

Prevention plans for psychosocial hazards

WHAT IS A PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARD?

A psychosocial hazard is anything in the working environment that could cause an employee to have a negative psychological response. This response can lead to psychological or physical harm, or both.

Psychosocial hazards may interact or combine to create new or higher risks. When managing psychosocial risks, employers must consider all the psychosocial hazards employees may be exposed to and consider the highest controls available.

Where do psychosocial hazards come from?

- work design
- systems of work
- management of work
- carrying out of the work
- personal or work-related interactions

EXAMPLES OF PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS INCLUDE:

- Aggression or violence
- Bullying
- Exposure to traumatic events or content
- Gendered violence
- High job demands
- Low job control
- Low job demands
- Low recognition and reward
- Low role clarity
- Poor environmental conditions
- Poor organisational change management
- Poor organisational justice
- Poor support
- Poor workplace relationships
- Remote or isolated work
- Sexual harassment

This list is not an exhaustive list of hazards. Other jurisdictions in Australia and internationally have identified other hazards and risk factors such as fatigue, job insecurity, burnout, poor or no policies and procedures, intrusive surveillance digital work systems (AI and algorithmic management).

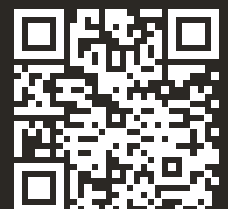
VICTORIAN TRADES HALL COUNCIL

54 Victoria St (cnr Lygon St)

Carlton Victoria 3053

03 9659 3511

ohsinfo@vthc.org.au ohsrep.org.au



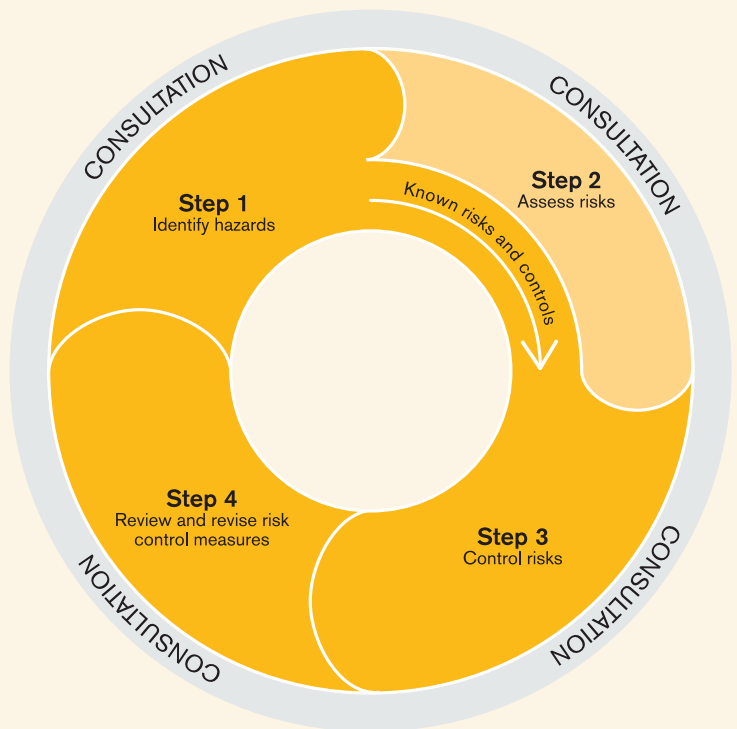
HOW TO DEVELOP A PREVENTION PLAN

A prevention plan is a written record that documents the risk management process. It can be used to help control the risk of psychosocial hazards in the workplace. There are four steps:

- 1. Identify** hazards
- 2. Assess** the risks to health and safety created by exposure to those hazards
- 3. Control** risks. Do this by eliminating the risk. If it's not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks, reduce them so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 4. Review & revise** risk control measures.

Each of the four step requires appropriate and thorough consultation. Under the Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004, employers must consult with employees on matters related to health & safety that directly affect, or are likely to affect, them. Employers must do this so far as is reasonably practicable, including developing prevention plans.

Psychosocial hazards may interact or combine to create new or higher risks. When managing psychosocial risks, employers need to consider all the psychosocial hazards employees might be exposed to.



REVIEWING AND REVISING PREVENTION PLANS

Employers should review prevention plans regularly to check if:

- Risk controls are working effectively.
- There are additional or modified controls needed to control the risks.
- Any new or unintended risks are present.
- Any improvements or changes can be made to:
 - The physical environment
 - Work systems and procedures
 - Training
- The plan reflects:
 - Any change in legislation
 - Current state of knowledge
 - Feedback from employees

Employers must review and revise risk control measures:

- Before making changes to any thing, process or system of work that is likely to result in changes to risks associated with psychosocial hazards.
- If new or additional information about a psychosocial hazard becomes available.
- If there is a report of a psychosocial hazard or a psychological injury.
- If a notifiable incident occurs or risk control fail for any other reason.
- When an HSR requests a review.

STAGE 1

Identify the Psychosocial Hazard/s

- Hazards are anything that could cause harm to a person. They may be reported or non-reported.
- Include information sources if relevant.
- Consider if teams, locations or designated work groups are exposed to different hazards.

Multiple hazards may be interacting, so tick all that apply. This list is not exhaustive. If you identify another psychosocial hazard that may arise in the working environment, you have a duty to control the associated risks.

- Aggression or violence
- Bullying
- Exposure to traumatic events or content
- Gendered violence
- High job demands
- Low job control
- Low job demands
- Low recognition and reward
- Low role clarity
- Poor environmental conditions
- Poor organisational change management
- Poor organisational justice
- Poor support
- Poor workplace relationships
- Remote or isolated work
- Sexual Harassment
- Other:

How was the hazard/s identified? For example, through employee consultation, workplace observation, hazards & incident reports. Do not include personal information that could identify individual employees

What does the hazard/s look like in your workplace? What negative effect could this hazard have on employees? This may be physical or psychological harm, including illness, injury or death

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

undertaken in accordance with s35 of the OHS Act, including employees and any health & safety representatives

Consultation date(s)

Method(s) of consultation

Who was involved

Summary of matters discussed

Outcome

STAGE 2

Assess the risk

- Consider how, and to what extent, the hazard/s identified in step 1 create a risk to employee health & safety.
- Consider if employees may be exposed to multiple hazards and how they may combine and interact.

How likely are employees to be exposed to the hazard? Are some employees more likely to be exposed?

How severe are the consequences if employees are exposed? Could some employees experience more severe consequences?

How often or for how long are employees exposed to the hazard?

Are employees also exposed to any other hazards?

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Who was involved

Summary of matters discussed

Outcome

STAGE 3

Control Risks

- Decide on appropriate risk control measures to eliminate or reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Outline how to apply these risks control measures in the workplace.

What are you already doing to eliminate or reduce the risks?

See the Psychological health compliance code for more information:

- Eliminating and reducing risks: Part 3, Step 3, noting that high controls need to be considered before the lowest ones

Risk Control

Who is responsible?

Timing

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

What other controls will you use to eliminate or reduce the risk?

See the Psychological health compliance code for more information:

- What changes to 15 (2)(a)(i-v)? Does the risk remain?
- What changes to 15 (b)? Does the risk remain?

Risk Control

Who is responsible?

Timing

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

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Outcome

STAGE 4

Review and revise

- Review the prevention plan according to the list.

See the Psychological health compliance code for more information:

- *Reviewing and revising risk controls: Part 3, Step 4*

Review date

What is the reason for review?

Details of consultation

Outcome of review
