

How to Use the Physical Demands Task Assessment

Many types of assessment and analysis tools are available. This assessment asks you to describe a task and show information about the physical demands and environmental conditions of the injured employee's position so his or her treating physician may make an informed decision about the employee's ability to return to his or her pre-injury job.

Follow these steps for completing the assessment.

1. Use these definitions to complete the top of the form:

Task Title: Name of the task being assessed.

Date: Date the form is completed.

Analyst: Name of the person making the assessment.

Task Duration: Number of hours the employee spends doing this task for one day.

With Breaks: Whether the employee doing the task takes breaks.

Overtime: Average number of hours of overtime the employee typically works per day/week.

Task Description: A brief description of the task (Use the tasks inventory form to list the steps of each task).

2. Fill in Sections 1 through 5 and make any additional comments.

Section 1: Postures

Observe the employee's postures (standing, sitting, walking, or driving) during the task. First, circle the number of hours the employee stays in a posture without changing. Second, circle the total (or cumulative) number of hours that the employee is in a posture while doing this task throughout the day.

Section 2: Lifting and Carrying

Observe any manual lifting and carrying during the task. For each category of weight, mark how frequently the weight must be lifted or carried. If the employee never lifts this amount of weight, mark "0 percent." If the employee lifts this weight less than one-third and two-thirds of the day, mark "occasionally"; between one-third and two-thirds of the day, mark "frequently"; and more than two-thirds, mark "constantly." For each weight, say how high the load must be lifted (example: a box is lifted from the floor to waist height, about three feet) and how far the weight is carried (example: from the dock to the processing table, about 20 feet).

Section 3: Actions and Motions

Observe the different actions and motions during the task. Write a description that explains why the employee must take action or motion (example: pushes mail cart across room). Show the total amount of time during the day the employee does each action or motion using these definitions.

Pushing Moving an object away from you, including kicking, slapping, pressing, and striking an object.

Example: Pushing a dolly.

Pulling Moving an object towards you, including jerking or sliding an object.

Example: Dragging a box across the floor toward you.



- Climbing Using your legs, arms, hands, or feet to move up or down a structure such as stairs, ladders, scaffolds, and ramps.
Example: Dragging a box across the floor toward you.
- Balancing Moving in a manner that requires you to keep from falling because of unstable surfaces such as slippery, moving, or narrow spaces.
Example: Replacing shingles on a steep roof.
- Bending Using your back and legs to bend forward and downward.
Example: Leaning over a car engine to do repairs.
- Twisting Rotating your upper body in a different direction than your lower body.
Example: Reaching behind you to pick up parts while you remain seated at a machine.
- Squatting Lowering your body by bending at the knees.
Example: Crawling through a crawl space to get to plumbing.
- Kneeling Lowering your body onto one knee or both knees.
Example: Kneeling on one knee to remove a flat tire from a car.
- Reaching Moving your hands and arms toward an object at arm's length in any direction from your body.
Example: Reaching upward to change an overhead light bulb.
- Handling Using your hands to hold, grasp, grip, or turn an object.
Example: Holding a drill while drilling holes.
- Fingering Using your fingers to pinch, pick, or manipulate objects, especially small ones.
Example: Picking up nuts and placing them on bolts.
- Feeling Using your hands and fingers to perceive the shape, size, temperature, or other characteristic of an object.
Example: Laying your hand on the hood of a car to check for heat.
- Repetitive Using your feet or hands continuously in the same motion or motions.
Example: Typing at a computer or using a foot pedal on a sewing machine.

Section 4: Equipment

Observe any equipment, tools, or machinery the employee uses during the task. Describe the name or type of each tool, piece of equipment, or machine. Mark how often it is used: never, occasionally, frequently, or constantly. Note any other information about the physical demands of operating equipment.

Section 5: Environmental Conditions

Observe the environmental conditions the employee is exposed to during the task, such as vibration, noise, and heat or cold. For each condition, describe the specific type of environmental condition, then list the frequency of exposure: never, occasionally, frequently, or constantly. Note any other information about the physical demands of working in this environmental condition.

