

# Creating a Workplace Mental Health Policy



## An Employer Guide

A written workplace mental health policy articulates your company's commitment to preventing and addressing mental health issues among your employees. It's an important way to communicate your values, establish company norms and prioritize transparency in benefits, treatment, care and support options.

Be sure to request employee feedback as you draft your policy, and consult legal counsel before finalizing. Build in timelines to revisit the policy as members of your workforce and their psychological needs shift over time.

**Use this checklist to help you draft a policy that's right for your company.**

- ☐ Establish and reiterate your company's view that mental health is as important as physical health.
- ☐ Offer support for employees who face mental health challenges, along with an overview of your company's mental health benefits and resources, including health insurance coverage, EAPs and other support options.
- ☐ Articulate the steps your company is taking to create a psychologically safe workplace in collaboration with managers, employees and health experts. Clarify your commitment to identifying and mitigating workplace stressors.
- ☐ State what you're doing to prioritize equity and address the unique needs of disproportionately impacted workforce populations.
- ☐ Provide an overview of your company's mental health leave policies, which may include paid mental health days, paid time off for therapy or mental health appointments, sick leave for mental health reasons, flexible use of vacation time, additional unpaid or administrative leave for treatment or recovery, or other options.



- ☐ Communicate employee rights and **reasonable accommodations** under the American Disabilities Act and the Family Medical Leave Act.
- ☐ Commit to company norms that support psychological safety and mental well-being (e.g. open door policy, designated break spaces, flexible work policies, etc.).
- ☐ Prohibit discrimination of employees who experience mental health conditions, and articulate a process to safely report violations.
- ☐ Set standards for employee education and manager training on workplace mental health.
- ☐ Set clear expectations about what employees should expect from managers or leadership if they disclose a mental health-related difficulty or a documented condition, as well as expectations following a mental health leave of absence.
- ☐ Designate people in the organization whom employees can reach out to if they don't feel comfortable reporting a condition or mental health need to their manager (e.g. trained mental health allies, a mental health navigator, Human Resources, etc.).
- ☐ Recommend community resources and national hotlines for support.



**DISCLAIMER:** Public health guidance on workplace mental health is evolving. Health Action Alliance is committed to regularly updating our materials once we have engaged public health, business and communications experts about the implications of new guidance from the mental health community and effective business strategies that align with public health goals.

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