





## **HEALTHY AND SAFE TELEWORK**

TECHNICAL BRIEF — GENEVA, 2021





Healthy and safe telework: technical brief

ISBN (WHO) 978-92-4-004097-7 (electronic version) ISBN (WHO) 978-92-4-004098-4 (print version) ISBN (ILO) 978-92-2-036231-0 (print) ISBN (ILO) 978-92-2-036232-7 (web PDF)

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**Cataloguing-in-Publication (CIP) data.** CIP data are available at http://apps.who.int/iris.

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### Acknowledgements

The technical brief was developed by a joint World Health Organization/International Labour Organization (WHO/ILO) technical advisory group on healthy and safe telework, under the leadership of Ivan Dimov Ivanov from the WHO Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health and Manal Azzi from the ILO Labour Inspection, Labour Administration and Occupational Safety and Health Branch (LABADMIN/OSH). The manuscript was written by Yonah Amster from WHO.

Valuable contributions were provided at various stages by the following WHO staff and consultants: Faten Ben Abdelaziz and Kristine Sorensen (Department of Health Promotion), and Aiysha Malik (Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse). The following ILO staff contributed to the document: Joaquim Pintado Nunes, Manal Azzi (LABADMIN/OSH) and Najati Ghosheh (Department of Conditions of Work and Equality) contributed to the technical content. The ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities and the Bureau for Workers' Activities reviewed and provided comments to the document.

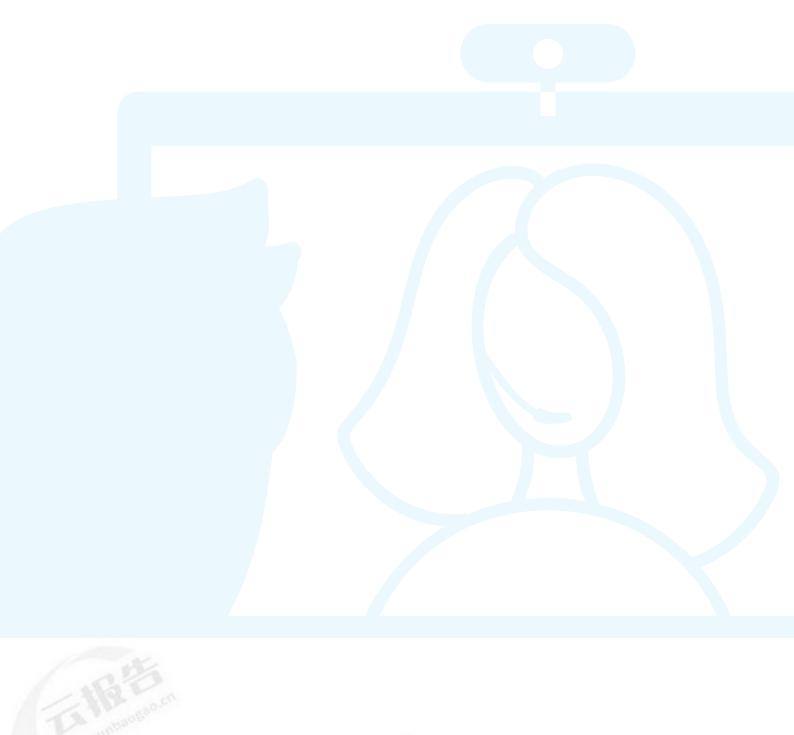
Kathleen Mosier and Michelle Robertson from the International Ergonomics Association participated in the task force and contributed to the document.

The brief was reviewed by the following external reviewers: Yoshihisa Fujino (University of Occupational and Environmental Health, Japan), Ehi Iden (Occupational Health and Safety Managers, Nigeria) and Diana Levine (University of Haifa, Israel). Katie Fineran (University of Haifa, Israel) assisted with the literature review.

Useful comments were received from: Alliance for Health Promotion, Institution of Occupational Safety and Health, International Ergonomic Association, International Occupational Medicine Society Collaborative, and International Union for Health Promotion and Education.

#### Key messages

- Telework the practice of working remotely using informational and communications technology has an important and growing role in the workplace, and has a potential impact on workers' health, safety and well-being.
- When organized and carried out properly, telework can be beneficial for physical and mental health and social well-being. It can improve work-life balance, reduce traffic and time spent commuting, and decrease air pollution, all of which can, indirectly, improve physical and mental health. Telework can also have public health and social benefits.
- Telework settings may fail to meet the occupational safety and health standards available at traditional worksites.
- Poor physical environment and workplace design and inadequate equipment and support can result in musculoskeletal disorders, eye strain and injuries.
- Working within a digital environment in physical isolation from co-workers, coupled with potential difficulties in managing work-private life balance in premises outside the direct control of the employer, can result in mental health problems and unhealthy behaviours.
- Protecting and promoting health and well-being in teleworking requires a comprehensive set of measures to provide a healthy and safe work environment, including adequate organization of the work.
- Governments, employers and workers all have a role in protecting and promoting health and safety while teleworking, including ergonomics, mental health and well-being, as defined by the ILO Convention on Occupational Safety and Health, 1981 and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006.
- Those employing teleworkers should develop programmes to promote healthy and safe telework. Such programmes should provide assistance for assessing and managing the risk factors for health and safety; workstation, computer and peripheral equipment, and remote ICT support.
- Occupational health services can offer ergonomic, mental health and psychosocial support.
- Workers should collaborate with employers on the implementation of these measures, cooperating with their employer and fulfilling their own health and safety duties to ensure decent and safe conditions for telework.



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