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Ways to Support Wellness

Tailor your approach to the individual!

- Paid Time Off/Sick Leave
- Scheduled meetings with agendas
- Note-taking during meetings for review afterwards
- No video option on virtual meetings
- Regular mental health check-ins
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Flexible scheduling
- Clear communication
- Medical and behavioral health benefits and Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)
- Clear boundaries between work and personal time
- A work culture that openly speaks about mental health
- Listening! Employees are experts on their mental health

Supporting Employees With Mental Health Conditions

According to the CDC, 1 in 4 adults will experience a mental health condition in a given year. That means that **whether employers know it or not, most workplaces include workers with mental health conditions**. Needless to say, employers should be prioritizing mental health in the workplace.

In *our first employer guide* , CAFE TAC shared some of the surprising benefits of hiring people with mental health conditions. In this resource guide, the aim is to help you, as employers, understand mental illness and develop best practices to support employees who may be experiencing mental health issues, whether they have chosen to disclose them or not.

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON FORMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS? [2]

Bipolar Disorder • Major Depressive Disorder
Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
Schizophrenia • Anxiety Disorder

47% **OF EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE DISCLOSED A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE IN THE WORKPLACE ADMIT TO** HAVING **EXPERIENCED A NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCE** BY DOING SO [3]

80% Percentage of employees who say they would quit a job over mental health

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SUSTAINED EMPLOYMENT IS AN INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT FACTOR FOR RECOVERY [4]

WHAT IS AN EAP?

An employee assistance program, or EAP, is an employee benefit program that assists employees with personal problems and/or work related problems that may impact their job performance, health, or mental and emotional well-being. Programs are delivered at no cost to employees by stand-alone EAP vendors or providers who are part of comprehensive health insurance plans. Services are often delivered via phone, video-based counseling, online chatting, e-mail interactions or face-to-face.

Examples include assessments, meetings with a mental health professional, and referrals for long-term support.

93% **OF EMPLOYEES SAY THAT AN OPEN-DOOR POLICY THAT ALLOWS FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION WITH LEADERSHIP OR HR IS IMPORTANT TO ADDRESSING EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH**

EMPLOYEE ACCOMMODATIONS

Employers need to be careful in addressing mental health in the workplace, so as not to spotlight individuals and unintentionally discriminate against employees with mental health concerns. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) supports employers in providing reasonable accommodations for employees with mental health-related disabilities.

Employers may be required under the ADA to provide reasonable accommodations, when requested, to an employee with a disability as long as it does not cause undue hardship on the employer. Examples include telecommuting, scheduling flexibility, sick leave, breaks, and noise reduction.

For more about disability, mental health, and the ADA, see the fact sheet at https://adata.org/factsheet/health.

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Example Check-In Questions

- How are you feeling today, really? Physically and mentally.

- What's taking up most of your head space right now?

- Tell me about a recent "win," either at work or at home.

- How can I support you this week?

- What's something you can do today that would be good for you?

- What's something you're looking forward to in the next few days?

- What are some goals we can work on this week?

- Who can help us reach these goals?

Mental Health Check-Ins

Mental Health Check-Ins are intentional one-on-one meetings between supervisors and their direct-reports focused on how staff can collectively support each other in the workplace.

They should always be voluntary for employees, who should have control over what and how much they share, and with whom they share it.

TEN TIPS FOR GREAT MENTAL HEALTH CHECK-INS WITH YOUR TEAM [6]

1. Make sure you know of where you can signpost people to if they are struggling with their well-being.

2. Be aware of any stressors or pressures and how these may be influencing individuals.

3. Listen to what it is your team has to say. Regularly practice the skill of mindful listening.

4. Make sure you are regularly checking in with how you are feeling.

5. Get to know your team and understand how personal factors could be influencing their performance.

6. Be proactive with support and ask your team if there is anything you can do to guide or help them.

7. Praise, encourage and be proud of team members who speak openly about mental health.

8. If someone is struggling be kind and understanding as to what it is they are experiencing.

9. If someone is struggling, suggest some positive actions people can engage with to look after physical and mental health.

10. Encourage your team to talk openly about well-being and mental health.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Want to find addition resources on how employers can successfully integrate employees with mental health various disabilities, including mental health conditions, into the workforce?

Take a look at guidance on recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining workers with disabilities from the Boston University Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation at https://cpr.bu.edu/resources-and-information/employment-repository/employers/

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