

Psychosocial Safety

made simple



Why Psychosocial Safety Matters

Psychosocial hazards, like stress, bullying, job insecurity, and unrealistic workloads, can harm mental health, reduce productivity, and put employers at legal risk.

From 2023, WHS laws in most states require businesses to identify and manage psychosocial risks, just like physical risks. As a small business owner, you're expected to take this seriously.

Use this simple checklist to start identifying, managing, and reducing psychosocial risks in your workplace.

KEY BENEFITS

- Identify and manage workplace mental health risks early
- Promote a safer, more supportive work environment
- Improve employee morale, engagement and retention
- Meet your WHS obligations with confidence
- Reduce legal and reputational risks
- Build a culture where people and performance thrive



A practical checklist for small business to manage psychosocial hazards and build mentally healthy teams.

Review the checklist overleaf to assess how your business is tracking.

Imagine this...

You're the owner of a busy team. Everything seems to be going well, until one employee breaks down in a team meeting. They say they've been feeling overwhelmed for months and feel unsupported by their manager. Another employee quietly resigns, citing burnout. Suddenly, your high-performing team is in crisis.

- The worst part? You didn't see it coming.
- There were no formal complaints.
- The team looked fine on the surface.
- But the signs were there - unrealistic workloads, lack of role clarity, and no regular check-ins.

Unchecked psychosocial risks like these can lead to serious consequences - legal, reputational, and human.

This checklist helps you spot the risks before they escalate.

Need Help Managing Psychosocial Risk?

HR Culture can help with:

- Conducting psychosocial risk assessments tailored to your workplace
- Developing compliant Mental Health & Wellbeing or WHS policies
- Training leaders to spot early warning signs and respond effectively
- Facilitating team workshops to build psychological safety and trust
- Supporting early intervention through coaching or mediation
- Providing practical templates and documents to reduce admin load

We're here to support you with practical advice, training, and compliant documentation. Let's make your workplace safer, stronger and more sustainable - together.





Psychosocial Risk Areas, Actions & Practical Examples

Workload & Job Demands

Excessive workloads, tight deadlines, or insufficient resources can overwhelm staff and increase burnout risk.

- ☐ Are workloads generally realistic and achievable during paid hours?
Example: Avoid setting deadlines that require staff to work late regularly.
- ☐ Do staff feel they have the time and resources to meet job requirements?
Example: Check in during 1:1s and ask “What’s getting in the way of getting things done?”
- ☐ Are expectations adjusted during periods of change or high demand?
Example: Pause non-urgent tasks during busy seasons.

Role Clarity & Change

When employees aren't clear on their responsibilities or experience sudden changes, it can cause confusion and anxiety.

- ☐ Do all employees have clear position descriptions?
Example: Review and issue updated PDs annually.
- ☐ Are changes to roles, duties, or reporting lines communicated early and clearly?
Example: Hold a short team meeting before implementing changes.
- ☐ Do staff know who to go to for support?
Example: Share a simple flowchart or contact list.

Support & Supervision

A lack of supervision or poor managerial support can leave staff feeling isolated and undervalued.

- ☐ Do team members receive regular check-ins with their manager?
Example: Schedule monthly 1:1s, even if informal.
- ☐ Are managers trained to identify signs of stress, burnout or conflict?
Example: Invest in short training or coaching for supervisors.
- ☐ Is there a confidential channel for employees to raise concerns?
Example: Nominate a contact person or use a confidential feedback form.

Psychosocial Risk Areas, Actions & Practical Examples

Work Relationships & Behaviour

Toxic behaviour, bullying or unresolved conflict can seriously affect wellbeing and workplace culture.

- ☐ Are there clear policies on workplace behaviour, bullying and harassment?
Example: Ensure policies are included in induction and available on request.
- ☐ Do leaders model respectful behaviour and respond to conflict early?
Example: Address gossip or tension quickly with a private conversation.
- ☐ Are team members encouraged to speak up and contribute?
Example: Use regular team huddles to invite input.

Workplace Culture & Recognition

A lack of appreciation, poor communication, or undervalued effort can lead to disengagement.

- ☐ Do staff feel valued and recognised for their contributions?
Example: Say thank you often and celebrate wins (big or small).
- ☐ Are achievements and good work regularly acknowledged?
Example: Start a monthly 'shout-out' or appreciation email.
- ☐ Are mental health and wellbeing openly supported in the workplace?
Example: Encourage breaks, share EAP info, and avoid glorifying long hours.

Job Security & Organisational Justice

Uncertainty about job stability or feeling that processes are unfair can undermine trust and motivation.

- ☐ Are employment conditions fair, transparent and in line with legal obligations?
Example: Review employment contracts annually with HR support.
- ☐ Do employees understand how decisions are made (e.g. promotions, rostering)?
Example: Explain criteria openly and document key decisions.
- ☐ Are performance and disciplinary processes fair and clear?
Example: Follow a consistent procedure and document meetings.

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Remote Work & Isolation (if applicable)

Working remotely can lead to social disconnection, communication breakdowns, and a lack of support.

- ☐ Are remote employees included in team meetings and social catchups?
Example: Always add a video link and rotate meeting times if needed.
- ☐ Do they have access to the same support and resources as onsite workers?
Example: Provide access to training, tools and WHS resources remotely.
- ☐ Are there regular check-ins to monitor wellbeing and workload?
Example: Schedule a 'coffee catch-up' via Zoom fortnightly.



What to Do Next

- Prioritise any "no" or "not sure" responses.
- Talk with your team - consultation is a key requirement under WHS laws.
- Update your risk assessments to include psychosocial hazards.
- Provide manager training in psychosocial risk management.
- Develop or refresh your Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy.

Contact HR Culture

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