

Mentally healthy workplaces



Industry specific psychosocial hazards and factors

The following table provides industry specific examples of different psychosocial hazards and factors. (Note: This list is not exhaustive.)

	Manufacturing	Transport	Agriculture	Construction	Retail and wholesale	Health care and social assistance
Low job control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shift work rosters can inhibit a workers control over the hours they work and ability to take scheduled breaks. Limited choice over the way work is performed or undertaken. Limited choice about specific tasks undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited choice of shifts or hours worked. Limited choice over the way work is performed or undertaken. Limited choice over work deadlines and allocated time slots for deliveries, particularly when faced with unavoidable delays (e.g. traffic, incidents). Shift work rosters can inhibit a worker's control over the hours they work and ability to take scheduled breaks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited control over working environments which can affect the quality of work (e.g. weather conditions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited job control over the way the work is performed (e.g. strict building codes to be met). Control over work hours and locations are limited. Limited control over work deadlines, particularly when depending on other trades. For many workers on a construction site, there is limited potential for input into decision making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited job control over working hours. For retail workers, there is generally limited control over interaction and communication with customers or clients. Limited choice of shifts or hours worked. Shift work rosters can inhibit a worker's control over the hours they work and break times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited choice of shifts or hours worked. Generally limited control over interaction and communication with customers or clients. Need to provide services despite unpredictable and challenging client behaviours. Shift work rosters can inhibit a worker's control over the hours they work and break times.

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High and low job demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work can have challenging production and quality targets. • Work design does not account for breakdowns and time taken to restart machinery and production processes. This can lead to physical workplace health and safety risks. • Some work is potentially monotonous or boring. • Potentially limited variety in work or tasks for some workers. • Significant attention to resources required due to maintaining prolonged focus on a task and ensuring safety due to operation in a high-risk environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demanding time pressures to meet deliveries and pick-ups within short time periods. • Potential for monotonous or dull work in some instances and work roles. • High likelihood of exposure to traumatic events (e.g. on-road accidents or fatalities). • Driving for extended periods without adequate rest, inducing fatigue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long working hours. • External pressures for production. • Work can be physically demanding (e.g. heat, noise). • Potential for long working hours or overtime work in busy periods. • Potential for role overload as many different roles may need to be undertaken to complete work tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for monotonous or dull work in some instances and work roles. • Work can be physically demanding (e.g. manual tasks, noise, vibration, heat, poor lighting). • Potential for long working hours or overtime work in busy periods. • Unpredictable shift rosters and on-going availability of work. • Potential for significant time pressures during busy periods or construction deadlines. • Unpredictable and inclement weather can impact on agreed timeframes for task completion. • Travel distances and time to work can vary having a significant impact on worker health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High emotional demands of role (e.g. remaining calm and polite when dealing with an angry customer). • Potential for difficult work targets and key performance indicators (KPIs). • Casual work across several employers can lead to fatigue and lack of work-life balance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High emotional demands of role (e.g. remaining calm and polite when dealing with an angry patient). • Exposure to client/patient/family aggression. • Unpredictable shift rosters. • Emotional involvement (e.g. making decisions about complex child protection and custody matters). • Likely exposure to emotionally disturbing and traumatic events. • Often fast work pace due to under-resourcing. • Following client restraint requirements and protocols can lead to emotional and physical demands.

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Poor support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some managers may supervise a large number of employees, which can limit the level of one-on-one support they can provide, particularly for newer members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographically dispersed drivers can feel isolated and have the perception of or actual limited access to support. Workers generally have less access to their supervisor and peer support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work usually occurs in rural areas and workers are generally isolated. Some work is conducted independently without an immediate team or work group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited support from other teams within a work site (e.g. can be subject to team and role conflict). Some managers may supervise a large number of employees, which can limit the level of one-on-one support they can provide, particularly for newer members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some managers may supervise a large number of employees, which can limit the level of one-on-one support they can provide, particularly for newer members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many staff working on their own with limited supervisor or peer support available (e.g. home and community visit staff and staff working in regional areas). Some managers may supervise a large number of employees, which can limit the level of one-on-one support they can provide, particularly for newer members.
Low role clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing a production schedule and also focussing on quality and work health and safety (WHS) can introduce role conflict and physical WHS risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role conflict is likely to occur with attempting to meet client expectations, particularly where they differ from contractual agreements. Inconsistencies in WHS systems and requirements between the employer and client organisations (e.g. having to undergo multiple site-specific inductions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role conflict may occur due to adopting dual roles while at work (e.g. responsible for managing family members or close friends). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be conflicted by needing to finish work quickly and requiring a quality job for a client. Workers who work across multiple construction sites may have uncertainty around specific duties and responsibilities at each site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some retail environments, there can be internal conflicts between meeting sales KPI's and upselling products and services to customers. Customer requests or needs may conflict with WHS or sales requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There can be conflict between wanting to provide additional care to a patient and meeting standards set via the health care system (i.e. appointment caps). Confusion regarding roles across different health disciplines. High turnover in industry can decrease role clarity. Workers can be required to perform tasks or roles that conflict with personal values.

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Low recognition and reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, there is no customer contact so limited opportunity for feedback or sense of appreciation of work. • Work demands on supervisors and managers may lead to ineffective recognition and reward systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to mainly remote and isolated work, there are limited opportunities for feedback, reward or recognition of any work undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolated work locations may create a lack of feedback opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have limited opportunity for feedback and recognition due to fast paced environments and that contractors typically contribute to only one part of an overall product or project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisors may be based off-site and there may be limited opportunity for feedback and recognition. • Work demands on supervisors and managers may lead to ineffective recognition and reward systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be limited supervisor contact for feedback and recognition. • In the public sector environment, typical reward and recognition systems are not always available within public service values and policies.
Poor workplace change management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in processes can be frequent with no or insufficient additional training, instruction and supervision during the transition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication of changes may be difficult given drivers often work remotely. • Lack of effective consultative arrangements due to remote and isolated work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes may be sudden and unplanned due to changes in external conditions (e.g. weather). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High turnover of employees through construction sites. • Regular change in work location (e.g. working across multiple sites which continually change). • Changes in client expectations can result in significant rework, impacting on timeframes for completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift work and use of casual employees could mean that change communications are missed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community workers can face continual change in their work due to working across multiple different environments and sites. • Healthcare and community workers can experience regular changes in teams or can be shifted to other areas. • The industry is characterised by regular changes in funding and restructures.

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Poor organisational justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for perceptions of unfairness in the allocation of shifts for shift workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for perceptions of unfairness in the allocation of shifts for shift workers. • Differing work standards, time slot allocation and WHS requirements across the supply chain may introduce perceived unfairness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for perceptions of unfairness surrounding resource allocation (e.g. equipment and tools provided). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differential treatment in conditions of workers on a site such as sub-contractors, contractors and employees, may create perceptions of unfairness. • Differential allocation of resources or tools to different teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for perceptions of unfairness in reward and bonus schemes across the retail industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for perceptions of unfairness in allocation of shifts for shift workers. • Some workplace procedures can be inconsistently applied.
Poor relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited social contact with other workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for interpersonal conflict (e.g. across sites, poorer communication methods, poorer quality working relationships). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited social contact with other workers. • Conflict in small work teams may escalate and contribute to stress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for task, role and relationship conflict between different work teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict in small work teams may escalate and contribute to stress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships can involve unresolved conflict. • Often there is a lack of work and personal boundaries.