

Mental Well-being Policy

1 Introduction

The Agency aims to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its employees. We recognise that we have a duty of care to look after the mental health and well-being of our staff whilst they are at work and to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that workplaces and working environments are safe and healthy.

The pressures and stresses of modern day living can be found in both the home and in the workplace. Personal life and work can place a variety of demands on us and we endeavour to meet these demands using individual or organisational resources. When there is a good balance between demands and resources the result is a pleasant energising feeling called "pressure". You could be very busy indeed and still only be experiencing pressure rather than suffering any adverse health affect to your mental well-being. The term stress is used to describe a mismatch between personal and external demands and the available personal and external resources. Stress is always bad for health - and is never good for business - anxiety and depression are other forms of mental ill health, which can have an adverse impact on individuals at home and in the workplace.

The Agency promotes a comprehensive approach to tackling mental health issues arising from the workplace or personal circumstances by addressing the roles of prevention, management and help. This policy must be supported by a shared understanding between staff and team leaders/managers that mental ill health can be a legitimate health issue in the workplace. Employees experiencing difficulties that could lead to them suffering mental health illness will be encouraged to seek help and support. Employees have a duty to themselves and others to help minimise mental ill health in the workplace and should take an active part in mental well-being management initiatives.

2 Objectives

- to maximise mental well-being in the workplace environment
- to provide a working environment where hazards to health are identified, assessed and removed or reduced
- to ensure that staff who have, or have had, symptoms of mental ill health are treated responsibly and in an understanding manner

3 Policy

- the Agency will review its prevention and management programmes from time to time through Line Management, Human Resources, Health and Safety, our Welfare Officer, Occupational Health Service and our Employee Assistance provider
- the Agency will ensure that staff have the opportunity to acquire the skills and competencies necessary to help to meet changing work demands through appropriate training and development
- the Agency will offer mental well-being seminars to staff from time to time on the nature, causes, recognition of mental ill health, and resources available to reduce or remove it
- the Agency will provide training for all managers on how to manage and eliminate or minimise mental ill-health in the work environment

4 Responsibilities

This policy reminds everyone that we all have responsibilities in addressing mental well-being issues and any member of staff should not hesitate to seek advice and/or support if they feel they need it. Confidentiality should be observed when dealing with mental ill-health issues. However, in exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to involve others where if it is clear that a person's state of mental health may be a danger to the safety of themselves or others.

Customer Service Centres

**Erskine House, 68 Queen Street, Edinburgh EH2 4NF, Tel: 0845 607 0161, Fax: 0131 200 3932,
Email: customer.services@ros.gov.uk**

**9 George Square, Glasgow G2 1DY, Tel: 0845 607 0164, Fax: 0141 306 4424
Email: customer.services@ros.gov.uk**

The role of Managers

Managers have a critical role in minimising mental ill health risks and in offering support to employees. They should:-

- carry out risk assessments in their work areas to identify any hazards that could give rise to mental ill health issues and act upon these hazards to eliminate or minimise them where practicable
- ensure they provide good communication to their staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes
- ensure staff are fully trained to do the job
- ensure staff are provided with appropriate training and developmental opportunities
- ensure staff are managing the demands of the job by monitoring workloads and working hours
- ensure that staff are taking their full leave entitlement by monitoring holidays
- ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their work area
- be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation
- offer access to skilled, professional help and advice to staff with mental ill health related problems
- offer support to other staff and colleagues of someone suffering from mental ill health, as appropriate
- ensure that employees returning to work after a period of absence due to mental ill-health are handled in a sensitive and sympathetic manner. If the cause of the individual's illness had been due to specific work issues, the manager must ensure that these work-related issues are addressed before the individual resumes their duties

The role of Human Resources

- advise managers on how to carry out risk assessments in the workplace
- offer advice and support for managers in dealing with instances of mental ill-health at work
- liaise with managers over return to work arrangements following a period of absence due to mental ill health and to advise on how to rehabilitate the individual and on whether redeployment of the individual to an alternative position is necessary
- offer access to skilled, professional help and advice to staff with mental ill health related problems
- assist in monitoring the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics

The role of Occupational Health Service

- to enable the individual to access confidential medical support and information
- to provide an Occupational Health report, where appropriate, on fitness for work, after an extended period of mental ill-health

The role of the Welfare Officer

- keep in touch with staff who are absent because of ill-health
- provide advice and support through period of recovery
- assist and advise managers of their welfare role

The role of employees

- raise issues of concern regarding mental well-being with their Team Leader/Manager, PCS, Occupational Health or ICAS
- accept opportunities to attend mental well-being seminars, when offered
- accept opportunities for counselling when recommended
- to behave in a manner that is conducive to the mental well-being of their colleagues

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The role of Union Officials

- encourage members to seek help where appropriate
- helping individuals to understand the policy and where to seek help, if necessary

If you feel you are experiencing mental health related issues the following guides show the procedures, which might be useful to you.

Quick guide to the procedures for dealing with mental ill health related issues - while at work and absences due to mental ill health.

5 If you feel at any time, that you have been treated unfairly under the Mental Well-being policy you should refer to the Agency's grievance procedures - grievance.

6 Sources of advice or assistance

Your Manager

Your Personnel Adviser

The Welfare Officer - see A guide to Welfare Services

Your Trade Union Representative

Your Doctor

The Agency's Employee Assistance Programme (ICAS) through the confidential Helpline number - 0800 072 072 - see also Employee Assistance Programme

Occupational Health Service through the confidential Helpline number - 0800 027 7045 - see also Occupational Health Service

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