

Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace

A psychologically healthy and safe workplace promotes a worker's psychological well-being, which actively contributes to preventing harm to a worker's mental health.

Traditionally, physical injury was the only factor considered when measuring the level of safety in the workplace. Today, employers are recognizing and accepting that a worker's psychological health and safety is just as important in promoting and strengthening a workplace's health and safety culture.

1 in 5

people in Canada live with a mental illness each year.*

*Source: https://stressedoutsolutions.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Investing_in_Mental_Health_FINAL_Version_ENG.pdf



When is a Worker Psychologically Healthy?

A worker is psychologically healthy when they are **able to work productively, to the full extent of their ability, and can effectively cope with everyday stress**. A psychologically healthy worker is able to actively contribute to their work environment.

Benefits of a Psychologically Healthy Workplace

Protecting and supporting workers' psychological health can positively impact an organization. Benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Increased productivity
- Organizational sustainability and growth
- Increased employee retention
- Increased employee engagement
- Lower absenteeism and reduced sick time
- Reduced stress
- Increased workforce morale

Supporting psychological health positively impacts an organization.

Simply, it's good business.

Adopting “The Standard”

The National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (The Standard) is a set of guidelines, tools, and resources that can assist employers in promoting worker’s psychological health and preventing psychological harm due to workplace factors.

Although adopting The Standard is voluntary, many employers have implemented these guidelines with minimal financial investment or change to organizational structure.



Ensuring a Workplace is Psychologically Safe

Employers have a responsibility to ensure that their workplace is safe and healthy. While creating a culture of psychological wellness is a cumulative effort of everyone at the worksite, employers can promote psychological wellness in their workplace by considering the following:

- **Organizational Culture** – A work environment must be fair and honest. Always encourage mutual trust between all parties.
- **Psychological and Social Support** – Employers, workers, and supervisors should be supportive of worker mental health challenges and concerns.
- **Clear Leadership & Expectations** – Be an effective leader and guide workers in their role.
- **Civility & Respect** – Encourage workers to be considerate to each other.
- **Psychological Demands** – Ensure worker competencies fit with the requirements of their position.
- **Growth & Development** – Give workers support in improving or developing their skills.
- **Recognition & Reward** – Ensure that workers receive appropriate acknowledgements of effort.
- **Involvement & Influence** – Include workers in discussions about their work and processes.
- **Workload Management** – Ensure tasks can be accomplished in the given amount of time.
- **Engagement** – Find ways to encourage workers to feel connected to their work.
- **Balance** – Allow workers to maintain a healthy work/life balance.
- **Psychological Protection** – Always ensure a worker is psychologically safe.
- **Protection of Physical Safety** – Always ensure a worker is physically safe.

To learn more about The Standard, visit www.mentalhealthcommission.ca.

