Workers' Comp

Tips from Coventry Employees for Working from Home

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In March, many people found themselves suddenly thrust into the weird and wonderful world of working from home (WFH). We thought we'd take a break from our usual format of offering workers' comp industry trends and insights to share some tips on working from home. We know a little something about WFH at Coventry since we have historically had a very large portion of our colleagues WFH. This WFH culture made our recent transition that much easier. On March 11, we began an effort to get all employees to WFH until further notice. In a matter of 2 days, nearly 2,000 Coventry Workers' Comp Services employees officially began working from home. With things changing so rapidly, we have learned something new every day. Here are the tips our employees have shared that we thought would be the most helpful to you as well.

1. **Make your workspace comfortable**. This may sound like an obvious idea, but not everyone is giving themselves the opportunity to get comfortable. Make sure your desk or tabletop is large enough to accommodate all your equipment and some additional space to spread out. Your space shouldn't feel cramped. If your WFH status is going to be permanent, consider investing in quality technology and an ergonomic chair. If you already have an ergonomic chair, we recommend following this step-by-step guide from The Human Solution to make the proper adjustments to decrease pain and risk of injury.
2. **Quality headphones are a must for those who work on the phone or participate in lots of meetings.** Whether you prefer wired or wireless headphones, make sure you have a high quality and comfortable set that includes a microphone. Noise-cancelling is a good way to go and can really improve the quality of your phone calls, especially if you're worried about background noise.
3. **Set real work hours.** If you're a salaried employee, one of the great things about WFH is the flexibility in your work schedule. Setting a schedule will help you manage your time more efficiently. Utilize to-do lists to keep yourself on track. Setting real work hours becomes especially important if you're prone to overworking. Remember to communicate your schedule to your supervisor and teammates if it varies from your normal schedule in the office. Determine when you're most productive to set your hours.
4. **Get ready for the day**. Working in your pajamas may be comfy and easy, however, you could be killing your productivity. Stick to the same daily routine that you would follow if you were going to your

workplace. This will put you in the right state of mind to tackle the day.

5. **Minimize distractions**. Turn off the TV. If you don't normally watch TV while you're at work, the same should go when you WFH. This is another productivity killer. Chances are you're engaging in more teleconferences, having the TV on in the background is distracting and can come across as rude. If you want some background noise, consider playing some music at a low volume. If possible, keep everyone out of your workspace (we realize this isn't going to be feasible for many during this unusual time in our nation).
6. **Stay on task**. Some people may benefit from keeping track of their time with a handy timekeeping app. These apps allow you to break out your day and manage your time so you don't get stuck in a rut, lose productivity, or spend too much time doing something that isn't productive.
7. **Take breaks.** WFH can be daunting if you don't break up the day. It's nice to get outside on your breaks, if you can. If you can't get outside, consider opening the windows for some sun and fresh air. You'll boost your creativity and productivity. Get up from your chair at least once an hour to keep the blood moving.
8. **Stay connected.** Besides teleconferencing, video chat and instant messaging are good tools to stay connected. Make it a point to reach out to someone every day. Update your profile picture on any applications used to collaborate. Putting a face to the name is a great way to feel connected even when you can't be together in the same room.
9. **Clear communication is key**. There are times when the tone of an email or message can be misconstrued as rude or dismissive. Not everyone is a clear and precise communicator. More often than not, the intent is meant to be friendly. Give yourself a few minutes before responding if you think someone's message came across as negative.
10. **Stay healthy.** It's easy to let a routine slip when you're in the comfort of your home day after day. Stay vigilant to your routines, particularly during this time when there is worry about public health and safety. Make sure you are exercising daily and eating healthy snacks and meals. Chances are you're eating 3 meals a day at home, plus some snacks. It's ok to treat yourself, but keep in mind, you're probably not moving around as often since you're in your home and not in an office. Eating healthy foods like fruits and vegetables will give you the energy you need to be productive all day.

What have you found works for you? Let us know in the comments section. Let's stay connected!



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