



# Building a Scalable Ergonomics Program **to Reduce Hybrid-Work Claims**

## Story Overview

A Southern California child care and social services organization operating across 30 locations was experiencing a high volume of repetitive-motion, strain, sprain, and other soft-tissue workers' compensation claims. As the organization shifted into hybrid and remote work after COVID, leaders had less visibility into employee workstations and needed a practical way to reduce claim frequency and severity across a dispersed workforce.

## Challenge

By 2021, the organization's ergonomic-related claims had become a meaningful financial and operational issue. Claim volume and incurred losses rose sharply as employees returned to work in a mix of office and home environments, where workstation setups were harder to monitor and standardize. The client needed more than one-off assessments. It needed a repeatable process to identify risk, guide equipment decisions, train employees, and intervene early before issues turned into costly claims.



Closing the visibility gap across remote workstations.



## IMA's Strategy and Actions

IMA's ergonomics and risk advisory team acted to support the client by:

- + Using Power BI trend analysis to help the client see claim patterns, understand the main drivers, and focus attention on the soft-tissue and repetitive-motion issues affecting cost.
- + Delivering virtual ergonomics training for employees and recording it so the client could reuse it broadly and embed it into onboarding.
- + Helping the client redesign its home-office stipend process so equipment purchases followed assessment and guidance rather than open-ended reimbursement.
- + Creating an online ergonomic assessment tool that served as an onboarding resource, workstation self-review, red-flag identifier, and tracking mechanism for HR.
- + Conducting virtual and in-person ergonomic assessments, documenting specific equipment recommendations, and reviewing findings with HR to support consistent follow-through.



## Why It Worked

IMA's approach worked because it combined analytics, education, and process design into a system the client could sustain. Rather than treating ergonomics as a one-time wellness initiative, the team helped the client build an operational model for training, assessment, escalation, and equipment selection. That structure was especially valuable in a hybrid environment, where visibility was limited and consistency mattered.

## Key Takeaways

This case demonstrates how ergonomics can become a meaningful cost-control strategy when it is tied to data, onboarding, and ongoing oversight. It also shows the value of bringing ergonomics into broader client discussions early, especially when hybrid work or repetitive-motion exposure is contributing to claims.

### THE RESULT:



From 2021 to 2025, the client's claim count fell from 36 to 29, while incurred costs dropped from about \$1.4 million to about \$184,000. The client also put more than 1,000 employees through the ergonomics process, creating a more scalable and proactive way to manage risk across its workforce.

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