



# MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK POLICY

## VERSION: SEPTEMBER 2019



**oneway**  
BUILDING YOUR FUTURE

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## 1. Purpose and scope

### 1.1. One Way is committed to:

- protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees;
- promoting positive mental health for all its staff; and
- tackling the causes of stress and work-related mental ill health.

### 1.2. One Way aims to promote a positive working environment where:

- it works with employees to promote the physical and mental health of all employees;
- all staff feel able to talk openly about their mental health and not fear discrimination if their condition is a disability, or bullying or harassment;
- people with mental health issues have the opportunity to participate in the workplace.

### 1.3. One Way recognises that stress in the workplace is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing the causes of workplace stress.

### 1.4. One Way also recognises that an employee's performance or behaviour can be affected if they are experiencing mental ill health, and that appropriate support and adjustments should be explored before considering any formal measures such as disciplinary action.

### 1.5. This policy applies to all staff, including employees, temporary and agency workers, other contractors, interns, volunteers and apprentices. Managers are responsible for implementation and One Way is responsible for providing the necessary resources.

## 2. Identifying stress

### 2.1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them'. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress, which is likely to be detrimental to physical or mental health if it is prolonged. Stress is not in itself an illness, but it can make you ill.

### 2.2. Causes of stress may include:

- demands—e.g. where employees are not able to cope with the demands of their jobs;
- control—e.g. where employees are unable to control the way they do their work;
- support—e.g. where employees do not receive enough information and support;
- relationships—e.g. where employees are having trouble with relationships at work, or are being bullied;
- role—e.g. where employees do not fully understand their role and responsibilities;
- change—e.g. where employees are not engaged when a business is undergoing change.

### 2.3. Signs of stress in a team may include:

- arguments;
- higher staff turnover;
- increased reports of stress;
- increased sickness absence;
- decreased performance; and
- increased complaints and grievances.

### 2.4. Signs of stress in an individual may include:

- taking more time off;
- arriving for work later;





- being more twitchy or nervous;
- mood swings;
- being withdrawn;
- loss of motivation, commitment and confidence.

2.5. An individual who is stressed may notice changes in the way they think or feel, or act, eg:

- feeling negative;
- being indecisive;
- feeling isolated;
- feeling nervous;
- being unable to concentrate;
- eating more or less than usual;
- smoking, drinking or taking drugs to 'cope';
- having difficulty sleeping.

### 3. Mental health conditions

3.1. If, as a manager, you know that an employee has a mental health condition, you should:

- 3.1.1. if you see that the employee is having difficulties, talk to them at an early stage and ask questions in an open, exploratory and non-judgemental way. If the employee does not want to speak to you, suggest they speak to someone else either One Way's Mental Health First Aider, Occupational Health or their GP;
- 3.1.2. if the employee has a disability, concentrate on making reasonable adjustments at work, rather than understanding the employee's diagnosis. Seek guidance from the employee's GP or other medical practitioner or a medical practitioner nominated by One Way on what you can do to help them;
- 3.1.3. if the employee is absent due to sickness, make sure you keep them informed about what is going on at work, including social events, and reassure them early on and throughout their absence;
- 3.1.4. before the employee returns to work after any sickness absence:
  - 3.1.4.1. discuss with the employee their return to work and reintegration into the workplace, and whether any change should be made to their duties, taking into account the available medical advice (as appropriate) and the needs of the business; and
  - 3.1.4.2. consider the need for a written plan that sets out when the employee will have reached the stage of 'business as usual', when you can use existing management processes to review their performance, needs etc; and
  - 3.1.4.3. if an employee gets upset, talk to them, reassure them, and tell them that you will give them all the help and support available. Explain that things will go at a pace that suits them. If you are in a meeting with them, ask if they would like someone else with them.

### 4. Policy

4.1. One Way will:

- carry out risk assessments to identify risks of stress in the workplace and seek to eliminate or control those risks. Risk assessments will be regularly reviewed;
- aim to manage and control the risks from work-related stress in accordance with the HSE's Management Standards;
- provide training for managers in dealing with stress and mental health issues, and good management practices;





- provide training for staff in mental health awareness;
- arrange confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors, where appropriate following action by an employee or manager;
- provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement this policy and procedure;
- implement this policy in line with the principles of its equal opportunities policy and with due regard to any employee's disability and the company's duty to make reasonable adjustments to its policies, arrangements and procedures.

## 5. Responsibilities—managers

### 5.1. Managers will:

- carry out and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their area;
- review job descriptions to identify tasks that may cause stress;
- ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes;
- ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties;
- ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities;
- monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded or under-utilised;
- discourage work-related contact with staff outside normal working hours or while on holiday;
- monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking;
- monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement;
- attend training, as requested, in good management practice and health and safety;
- ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction;
- be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff experiencing stress outside work, e.g. bereavement or separation; and
- ensure that individuals' personal data, including information about their mental health, is handled in accordance with the organisation's Privacy Standard.

## 6. Responsibilities—employees

### 6.1. You will:

- 6.1.1. if you are experiencing mental health difficulties, or stress at work, seek help at the earliest opportunity from your line manager, mental health first aider or your GP, in the knowledge that One Way will do its best to support you;
- 6.1.2. raise any other issues of concern with your line manager or mental health first aider;
- 6.1.3. take an active part in the process of assessing the risk, e.g. completing surveys or providing honest feedback when requested; and
- 6.1.4. accept opportunities for counselling when recommended.

One Way's mental health first aider is Abbie McMahon-Smith Operations Assistant

Signed Date: September 2019

Paul Payne  
Managing Director

