

The Changing Workplace and the Impact on Workers' Compensation

New trends change the way that we work. New machines make mass production quicker and easier. New formulas may make existing products better or stronger. Additions to the workforce can help companies manufacture more goods or provide more services to their customers.

As technology advances, our workplaces must also change. These changes can lead to new workplace injury concerns. If employers are not prepared, this could lead to an increase in injured workers and workers' compensation claims.

A quick look at the office of today will show many differences from that of just five years ago. Many workplaces allow employees to work from home, and this means that employees are able to perform work nearly any time.

While this may seem like a good thing, both employees and employers need to pay close attention to some of the dangers of non-stop working. Employees can suffer from increased stress, which could lead to illnesses or other serious health problems.

Additionally, workers outside of the office are faced with several different injuries that are sometimes uncommon in the workplace, such as laptop burns, neck injuries or repetitive stress disorders. Many home offices do not have the ergonomic equipment that is present in traditional offices.

Other mobile devices, like smartphones, have also increased the potential for injury. Employees may be required to stay "plugged in" at all times, and this can lead to workers checking email or texting while driving. Additionally, the

continuous use of these devices can lead to carpal tunneling or other painful injuries.

Employers will need to address the changes of their workplace. Those employees that work from home may still be eligible for workers' compensation if they suffer an on-the-job injury.

Source: Workforce.com "Analysis: Transforming the Mobile Workplace While Keeping an Eye on Ergonomics and Underlying Health Risks" Tina Minter, August 17, 2012.

For more information, please see the page on [Pennsylvania Workers' Compensation](#) on our website.