfers to a new workstation or significant new work equipment, change of equipment or new technology is introduced
8. Ensure that the provision of an appropriate eye and eyesight test is made available to every employee
9. A copy of the completed risk assessment should be given to the employee for their records and for further follow up where required to ensure all outstanding actions are addressed. Ensure records of training and assessments are maintained and available for audit purposes.

For more details please refer to Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Risk Assessment Flowchart in this document):

For further information regarding office accommodation aspects not covered in this FAQ please refer to the FAQ on Office Accommodation, Display Screen Equipment Campaign, Fast Fact Ergonomics and the Fast Fact Ergonomic Tips for a Healthier Workspace available on our website.

**What happens when an employee moves to another workstation?**

A system should exist that when this happens a formal request is submitted to have a new workstation assessment carried out.

**What action is required when employees are “hot-desking”?**

It is necessary to ensure that any workstation being used is not likely to cause you any safety or health risk. Employees should refer to the training already provided to them to ensure that the workstation set-up is appropriate and report any hazards to their manager.

**What is the guidance with laptop use?**

The Guide to the Display Screen Equipment Regulations states that laptops should **not be used for long periods of time**. The workstation must be assessed to determine whether the workstation meets the requirements detailed in the Display Screen Equipment Regulations as users must find a comfortable working position which avoids fatigue in the arms or hands.

**Does the use of DSE affect eyesight?**

Some employees may experience temporary eye fatigue, with such symptoms as failure to see clearly, red or sore eyes and headaches. Eye fatigue may also lead to employees adopting awkward postures which may cause discomfort of the limbs. Eye strain and fatigue can be reduced by ensuring the screen is well positioned and properly adjusted, that lighting conditions are suitable, and by taking regular breaks from screen work.
Are employees entitled to an eye and eyesight test?

Yes, every employee who habitually uses a DSE as a significant part of normal work has a right to an appropriate eye and eyesight test by a competent person. It must be made available and paid for by the employer. Local arrangements should be in place through your local your Occupational Health Department.

How often should the eye tests occur?

Although there is no specified interval set down in legislation, it would seem reasonable that an eye and eyesight test should be made available to employees every three years.

When is an employer liable for the costs of providing glasses?

Where eye tests carried out by the doctor or optometrist reveal that particular lenses are required for DSE work, the costs of minimum requirement frames and lenses must be paid for by the employer. Where an employee already wears glasses to correct a visual defect (normal corrective appliances), and routine change of lenses arises, if these glasses are adequate also for DSE work, the employer is not liable as regards meeting the cost. The cost of dealing with more general eye problems which are revealed as a result of the tests and which are not directly related to working with a DSE is a matter for the employee as part of his or her general health care, taking account of health care entitlements. Talk to your line manager or local Occupational Health Representative for more details.

How does the employee claim expenses?

When agreed with their manager a claim can be made on “Reimbursement for Other Costs” form available in the HSE National Financial Regulations appendix 1, (available on the HSE’s website) or contact your local Human Resources Department for clarification of local processes.

What are the main risks to safety and health?

A poorly equipped and arranged work station is a major contributing factor in the development of many work-related upper limb disorders (WRULDs). The importance of the awareness training; the risk assessment and providing opportunities to take break away from DSE activity cannot be underestimated.

How often should I take change my activity while working with DSE?

Most jobs provide opportunities to pause from DSE work to do other tasks, such as filing or copying. If there are no such natural changes of activity plan to have such breaks. These breaks or changes of activity allow the user to get up from their workstation and move around, or at least stretch and change posture.

Ideally, the length of the rest should reflect the intensity of the individual job. However, there are four important points -

- Changes in the work activity, where they are necessary, should be taken before fatigue sets in
- The employee should not sit or stand in the same position for long periods and make sure to change posture as often as practicable
• Short frequent changes in activity are more satisfactory than longer periods of activity change taken occasionally

• Changes in the work activity should be taken away from the DSE. Other duties may be assigned during this period.

**What should I do if I have any problems?**

If you are a DSE user and think you have health problems connected with your work, talk to your manager or safety representative first. It is good practice for employers to encourage early reporting of health problems, help sufferers obtain treatment they need, and help them return to work.

**How do I adjust my chair?**

Each chair may have different adjustment mechanisms and it is essential that the user familiarises themselves with those adjustments mechanisms. It is more important that you know how you should be positioned at your workstation and then adjust your seating to support this posture. Please refer to diagram 1 below for more details regarding your seating posture.

Diagram 1: Correct Sitting Posture for Computer:

![Correct Sitting Posture for Computer](image)

**What is the safest position to place my hands when using the keyboard and mouse?**

It is recommended to place your hand and wrist in the neutral position as per diagram 2 below so as to avoid musculoskeletal issues.
Diagram 2: Correct Positioning of hands and wrists when using DSE equipment:

Additional Resource Information:

Manager to Identify DSE employees “Users”

The Employee has no choice but to use the DSE to carry out their work or
Employee normally uses the DSE for continuous periods of more than one
Or employee uses DSE on a daily basis

Yes

Manager/Designated Person and employee
completes the HSELand on line e-learning
programme www.hseland.ie

Note: Manager/Designated Person must
also complete the “Managing Health and
Safety in the Healthcare Setting” on
HSELand

DSE risk assessment checklist is completed
by the Manager/Designated Person with the
employee

Risk Assessment Forms

Does the risk assessment identify any
remedial steps that require further
attention?

No

Continue to monitor

Yes

The Manager documents issues for follow up
and develops an action plan which will
include person responsible for the
implementation of the actions and the date
for completion.

Should the employee continue to
experience difficulties, managers can

Should Ergonomic
problems persist

No further
action required

Copy of risk
assessment supplied
to employee and
records kept for
future reference.

Refer the employee to their local
Occupational Health
Service/Department for medical review,
with a copy of the risk assessment.

Engage the specialist ergonomist service at
Universal Safety Associates Ltd.,
Phone - 091 485580, Email - info@usafety.ie