



Work From Home Risk Management

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Mango

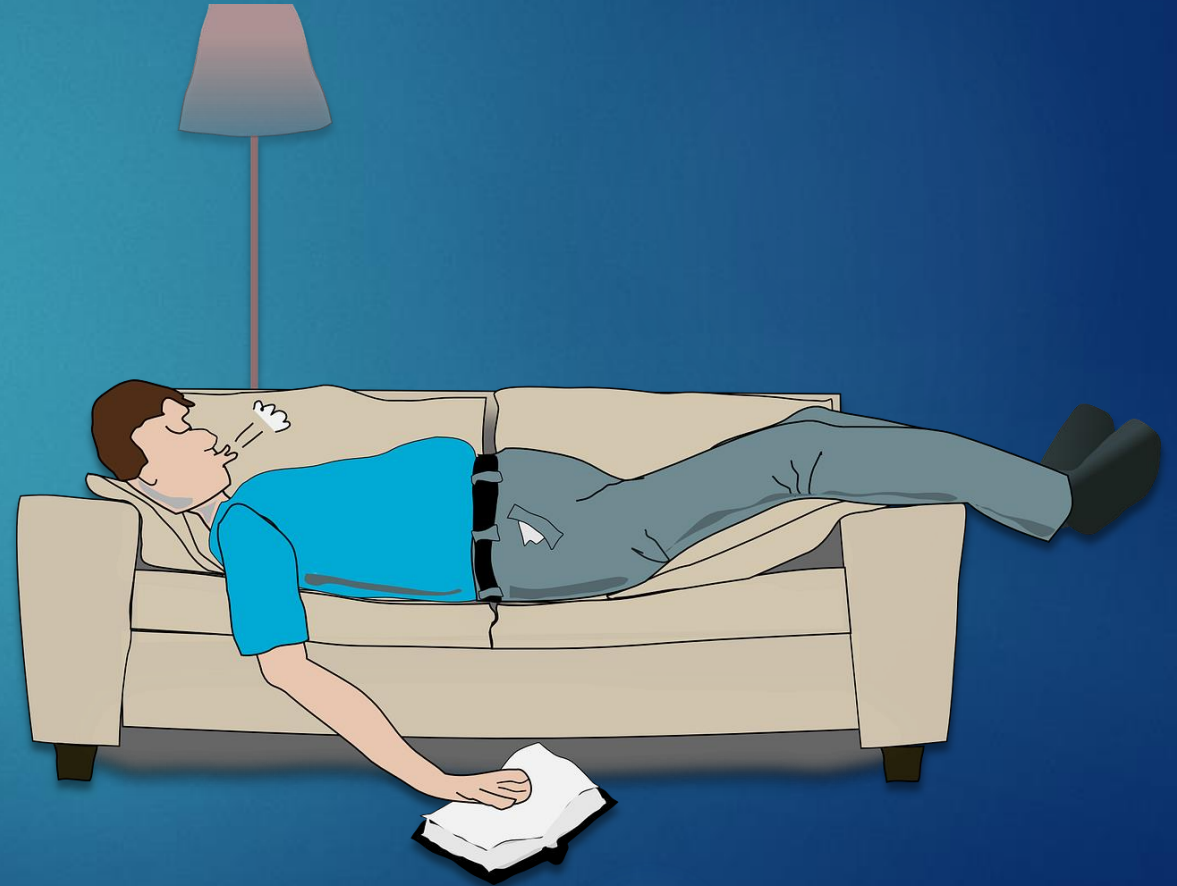


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Is the home workplace the same?

- ▶ Not quite.
- ▶ It is a workplace and a home – so different.
- ▶ These two can't quite be separated.
- ▶ Our job is to manage the workplace part



When is home a workplace?

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 – Section 8

Meaning of workplace

(1) A workplace is a place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes **any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work.**

(2) In this section, place includes—

- ▶ (a) a vehicle, vessel, aircraft or other mobile structure; and
- ▶ (b) any waters and any installation on land, on the bed of any waters or floating on any waters.

When is home a workplace?

Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 – Section 34

Injury while at or after worker attends place of employment

1. An injury to a worker is taken to arise out of, or in the course of, the worker's employment if the event happens on a day on which the **worker has attended at the place of employment as required under the terms of the worker's employment**—
 - a) while the worker is at the place of employment and is engaged in an activity for, or in connection with, the employer's trade or business; or
 - b) while the worker is away from the place of employment in the course of the worker's employment; or
 - c) while the worker is temporarily absent from the place of employment during an ordinary recess if the event is not due to the worker voluntarily subjecting themselves to an abnormal risk of injury during the recess.

A reminder of WHS Duties

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 – Section 19

Primary duty of care

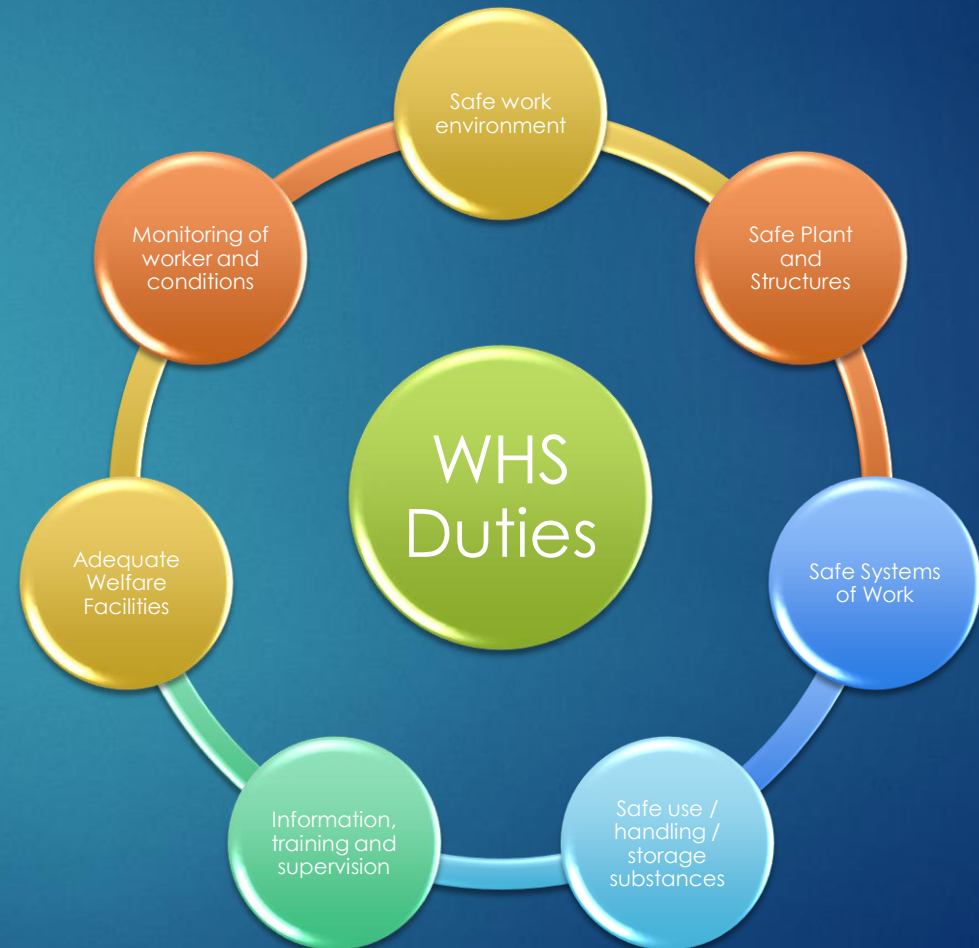
A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, **so far as is reasonably practicable**, the health and safety of—

- ▶ workers engaged, or caused to be engaged by the person; and
- ▶ workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the person;
- ▶ **while the workers are at work** in the business or undertaking.

A reminder of WHS Duties

“...ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their workers...”

(Qld WHS Act 2011)



Telstra vs Hargreaves

- ▶ Employee working from home
- ▶ Logged onto her work computer
- ▶ Walking down stairs to get cough medicine.
- ▶ Fell
- ▶ Injury found to be compensable

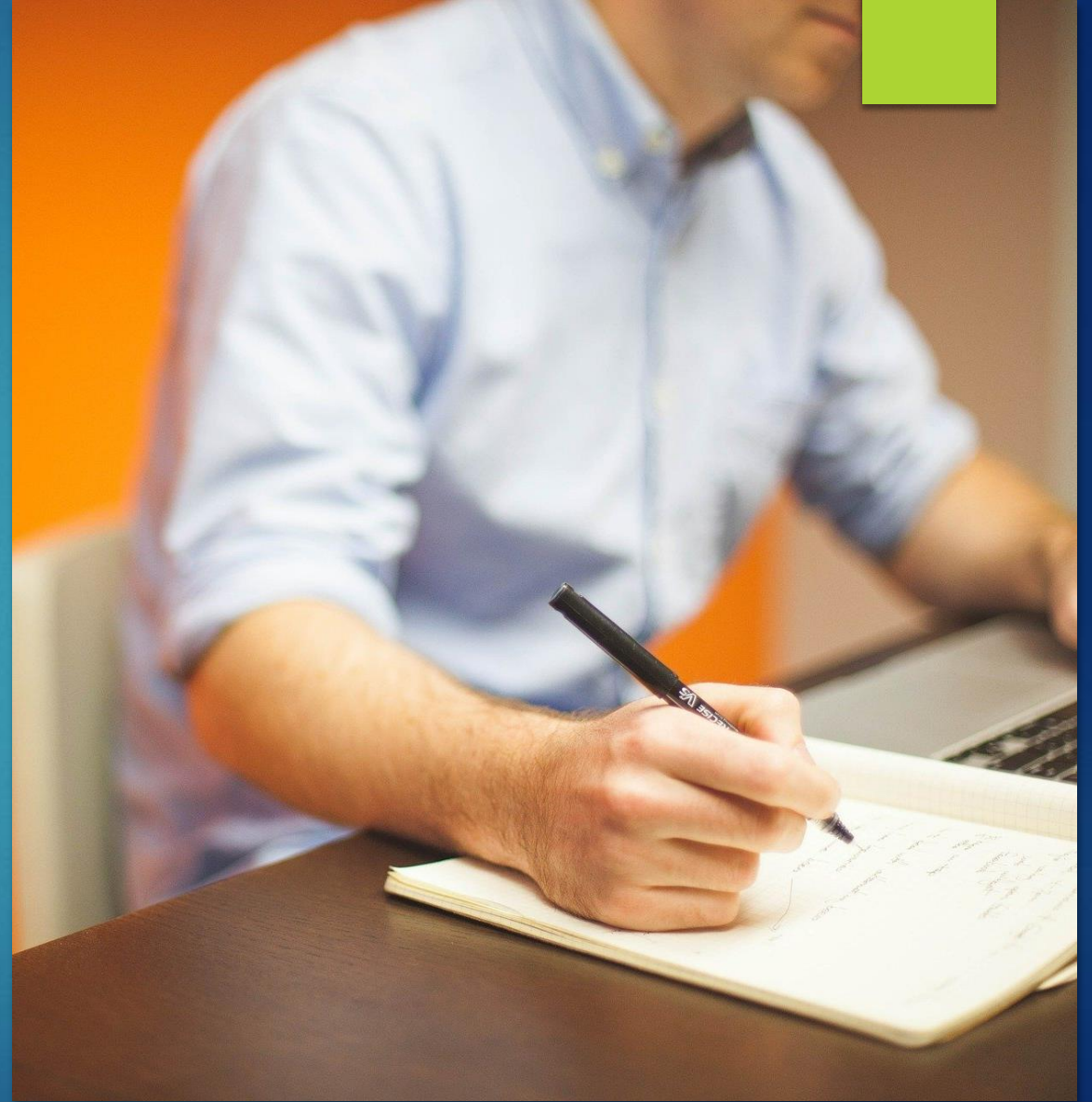




Managing the Risk

Develop WFH Policy

- ▶ Clear instructions on performing duties safely
- ▶ States how you will inspect
- ▶ Information on how to report issues
 - ▶ Must therefore have effective reporting system to support this



Identify hazards

- ▶ Inspection checklist
 - ▶ Entry and Exit
 - ▶ Housekeeping
 - ▶ Floors and surfaces
 - ▶ Workstation Ergonomics
 - ▶ Lighting
 - ▶ Air quality
 - ▶ Heat and cold

Home Based Worker Checklist

Employee Name:

Address of home-based worksite:

Inspector:

Inspection Date: / /

Criteria	Y/N	Comments
Is the work suitable to be done from home?		
1. Equipment		
Does the employee have all the necessary equipment required to do their job safely?		
Is the equipment in safe working condition?		
Has the employee been trained in the use of equipment?		
2. Workstation		
Are there are no reflections from windows or lighting?		
Does the employee have...the opportunity to look into the distance to relax eyes?		
Is there is adequate space for employee movement? Including leg space underneath the desk?		
Is the workstation of an adequate size for the work to be performed?		
Is there is ease of access to rear of computer?		
3. Seating		
Is the chair fully adjustable?		
Does the chair have a stable base?		
Does the backrest support the lumbar region?		
Do the employee's feet rest on the floor? If not, is a footrest provided?		
Is the chair in good repair?		

How to do Inspection

- ▶ Best is physical inspection – not practical
- ▶ Other options
 - ▶ Virtual (physical walk around)
 - ▶ Online checklist with photos (most common)
 - ▶ Printed and scanned checklist



Risk Assessment

- ▶ Where hazard Identification process has identified more serious issue
- ▶ Should follow usual company risk assessment process



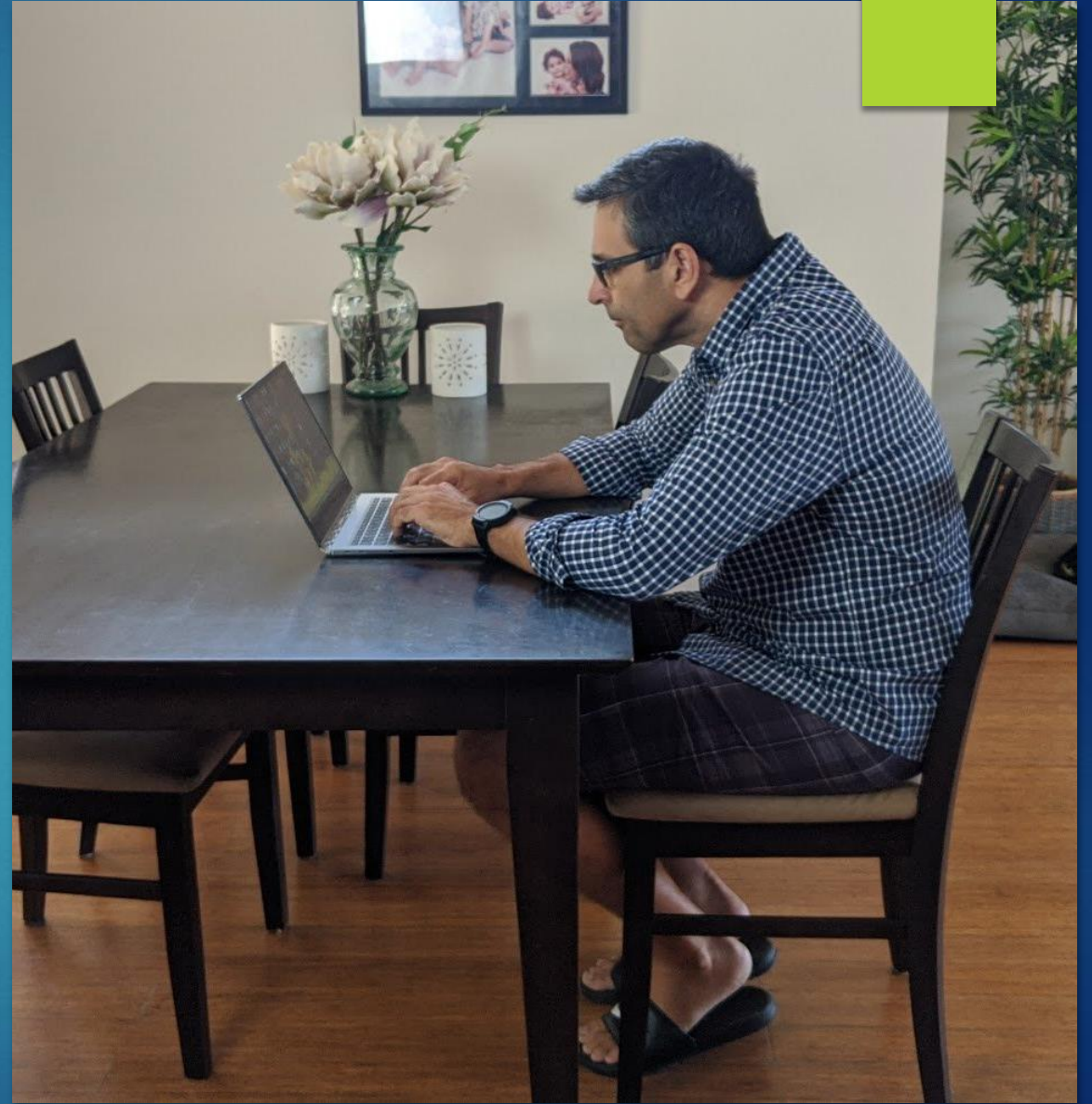
Specific Controls

- ▶ Refer to checklist
- ▶ Common considerations
 - ▶ Tested electrical safety switches
 - ▶ Awareness of emergency plans (e.g. apartment building)
 - ▶ Basic fire fighting equipment
- ▶ Office workstation ergonomics
 - ▶ Separate checklist recommended



Dining room ergonomics

- ▶ Could be your highest risk worker
 - ▶ Poorly set-up workstation
 - ▶ New to WFH
 - ▶ WFH duration much longer than usual



Set-up advice

Long term arrangement

- ▶ Purchase suitable equipment
 - ▶ Height adjustable screen
 - ▶ Office chair (height adjustable)
 - ▶ Separate keyboard and mouse

Short-term (COVID-19) arrangement

- ▶ Reasonably practicable may apply
- ▶ Some simple adjustments go a long way



Takeaways

- ▶ Employers still have duties for workers who are working from home
- ▶ Should have clear WFH Policy
- ▶ Need a checklist system to provide some assurance
- ▶ Risk manage hazardous situations
- ▶ Pay particular attention to home workstation ergonomics

