Mental Health
Triage Approach

This policy, Purposed.

This policy will make possible…

A clear approach for supporting someone who is struggling with their mental health at work.

Contents

1.0 Purpose

This policy exists to provide a clear approach for supporting someone who is struggling with their mental health at work.

1.1 What does it make possible?

- A fear-free environment where all people's needs are supported
- People have clarity over how they bring their authentic selves to their role at Modern People,
- People can practically apply our values and behaviours everyday.
- A deep understanding of our culture.

1.2 People

This policy applies to all Team Members and Leaders, whether your rhythm is full time, by contract, or remote.

1.3 Accountability

Team members are accountable for:

- understanding the policy, and seeking clarification where we are unsure;
- reflecting on how it impacts us at work, and other times we are representing Modern People; and
- raising culture concerns with your Leader.

Leaders are accountable for:

- ensuring that all team members are aware of this policy;
- reflecting on this policy, its Purpose, and how it is being practised; and
- raising or escalating culture issues.

1.4 Communication

Modern People will ensure that:

- team members receive a copy of the policy during the onboarding process;
- the policy is easy to find for all people in the organisation;
- team members are reminded when an activity aligns with the policy;
- team members are empowered to actively contribute and provide feedback to this policy; and
- team members are notified of all changes to this policy.

1.5 Impact and Reflection

Modern People will reflect on this policy annually, and additionally where required.

The impact of the policy will be measured by:

- Feedback from Team Members and leadership; and
- Reflection on the policy by Leadership to determine if its Purpose is being served, and to identify areas for growth.

Our Values-led Approach to Mental Health Triage

Our behaviours are built on the foundations of our company values that encompass elements have a positive impact on 4 key pillars:

- Our People : our internal teams, partners, and all stakeholders.
- Our Planet : our global impact and contribution to the 17 SDGs
- Our Purpose : our organisation's uniqueness and reason for existing
- Our   Profit   :   our   financials   and   growth

Our Values

Meet People Where They Are	➢ We create inclusivity by respecting everyone's unique journey, creating spaces where people feel they matter and are understood from the start.
Embrace Synchronicities	➢ We are open to the meaningful coincidences in life, we find value in unexpected connections, nurturing a sense of interconnectedness and wonder.
Harmonise Work, Life + Nature	➢ We integrate work and a connection to nature to cultivate inner well-being. Our focus is restoration and longevity in all we do.

Impact and Reflection

Modern People will reflect on this policy annually, and additionally where required. The impact of the policy will be measured by:

- Feedback from team members and leadership; and
- Reflection on the policy by leadership to determine if growth metrics have been met, and to identify areas for growth.

This Policy is owned by Annie Simpson, Chief Consulting Officer. For any queries or amendments, please contact her.

Rights and Responsibilities

Your organisation's role	Leaders' roles	Your team members' roles
Provide a safe and healthy work environment	Reach out to those who are struggling	Maintain privacy about their mental health
Create mental health policies Support people with a mental health condition (make reasonable adjustments)	Make reasonable workplace adjustments Return to work plans after mental health absence	Take steps to address challenges at work, and work with team and leader Commit to plans supporting work participation
Provide information and training on supporting mental health at work	Ask about mental health conditions (if for a legitimate purpose)	Work in an environment that does not cause or worsen a mental health condition
Protect privacy	Know the relevant laws, policies and procedures	Inform leaders about any conditions that may harm their safety, or others'
Prevent harassment	Provide equal opportunity	

Overview

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04	Discrimination legislation	Equal opportunity + safety
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Workplace Health and Safety

01	✈	Workplace health and safety	Creating a positive environment

You have an obligation to provide a safe and healthy workplace, and to prevent or lessen potential risks to the health and safety of all team members and visitors.

Employers, Leaders and Team Members must:

1. ensure safety, whether a team member has a mental illness or not
2. consider reasonable adjustments that can be made for team members with mental illness.
3. consider individual circumstances. Do not rely on assumptions or stereotypes about a particular mental illness – the abilities of each individual person must be considered against the inherent requirements of the job
4. assess actual risk – it is important to objectively assess the actual OHS risk of a team member with mental illness to ensure that the assessment is based on 'real' risk rather than 'perceived' risk
5. determine the degree of risk and take proportionate steps to minimise or prevent it – the more serious the risk and the greater the likelihood of it happening, the more important it is to take preventative steps
6. take action to eliminate or manage the risk as appropriate.

As a Leader, you are responsible for ensuring a safe working environment. You have an obligation to identify whether these risks of harm to mental health (or any others) exist and to take action to eliminate or manage that risk.

Making Reasonable Adjustments

02	✈	Reasonable adjustments	Workplace changes

Reasonable adjustments are changes to a role or workplace that help someone with a mental health condition to keep working, or return to the workplace if they've taken time off.

Leaders must make reasonable adjustments, provided the person can fulfil the core requirements of the role.

Reasonable adjustments apply at every stage of employment:

1. Recruitment, selection and appointment
2. Existing work role
3. Career development
4. Training
5. Promotion and transfers

Common adjustments:
- Flexible working hours and location
- Workload and stress
- Training and support

Workplace Health and Safety

03	✈	Inherent requirements	What the role requires

'Inherent requirements' of a job are those requirements, tasks or skills that are essential to the position. You are required to assess the inherent requirements of the job to determine whether the team member with mental illness can meet these requirements of the job with the assistance of some reasonable adjustments.

Where a team member is unable to perform the inherent requirements of the job and no adjustment can reasonably be made to allow them to perform the core work requirements then you may choose to explore alternative work options.

It is not unlawful discrimination to terminate a team member's employment where they cannot perform the inherent requirements of the job after reasonable adjustments have been made. You should note, however, that you may still have legal obligations under the contract of employment, award or agreement or other laws.

Discrimination Legislation

04 ✈	Discrimination legislation	Equal opportunity + safety

You must not take adverse action against a team member or potential candidate because of mental illness.

Commonwealth industrial law, Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth), also provides protection for employees with mental illness from adverse actions taken by an employer. Employers who are covered by the Commonwealth legislation must not take adverse action against an employee or prospective employee because of mental illness.

Adverse action includes:

- dismissal
- injuring the employee
- altering the position of the employee to the employees prejudice
- refusing to employ a prospective employee or discriminating against an employee

In some circumstances, similar to those in Commonwealth and State anti-discrimination laws, an adverse action may not be unlawful under the Fair Work legislation, but employers should be aware of their obligations under these laws.

Privacy Obligations

05	Privacy obligations	Disclosure and consent

You are bound by the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 (Cth). You are also bound by implied contractual and equitable principles for maintaining confidentiality in an employment relationship.

As a result, when a team member discloses that they have a mental illness, this information should not be disclosed without their consent. You can only use this information for the purpose they disclosed it to you (e.g. to seek some adjustments to their work to deal with their mental illness).

There may be exceptions, for example, where:

- use of the information is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of the individual concerned or another person, or
- use of the information is required or authorised by law.

As with any other potential health and safety risk, whether it is a back injury or mental illness, you are obliged to eliminate, isolate or lessen health and safety risks while taking care to ensure the privacy of team members is upheld.

People Leaders Triage Approach

01

Leader is approached by team member, OR Leader reaches out to someone who may be struggling.

When to escalate if you've been approached:
- Expressing the need for psychological support/counsel
- Feeling mentally 'unhealthy'
- Sharing thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide
- Feeling anxious or depressed, unable to cope

When to escalate if you've reached out:
- Expressing the need for psychological support/counsel
- Feeling mentally 'unhealthy'
- Sharing thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide
- Feeling anxious or depressed, unable to cope
- Feeling unsafe or in danger

02

Reassure your team member that they have been heard & recognise your boundaries.

Whatever is shared with you, ensure that person knows they have been heard and that you care. Their bravery and vulnerability matters. At this early stage, recognise the boundaries of the conversation and your capabilities.

03

Make a plan: who, when, what.

Using what you know to be true, be clear on next steps. Who you will be talking to, when will you check in again, what are you going to do with what they have shared?

04

Ask about sharing + how you can support them.

"Would you feel comfortable for me to share this with another Leader?"
"Would you feel comfortable for me to share this with the Modern People team?"
"Would you feel comfortable with me coming back to you with a professional contact for you to reach out to?"
"How can I best support you through this?"

05

Make records on a private platform.

IMMEDIATELY document your conversation and your plan on a private platform.
It is your responsibility to continually update this information.

06

Contact relevant parties within 24hrs of you conversation.

07

Check-in, both formally and casually.

08

If you are concerned for the wellbeing of any of your team, and need IMMEDIATE support, call Lifeline: 13 11 14

Optimise your impact.
Cultivate meaning and fulfilment.
Create a culture that matters.