

Treadmill Desk Workstation

[[Policy Purpose](#)] [[Policy Summary](#)] [[Definitions](#)] [[Policy Statement](#)] [[Procedures](#)] [[Additional Contacts](#)] [[History](#)] [[Related Information](#)]

About This Policy

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Responsible University Office: Human Resources

Responsible University Administrator: Chief Inclusion and Human Resources Officer

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Policy Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines to any Clarkson University employee considering in investing in and/or using a treadmill desk workstation.

Installation and utilization of any individual or shared departmental treadmill desk workstation is at the discretion and requires approval by the direct supervisor and department chair or dean.

[back to top](#)

Policy Summary

Treadmill desk workstations are becoming a popular way for employees to stay productive and engaged while enhancing their health. There are two types of treadmill desk workstations: an individual treadmill workstation and a shared departmental treadmill workstation.

1. **Individual treadmill desk workstation:** a workstation that utilizes a treadmill and treadmill desk as the primary workspace for an individual in a private or semi-private office.
2. **Shared departmental treadmill desk workstation:** a workstation that utilizes a treadmill and treadmill desk as a workspace to be used by employees of a given department in a common workspace area. The department treadmill desk workstation allows for multiple employees in a department to utilize the workstation during scheduled periods of time while performing regular job responsibilities.

Treadmill desk workstations are considered outside the scope of conventional, ergonomic, and comfortable office furniture that the University provides for its employees. University funds, including start-up funds, may not be used for the purchase of a treadmill desk workstation. However, a treadmill desk workstation may be purchased by employees from their personal resources and brought to campus as long as it meets all requirements specified in this policy. Additionally, the University does not insure or provide protection against any treadmill desk workstation as it is considered personal equipment.

[back to top](#)

Definitions

Treadmill Desk Workstation: A computer desk that is adapted so that the user is "in motion/active" on a treadmill while performing their regular job responsibilities and can complete nearly any job duty/task they would normally do at a standard desk.

[back to top](#)

Policy Statement

Treadmill desk workstation is an alternative to an individual's work area. It allows an employee to remain in motion while performing the duties of their job. Granting of a treadmill desk workstation request is done so at the sole discretion of the supervisor.

[back to top](#)

Procedures

In order to utilize a treadmill desk workstation, the following facility requirements shall be taken into consideration and maintained:

1. **Office Space** – The office space shall be private or semi-private (shared).

- a. Private Office Space – In the event that the office space is private, a written agreement shall be obtained between the employee and the supervisor and include a discussion of:
 - i. Sound level – for those on the phone in the surrounding office, etc.
 - ii. Hours of usage – by the employee
 - iii. Location/set up of treadmill in relation to others – proximity to others shall have 3 feet clearance behind the treadmill • A trial period with specific dates
- b. Semi-private Office Space – In the event that the office space is semi-private, a written agreement shall be obtained between all parties who work in that location, as well as the department supervisor. The employee and supervisor agreement shall include a discussion of:
 - i. Sound level – for those in close proximity, on the phone, etc.
 - ii. Hours of usage – by all users
 - iii. Location/set up of treadmill in relation to others – proximity to others shall have 3 feet clearance behind the treadmill
 - iv. A trial period with specific dates
- 2. **Equipment Requirements** – Only treadmill desk workstations that are built and sold for the purpose of walking while working are allowed. The following are examples of treadmill desk workstations:
 - a. Steelcase
 - b. Signature TM Desk
 - c. Tread desk
 - d. Trek desk
 - e. Life Span

When purchasing a treadmill for the purpose of a walking workstation, the following guidelines shall be ensured:

- i. Sound Level – The treadmill should be equipped with a “whisper deck” or specify that it runs at a low sound level (maximum of 70 decibels (dBA)).
- ii. Motor – The treadmill should be equipped with a commercial grade motor. Home use treadmills are not designed for this purpose. A commercial grade motor is more apt to handle the demands of a walking workstation situation.
- iii. Weight Limit – The treadmill should be equipped to handle the maximum weight as will be used by the heaviest user. All treadmills have a weight limit.
- iv. Warranty – The treadmill should come with the original manufacturer's warranty and that warranty should last for one year, at minimum.
- 3. **Maintenance Requirements** – All maintenance shall be provided on a regular basis by the treadmill desk workstation owner(s) according to the manufacturer's guidelines, found in the treadmill's manual. Clarkson University Facilities & Services will not provide maintenance on personal treadmill desk workstations.
- 4. **Electrical Requirements** – The office space shall provide proper power requirements as specified by the manufacturer. The treadmill must also plug directly into an electrical outlet – it cannot be plugged into a power-strip or extension cord.
 - a. If a new electrical outlet is necessary, submit a work order through Facilities & Services for an estimate/installation.
 - b. The individual shall be financially responsible for any required electrical updates.
- 5. **Safety Requirements** - In order to utilize a treadmill desk workstation, the following safety considerations shall be followed:
 - a. Manufacturer Guidelines – Read and follow safety considerations in treadmill manufacturer guidelines.
 - b. Proper Attire – The employee shall wear attire which upholds the University or department dress code policy and proper footwear while walking on the treadmill workstation. Proper footwear is defined as walking shoes, athletic shoes, or sneakers. Any personal accessories shall be kept clear of the treadmill's moving parts.
 - c. Proper Hygiene – The employee shall practice proper hygiene.
 - d. Desk Accessories – All desk accessories shall be cleared of the moving parts of the treadmill. All cords shall be gathered and directed away from the belt and other moving parts. No other desk accessories shall be a hindrance to the treadmill's function.
 - e. Treadmill Placement in Workspace – The following considerations need to be kept in mind when determining the placement of a treadmill workstation:
 - i. Exit corridors – Placement of the treadmill in the workspace may not impede access to the exit corridors. All exit access shall be at least 28 inches wide at all points.
 - ii. Clearance – All treadmills shall have 36 inches cleared space behind the belt.
 - f. Treadmill Workstation Set-up – There are basic ergonomic tips to consider when setting up a treadmill desk workstation. The following recommendations are advised specifically for treadmill workstations. Additional guidance on ergonomic workstation setups can be found on the Environmental Health & Safety website (<http://www.clarkson.edu/dehs/ergonomics.html>). Ergonomic workstation setup consultations can also be coordinated through the Environmental Health & Safety Department.
 - i. Head and neck balanced and in-line with the torso.
 - ii. Elbows close to the body and bent between 90 and 120 degrees. Desktop height should be adjusted accordingly.
 - iii. Top of the monitor at or just below eye level so the user does not have to tilt the head up or bend the neck down to see the monitor.
 - iv. Shoulders relaxed.
 - v. Wrists and hands straight, in-line, and roughly parallel to the floor.
 - vi. Adequate room for keyboard and mouse.
- 6. **Health Requirements** – In order to utilize a treadmill desk workstation, the following health considerations shall be considered:
 - a. Risks – As with any form of physical activity, there are inherent risks. Examples of such include bruises, sprains and muscle pulls along with the potential for more serious problems to arise such as heart attacks, heart rhythm abnormalities and other cardio respiratory problems.
 - b. Health/Fitness Usage Guidelines
 - i. The safety key shall be clipped to the user at all times while operating the treadmill.
 - ii. The user should never walk faster than 2.0 mph while working.
 - iii. The grade should be less than 3% while working.
 - iv. The treadmill workstation is not to be used except in the capacity for which it is designed. The treadmill is not to be used for a daily workout, but as a walking workstation only.
 - v. The treadmill workstation should be used minimally at first and slowly progressed over time. A beginner should increase the time walking by 15 minutes each week, however, individual fitness levels will vary.
 - vi. It is recommended that an individual consult with their primary care doctor before utilizing a treadmill work station.
 - vii. Clarkson University is not responsible or liable for any injuries resulting from the use of personal equipment such as treadmill workstation. Acknowledgement of this must be done through signing the “Treadmill Desk Release of Liability” form, which can be accessed by clicking here. The completed form shall be submitted to Human Resources.

[back to top](#)

Additional Contacts

[back to top](#)

History

[back to top](#)

Related Information

[back to top](#)