

Mental Health Awareness

Purpose

- Workers in the construction industry have a suicide rate roughly four times higher than the general population.
- Work-related stressors, like demanding schedules, seasonal work, physical injuries, and time away from home can take a serious toll on mental health.
- Suicide deeply affects not only individuals, but families, teams, and entire communities.

Responsibilities

The Company

- Educate and inform employees of worker's rights entitled to for seeking treatment as well as there being no retaliation for informing the employer of the need for services

Management

- Leadership has a great ability to start the conversation on mental health crises in the workplace and break down the stigma by openly discussing mental health
- Prioritize your own health by modeling healthy behavior
- Make it a point to check in with each of your direct reports and team members on a regular basis.
- Train employees on signs and symptoms of decreased mental health in themselves and other employees
- Educate employees on workers' rights regarding mental health and what they are entitled to as well as protection against retaliation for speaking up and asking for help
- Review policies and procedures for how work is managed to determine if additional flexibilities are needed.



Fact Sheet

- Evaluate your overall work environment, such as customer interactions, productivity schedule, pace of work, etc., to determine if there are workplace stress factors you could address.
- If your organization has an employee assistance program (EAP), remind employees about the benefits.

Employees:

- Look for the signs and symptoms of decreased mental health in other employees and themselves
- Promote and provide a healthy and safe work environment
- Participate in regular toolbox talks regarding mental health awareness

Causes and Signs of Mental Distress

- Potential causes of decreased mental health in employees:
 - Seasonal work and potential layoffs
 - Highly competitive culture
 - Overtime and long work hours
 - Payment and wage
 - Physical exertion and exhaustion
 - Workplace injuries
 - Substance abuse
 - Personal trauma and/or issues
- Signs of mental distress in employees
 - Irritability
 - Isolation
 - Decreased productivity
 - Excessively late for work/Excessive missed days
 - Risky behaviors
 - Increased conflicts with other employees

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5 Things you Should Know:

1. **Be Aware:** Recognize that mental health and suicide can affect anyone, even those who seem “tough.” Changes in behavior, mood, social withdrawal, unusual comments or post, these can be warning signs.
2. **Pay Attention:** If you notice something off, a coworker isolating, acting out of character, expressing hopelessness, take it seriously.
3. **Reach Out:** Show empathy, listen without judgement, and let them know you care.
4. **Take action:** If someone is in immediate crisis, stay with them. Contact emergency services or call/text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
5. **Learn More & Share:** Use trusted resources to educate yourself and your team.

Resources

- Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
 - <https://988lifeline.org/>
 - Call or text 988
- Crisis Textline
 - <https://www.crisistextline.org/>
 - Text “TALK” to 741741
- Construction Working Minds
 - <https://www.constructionworkingminds.org/>
- Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention
 - <https://preventconstructionsuicide.com/>