



October 2021

Mental Health at Work Policy

This policy outlines the approach of the organisation towards supporting employees who have mental health-related issues. The policy should be read in combination with related policies on Stress at Work and Occupational Health.

This organisation recognises that mental health issues are common in modern society and affect many employees and managers in workplaces. It also recognises that people with mental health issues make valuable contributions to the success of any organisation and that providing them with adequate support not only complies with the law but supports their ongoing health and employment.

In particular, the organisation recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent discrimination and to make “reasonable adjustments” for employees with disabilities which remove barriers to their employment. The organisation recognises that disability is defined in the Act as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability of an individual to carry out normal, day-to-day activities.

It is understood that establishing a workplace ethos that supports positive mental health can:

- help to retain valuable and experienced staff, reducing turnover, staffing and training costs
- reduce sickness absence, particularly from stress-related mental health conditions
- help staff achieve their potential and sustain their careers
- enhance safety and increase productivity
- make for a healthier, more tolerant workplace.

Policy

In this organisation:

- Managers and supervisors will be trained to spot the signs of employees who may be having mental health, psychological or emotional difficulties. They will be trained to make simple and clear interventions aimed at discovering what the organisation can do to help, identifying any work-related causes for their issues and making “reasonable adjustments” wherever appropriate to support them.
- Where necessary, managers will discuss with the employee whether an occupational health referral will be helpful. Where the employee agrees, the referral should be made. The manager should continue to support the employee as appropriate, including working with occupational health, where required, on any agreed support plan.

- All discussions between managers and employees, referrals to occupational health or subsequent support plans, should be kept confidential by the manager.
- Flexible working options will be discussed with employees wherever their mental health needs indicate that an adjustment may be helpful to them. This might include variable hours or part-time working. All changes must be discussed with line managers.
- The management will promote the awareness of mental health issues and do all they can to create a culture where employees feel they can talk about their concerns. The organisation will support the establishment of mental health champions to help staff to support their colleagues and will seek accreditation as a mental health positive workplace.
- Negative or discriminatory views about mental health and stigma will be challenged. This will be achieved through methods such as stress awareness campaigns, positive mental health days, staff surveys, training, etc. The organisation has a zero tolerance approach towards discrimination, bullying and harassment on any grounds, including towards staff because of their mental health. Staff are encouraged to report any instances and managers will take appropriate action.

Training

Managers and supervisors should be trained how to provide appropriate support to people with mental health issues and how to create a healthy working environment. Training in mental health issues will help to fight the misconceptions some people have about mental illness.

Review

As part of its monitoring of safety and risk assessment this policy will be subject to periodic review.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Policy review date: _____