COMMUNICATIONS KIT

MANAGING THE RISK OF PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS AT WORK

CODE OF PRACTICE

COMMENCING 1 APRIL 2023

ABOUT THE CODE

The Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice 2022 (the Code) is a practical guide on how to prevent harm from psychosocial hazards at work, including psychological and physical harm.

The Code is an approved code of practice under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act).

It provides information for persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) on how psychosocial hazards and risks can be controlled or managed and can be used to help decide what's reasonably practicable to reduce risk.

The Code is also a helpful resource for workers who may experience harm from psychosocial hazards, including psychological harm, at work.

HOW TO USE THIS KIT

We've developed this communication kit for you to promote and raise awareness about the new Code.

Engage your networks and industry with messages including:

- newsletter/editorial copy
- social media posts or share one of ours
- sharing the toolbox talk presentation
- attending the livestream recordings
- sharing information on each of the hazards mentioned in the Code and the importance of mentally healthy workplaces.

KEY MESSAGES

The Code provides practical guidance and examples on how to comply with existing obligations to manage psychosocial risks at work.

This kit contacts handy links, resources, social media copy and tiles and suggested newsletter copy you can share with your key stakeholders.

1 Managing psychosocial hazards and risks at work is just as important as managing physical risks. The Code is a practical guide on how to prevent harm from psychosocial hazards at work, including psychological and physical harm.

2 The Code does not create a new work health and safety duty or expand existing duties; rather, it provides clarity and certainty through practical guidance for duty holders about their existing obligations to ensure risks to psychological health are eliminated or minimised under the WHS Act.

3 Psychosocial hazards and their effects are not always obvious. Some psychosocial hazards, when present at low levels over a long period of time, can accumulate to significantly affect psychological and physical health. While some psychosocial hazards may cause harm more immediately, such as a single stressful event. In many circumstances, psychosocial hazards combine to create or increase risk of harm.

4 Work-related psychosocial hazards can harm psychological health. The new code of practice helps employers to focus on the risks they are legally responsible for.

The new Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice comes into effect 1 April 2023

DIGITAL RESOURCES

WATCH THE TOOLBOX PRESENTATION

Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work ...

Watch later   Share

Managing the Risk of Psychosocial Hazards at Work: Code of Practice 2022

Watch Now ☆

DIGITAL RESOURCES

WEBINAR RECORDINGS

- Shifting the dial on the regulation of mental health at work

- Regulating mentally healthy workplaces

- Suicide prevention for at-risk industries

- Diversity and inclusion for mentally healthy workplaces

- Developing suitable duties to support a worker with psychological injury

- Imagining a workplace without burnout: new findings and a roadmap to prevention

- Achieving mentally healthy workplaces through early intervention

- Managing the mental health impacts of remote and isolated work

- Trauma informed care and vicarious trauma in healthcare

- Using cultural capability to create mentally healthy workplaces

EDITORIAL COPY

Managing psychosocial hazards and risks at work is just as important as managing physical risks.

Psychosocial hazards can exist in every workplace, in every industry, every day.

The release of the [Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work Code of Practice 2022](#) (the Code) along with amendments to the Work Health and Safety Regulation, are important steps in keeping Queensland workplaces safe, healthy and productive.

The new code and regulations will raise awareness of existing duties and provide clarity and certainty for duty holders about their obligations under the Act to ensure psychological health risks are eliminated or minimised.

The harm created by psychosocial hazards and risks varies, and the effects are not always obvious. It can be a single event involving one or more psychosocial risks, such as exposure to a traumatic event by an ambulance officer. It can be a combination of psychosocial risks that accumulate to create frequent, prolonged or severe stress responses, such as organisational change with poor supervisor support and low role clarity.

Looking for practical resources to support your managers and leaders? Download the [Mentally healthy workplaces toolkit](#) for tools and resources that you can use to create and maintain a mentally healthy workplace.

The Code commences 1 April 2023. Visit [worksafe.qld.gov.au](#) to learn more.

SOCIAL MEDIA

You are welcome to use the below posts on your own channels or share one of ours!

Facebook:@WorkSafeQueensland
LinkedIn: worksafe-q-8622b470/
Instagram: @worksafeqld
YouTube: @WorkSafeQueensland

Copy	Suggested asset
Queensland business owners, managers, supervisors and team leaders – the new Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice comes into effect 1 April 2023. You must meet your duty of care in identifying, eliminating and managing risks to psychological health in the workplace. Ensure your workplace is prepared and your workers are protected from psychosocial hazards at work. Learn more about the new code and view a range of resources that can support at worksafe.qld.gov.au Direct page link: https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice/managing-the-risk-of-psychosocial-hazards-at-work-code-of-practice-2022	CODE OF PRACTICE Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Commencing 1 April 2023

SOCIAL MEDIA

You are welcome to use the below posts on your own channels or share one of ours!

Copy	Asset
The workplace often represents a significant part of a person's life, and consequently plays an important role in supporting the mental and physical health of its employees. Psychosocial hazards at work which aren't effectively managed can lead to serious harm for people and business. Workplaces have always had to manage the risk of psychosocial hazards - the new Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice provides clear guidance on how to reasonably practicably manage the risks. You can learn more about the code and download a range of resources to help support build a mentally healthy workplace at worksafe.qld.gov.au	

SOCIAL MEDIA

You are welcome to use the below posts on your own channels or share one of ours!

Copy	Asset
Psychosocial hazards and their effects are not always obvious. Some psychosocial hazards, when present at low levels over a long period of time, can accumulate to significantly affect psychological health. While some psychosocial hazards may cause harm more immediately, such as a single stressful event, in many circumstances psychosocial hazards will interact and combine to create the risk of harm. The new Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice comes into effect 1 April 2023 and ensures Queensland's regulatory framework appropriately reflects the importance of psychological health from a work health and safety perspective. Learn more about how to prepare - visit worksafe.qld.gov.au	 **CODE OF PRACTICE** **Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work** Commencing 1 April 2023

SOCIAL MEDIA

You are welcome to use the below posts on your own channels or share one of ours!

Copy	Asset
Like physical hazards, some workers may be at greater risk from psychosocial hazards. Consulting with workers assists with identifying those who may be at greater risk, and what additional controls can be implemented to eliminate or minimise the risk for these workers, so far as is reasonably practicable. Learn more about the factors that may put some workers at higher risk - visit worksafe.qld.gov.au *or link to hazards specific page: https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/mental-health/Psychosocial-hazards	

SOCIAL MEDIA

You are welcome to use the below posts on your own channels or share one of ours!

Copy	Asset
Work-related stress is estimated to affect around 32% of all Australians. One in five Aussies experience a mental health condition in any year and one in two of us will experience a mental health condition in our lifetime. You don't need to be an expert on mental health, but as an employer, people manager or leader you do need to manage psychosocial risks in the same way you manage WHS risks, in a reasonably practicable manner. The new Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice comes into effect 1 April 2023. Learn more about the code at worksafe.qld.gov.au or watch the toolbox presentation linked.	**YouTube link:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_uQrQ_aD8Ho

SOCIAL MEDIA

You are welcome to use the below posts on your own channels or share one of ours!

Copy	Asset
IMPORTANT: The new Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice comes into effect 1 April 2023. The benefits of a systematic approach to psychological health includes decreases in work-related injuries, illnesses, claims, absenteeism and turnover, and results in increases in engagement, productivity, job satisfaction and attraction of top talent. The People at Work psychosocial risk assessment tool provides a way for workplaces to identify their psychosocial risks, benchmark them and track improvements over time – for free! Visit peopleatwork.gov.au to learn more about how to embed the People at work tool into your workplace.	 **People AT WORK** Supporting Australian organisations to meet their legislative work health and safety responsibility to identify and manage psychosocial risks in the workplace. Visit peopleatwork.gov.au to learn more.

FAQS

If you have a question you can contact us at safe@oir.qld.gov.au or visit the website for the complete FAQ list. Below are the most commonly asked questions.

Q. What are psychosocial hazards?

Psychosocial hazards are anything at work that may cause psychological or physical harm.
These stem from:

- the way the tasks or job are designed, organised, managed and supervised
- tasks or jobs where there are inherent psychosocial hazards and risks
- the equipment, working environment or requirements to undertake duties in physically hazardous environments, and
- social factors at work, workplace relationships and social interactions.

Q. What are the psychosocial hazard regulations?

The Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (WHS Regulation) will be updated to include psychosocial hazard regulations.

The psychosocial hazard regulations (the Regulations) will give more specific detail about how duties under the WHS Act must be performed.

The Regulations define important terms, such as 'psychosocial hazard', 'psychosocial risk', and clarify what matters PCBUs should consider when implementing ways to manage psychosocial risks.

FAQS

Q. Who does the Code and Regulations apply to?

The Code and Regulations apply to all work and workplaces covered by the WHS Act.

The Code and Regulations cover employers, workers, contractors, subcontractors, outworkers, the self-employed, apprentices and trainees, work experience students, and volunteers.

The Code and Regulations also cover other people in workplaces, such as customers and visitors.

Q. Who doesn't it apply to?

The Code and Regulations do not apply to some Queensland workplaces in the mining and resources industries, and Commonwealth government departments and Australian Public Service agencies.

Queensland mining and resources workplaces have separate health and safety laws that are managed by Resources Safety & Health Queensland (RSHQ).

Employers and workers in these industries may wish to contact RSHQ for information about the health and safety laws that apply to them.

Commonwealth government and Australian Public Service employers and workers should contact Comcare for information about health and safety laws.

FAQS

Q. How should I respond if a worker has an issue or makes a complaint?

Part 4 of Code has helpful information about the process to follow if a worker has an issue or makes a complaint.

PCBUs should:
- act promptly
- ensure immediate safety
- treat all matters seriously
- maintain confidentiality
- be neutral
- support all parties
- not victimise
- communicate process and outcomes
- keep records, and
- use a trauma-informed approach (e.g., being mindful that workplace systems recognise that workplace responses about psychosocial hazards can escalate or de-escalate distress in those with a history of trauma).

Workers play an important role in ensuring safe and healthy workplaces. The Code is a helpful resource for workers who may experience harm from psychosocial hazards at work. For example, Part 5 of the Code outlines the process that a worker can follow if they have a complaint or issue about psychosocial hazards in the workplace.

The Code and Regulations cover workers, contractors, subcontractors, outworkers, the self-employed, apprentices and trainees, work experience students, and volunteers.

FAQS

Q. What do PCBUs need to do to comply?

PCBUs must adopt a risk management process, including eliminating psychosocial risks, so far as is reasonably practicable, or if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate psychosocial risks, by minimising them.

PCBUs should follow a four-step risk management process to meet their health and safety obligations under the Code and Regulations:

- Identify psychosocial hazards
- Assess the risk
- Control the risks
- Review the controls

Part 3 of the Code provides detailed information about these steps for psychosocial hazards.

FOR MORE HELPFUL FAQS VISIT:

https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice/managing-the-risk-of-psychosocial-hazards-at-work-code-of-practice-2022

MENTALLY HEALTHY WORKPLACES TOOLKIT

This digital toolkit provides practical tools and resources that employers, managers and leaders can use to create and maintain mentally healthy workplaces.

It aims to help employers, managers and leaders eliminate and minimise risks to psychological health and create workplace environments that are mentally healthy. Use the guidance material and practical tools in the toolkit to facilitate positive steps towards a mentally healthy workplace.

Toolkit contents:
1. Mentally healthy workplaces
2. Promote positive practices
3. Prevent psychological harm
4. Intervene early
5. Support recovery from injury
6. Small business
7. Additional resources

DOWNLOAD

PEOPLE AT WORK

Because every workplace is unique, a risk management process is required to identify psychosocial hazards, assess risks and implement strategies to control the risks.

Australian work health and safety regulators have jointly funded People at Work. The People at Work® survey is a free and comprehensive survey of psychosocial hazards.

The survey assesses a number of the most common psychosocial hazards and factors and is part of a five-step process that you can use to identify, assess and control risks to psychological health at work. Designed for medium and large workplaces, the survey can be used with workplaces with 20 or more workers and provides an indication of each hazard as compared to other Australian workplaces.

Visit https://www.peopleatwork.gov.au/ to learn more.

TYPES OF HAZARDS

Psychosocial hazards are anything in the design or management of work that increases the risk of psychological or physical harm.

Poor organisational justice

Poor organisational justice refers to processes or decisions that are perceived as unfair. Examples include inconsistent application of policies and procedures, unfairness or bias in decisions about the allocation of resources and work, or poor management of underperformance.

Reward and recognition

Low reward and recognition refers to jobs where there is a lack of positive feedback, there is an imbalance between workers' efforts and formal and informal recognition and rewards, there is a lack of opportunity for skills development; or skills and experiences are underused.

Violence and aggression

Violence and aggression includes incidents where a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in relation to their work. Examples include robbery, assault, being bitten, spat at, scratched or kicked or being threatened with a weapon.

Traumatic events

Workers may be exposed to this hazard at work through investigating, witnessing or being directly exposed to traumatic events or situations. This may include reading, hearing or seeing accounts of traumatic events.

Bullying

Repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed toward a worker or group of workers. Examples include insulting, offensive language, deliberating excluding someone from work activities, spreading misinformation or rumours.

TYPES OF HAZARDS

Psychosocial hazards are anything in the design or management of work that increases the risk of psychological or physical harm.

Harassment, including sexual harassment

Refers to behaviour that is unwelcome or unsolicited, offensive, humiliating or intimidating and relates to someone's sex, race, age or other personal attribute. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature.

Remote and isolated work

Refers to work at locations where access to resources and communications is difficult and travel times may be lengthy. Isolated work refers to work where there are no or few other people around. Examples include farmers, real estate agents, a community nurse conducting visits at night, night shift operators in petrol stations or convenience stores, or fly in, fly out (FIFO) workers.

Poor environmental conditions

Refers to exposure to poor quality or hazardous work environments. Examples include hazardous manual tasks, poor air quality, high noise levels, extreme temperatures or working near unsafe machinery.

Low job control

Refers to having little control over aspects of the work including how or when a job is done. Examples include tasks or jobs where work is machine or computer paced, work is tightly managed, workers have little say in the way they do their work and when they can take breaks, or workers are unable to refuse dealing with aggressive or clients.

Poor support

Refers to tasks or jobs where workers have inadequate emotional and practical support from supervisors and co-workers, inadequate training or information to support their work performance, or inadequate tools, equipment or resources to do the job.

TYPES OF HAZARDS

The [Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice 2022](#) provides further information on each of the hazards and options for control measures.

Low role clarity

Refers to jobs where there is uncertainty about or frequent changes to tasks and work standards; where important task information is not available to workers; or where there are conflicting job roles, responsibilities or expectations (e.g. a worker being told one task is a priority but another manager disagrees).

High/low job demand

Refers to the physical, mental, emotional, social or organisational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological effort or skills. Examples include high workloads, long periods of vigilance looking for infrequent events, emotional effort in responding to distressing situations or distressed or aggressive clients and shift work leading to higher risk of fatigue.

Low job demand refers to sustained low levels of physical, mental or emotional effort required to do the job or little task variety. For example, tasks or jobs where there is too little to do or highly repetitive or monotonous tasks.

Poor organisational change management

Refers to workplaces where there is insufficient consideration of the potential work health and safety and/or performance impacts during downsizing or relocations or associated with the introduction of new technology and production processes where there is inadequate consultation and communication with key stakeholders and workers about major changes, or not enough practical support for workers during transitions.

Poor workplace relationships including interpersonal conflict

Refers to poor workplace relationships or interpersonal conflict between managers, supervisors, co-workers or others with whom workers are required to interact. It can appear as frequent or excessive disagreements, or rude comments—either from one person to another or between multiple people.

OTHER LEGISLATION

A range of laws deal with mental health issues in Queensland workplaces.

QUEENSLAND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Queensland Human Rights Commission provides information about Queensland's anti-discrimination and human rights laws, including sexual harassment at work.
The Queensland Industrial Relations Commission helps to resolve disputes about workplace bullying for Queensland public sector employees.

QUEENSLAND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION

The Queensland Industrial Relations Commission helps to resolve disputes about workplace bullying for Queensland public sector employees.

FAIR WORK COMMISSION

The Fair Work Commission helps to resolve disputes about workplace bullying and sexual harassment for most private sector employees.
The Fair Work Ombudsman helps employers and employees understand their workplace rights and responsibilities

WORKCOVER QUEENSLAND

WorkCover Queensland provides workers' compensation insurance and information about how to make a workers' compensation claim.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

In an emergency call 000 or go to your local hospital emergency department.

Mental Health Commission

Lifeline Australia – 13 11 14

Mental Health access line – 1300 642 255
A confidential mental health telephone triage service that provides the first point of contact to public mental health services to Queenslanders. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and links callers to the nearest Queensland Public Mental Health service.

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467

Beyond Blue – 1300 22 46 36

13 YARN – 13 92 76 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Heads Up – information and resources on developing a healthy workplaces https://www.headsup.org.au/healthy-workplaces

Workers' Psychological Support Service – assists Queensland workers who have experienced a work-related psychological injury. https://wpss.org.au/

Injury Prevention and Management Program – IPaM is a joint initiative delivered by WHSQ and WorkCover Queensland. It is a free program designed to help Queensland businesses develop and implement sustainable health, safety and injury management systems.