

A close-up, profile view of a woman with dark hair, looking down. She is wearing a dark turtleneck sweater and a denim jacket. The lighting is soft and warm, coming from the side, highlighting her features.

# CPI's Checklist for Managing Mental Health at Work

# Can This Checklist Help Me?

One in four people experiences at least one mental disorder in their lifetime, according to the World Health Organization. Mental illnesses are more common than cancer, diabetes, and heart disease, and depression is the most common mental health problem.

If not well managed, workplace-related mental health issues can lead to decreased productivity, performance, and morale. But you can take steps to boost those—and reduce stress, absenteeism, and conflict while you're at it. While attitudes, beliefs, and practices at work can contribute to mental health problems, your workplace can and should contribute positively and constructively to mental wellness.

This checklist will help you develop practical, sensitive policies and procedures for doing just that. It will also give you additional steps and resources to consider for preventing and managing mental health issues at work—whether you're an employee, a manager or supervisor, or a member of senior leadership.



# Introduction: Causes and Signs of Stress

Mental health issues at work can have internal causes, external causes, or a combination of the two. An employee may be predisposed to a condition such as depression, or job factors may play a role in a person's mental health. Some job factors have the potential to harm, but the checklist on the following pages will give you the ability to help.

## Causes of stress

Numerous studies have linked conditions like depression to job stressors such as:

- Extreme job demands
- Low job control
- Lack of support
- Financial problems
- Lack of control or feeling trapped in a job role
- Workplace bullying
- Underlying emotional problems or mental illness

## Signs of stress

While you should not be expected to diagnose or treat depression, stay aware of signs such as:

- Withdrawal or passivity
- Decreased performance
- Uncharacteristic procrastination or expressions of frustration
- Persistently sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Obvious signs of sleep problems
- Frequent restlessness or irritability
- Sudden difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Fatigue
- Expressions of guilt, hopelessness, or worthlessness
- Talk of suicide or death

# Checklist: General Policies and Procedures

- ☐ Clearly state your organization's commitment to wellness at work.
- ☐ Provide an environment that contributes to the positive social and emotional well-being of all employees at all levels.
- ☐ Outline expectations for all employees and model respectful, service-oriented, and physically and emotionally safe practices toward internal and external customers.
- ☐ Address any necessary factors related to privacy and confidentiality.
- ☐ Consider reasonable accommodations for internal and external customers with mental illness.
- ☐ Address applicable legal, regulatory, accreditation, licensing, industry, professional, trade, or union requirements, and best practices.
- ☐ Outline procedures for responding to threats or acts of violence, including those toward oneself.
- ☐ Take all threats seriously.
- ☐ Develop an emergency resource list. This can include contact information for law enforcement, emergency medical services (EMS), your Employee Assistance Program (EAP), community mental health agencies, suicide hotlines, online resources, etc.

# Checklist: Support for All Employees

- ☐ Offer internal skill-building seminars on topics such as time and stress management, work-life balance, financial planning, helpful technology, etc.
- ☐ Provide employees with wellness information, brochures, fact sheets, quick tips, intranet postings, etc.
- ☐ Provide information and resources on helpful benefits available through your organization. These can include education and training benefits, seminars, medical benefits, your EAP, community mental health resources, online supports, etc.
- ☐ Provide employees with information, resources, and training specific to mental wellness, emotional problems and concerns, mental illness, substance abuse, diversity, sexual and psychological harassment, and violence.
- ☐ Outline procedures for all employees in recognizing and responding to crisis situations. This should include situations involving irrational behavior, mental health problems, concerns, and mental illness.

# Checklist: Support for Managers & Supervisors

- ☐ Provide managers and supervisors with training opportunities on respectful, service-oriented, and physically and emotionally safe supervisory practices for all employees at all levels.
- ☐ Offer managers and supervisors specific information on the role of the work environment on social and emotional well-being.
- ☐ Enable managers and supervisors to offer flexible work arrangements that consider the life circumstances of a diverse workforce.
- ☐ Encourage managers and supervisors to reward exceptional and exemplary employee efforts in a fair and impartial manner.
- ☐ Provide managers and supervisors with referral checklists for medical benefits, your EAP, community mental health resources, online supports, etc.

# Thank You!

We hope you found this resource helpful. Please feel free to share it with a friend or colleague.

Want more tips on addressing mental health issues in your workplace?

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Have questions? We can help!  
Give us a call at 888.426.2184 or email [info@crisisprevention.com](mailto:info@crisisprevention.com)