

WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH POLICY STATEMENT - PROPOSED

Mental ill health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our places of work. Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of employees is important for individuals' physical health, social wellbeing and productivity. Many factors in the workplace influence the mental wellbeing of individual employees, particular departments or organisations as a whole. Understanding and addressing the factors which affect people's mental wellbeing at work have a wide range of benefits, both for individuals and the organisation.

According to WHO, Depression and anxiety have a significant economic impact; the estimated cost to the global economy is US\$ 1 trillion per year in lost productivity. Harassment and bullying at work are commonly reported problems, and can have a substantial adverse impact on mental health. For every US\$ 1 put into scaled up treatment for common mental disorders, there is a return of US\$ 4 in improved health and productivity.

Mental wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improved mental wellbeing at work. Addressing workplace mental wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health. It can also help promote the employment of people who have experienced mental health problems and support them once they are at work. We aim to create and promote a workplace environment that supports and promotes the mental wellbeing of all employees. We acknowledge that certain working conditions and practices can negatively affect employees' mental wellbeing, including aspects of work organisation and management, and environmental and social conditions that have the potential for psychological as well as physical harm.

This policy will be implemented in line with recommendations of the Mental Health Taskforce Report Kenya 2020 and other pertinent global/national health and safety guidelines.

KEY OBJECTIVES

PROMOTING THE MENTAL WELLBEING OF ALL STAFF THROUGH:

- Providing information and raising awareness about mental wellbeing and
- Providing opportunities for employees to look after their mental wellbeing.

PROMOTING POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE WELLBEING

- Providing support to employees through;
- Providing a work environment that promotes and supports mental wellbeing for all employees;
- Offering assistance, advice and support to people who experience a mental health problem while in employment and;
- Support for staff returning to work after a period of absence due to mental health problems.

HELPING PEOPLE GET BACK TO WORK AFTER A PERIOD OF ABSENCE DUE TO MENTAL ILLNESS THROUGH:

- Making reasonable adjustments and,
- Retaining staff who develop a mental health problem.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone has a responsibility to contribute to making the workplace mental wellbeing policy effective:

EMPLOYERS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- Make mental health self-assessment tools available to all employees
- Offer free or subsidized clinical screenings for depression from a qualified mental health professional
- Offer health insurance with no or low out-of-pocket costs for depression medications and mental health counselling.
- Provide free or subsidized lifestyle coaching, counselling, or self-management programs.
- Distribute information materials to all employees about Mental Health and opportunities for treatment
- Host workshops that address depression & stress management techniques, to help employees
- Create and maintain dedicated, quiet spaces for relaxation activities.
- Provide managers with training to help them recognize the signs & symptoms of stress & depression in team members.
- Give employees opportunities to participate in decisions about issues that affect job stress.

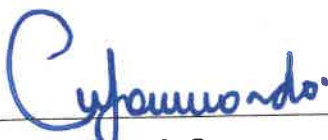
EMPLOYEES HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- Encourage employers to offer mental health and stress management education and programs that meet their needs and interests if they are not already in place.
- Participate in employer-sponsored programs and activities to learn skills & get the support they need to improve their mental health.
- Serves as dedicated wellness champions and participate in training on financial planning and how to manage unacceptable behaviours and attitudes in the workplace to help others when appropriate.
- Share personal experiences with others to help reduce stigma, when appropriate.
- Be open-minded about the experiences and feelings of colleagues. Respond with empathy, offer peer support, and encourage others to seek help.
- Adopt behaviours that promote stress management and mental health.
- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night.
- Take part in activities that promote stress management and relaxation, such as yoga, meditation, mindfulness, or tai chi.
- Build and nurture real-life, face-to-face social connections.
- Take the time to reflect on positive experiences and express happiness and gratitude.
- Set and work toward personal, wellness, and work-related goals and ask for help when needed.
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S/ DIRECTORS COMMITMENT

We, the Directors, pledge to provide satisfactory resources to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that our organization employees are provided with the necessary training, supervision, information, procedures, skills, equipment and leadership necessary to achieve our policy objectives.

This policy statement applies to all employees and other personnel engaged in this organization:



Mr. Joseph Onyango
Chairman
Institute of Human
Resource Management



Dr. Frank Njenga
Presidential Advisor on Mental Health,
Republic of Kenya