

Guide to developing your Mentally Healthy Workplace Strategy and Action Plan - Template 1: Your vision and goals

Supporting tool for the Victorian Mentally Healthy Workplaces Framework

Victorian Government



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the First Peoples of the lands and waters across Victoria and their ongoing strength in practising the world's oldest living culture. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work and pay our respect to their Elders past and present.

We recognise that poor mental health disproportionately affects First Peoples' communities. Further, there are long-lasting, far-reaching and intergenerational consequences of the dispossession of First Peoples and their Country that are a direct result of colonisation and the establishment of the State of Victoria. This history, and the systems it gave rise to, continue to harm First Peoples today. It is only through community-led approaches to supporting healing and structural transformation to enable true self-determination that we can begin to right the wrongs of the past.

Disclaimer

This guide is intended for general information and guidance purposes only and should not be considered or relied upon as an official compliance tool or advice. Using this guide does not ensure compliance with Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) regulations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004. Additional resources such as those provided by WorkSafe Victoria need to be considered / adopted to abide by regulations.

While efforts have been made to ensure information presented is accurate and reliable, it is important to note that laws, regulations and requirements can change over time and may vary by jurisdiction.

This guide does not constitute legal, professional or regulatory advice. It is recommended that you consult the appropriate jurisdictional resources and consult with qualified legal or compliance professionals if you require specific compliance and regulatory guidance.

Key terms and their meaning:

Business Types: This framework has been developed for all Victorian Businesses, including sole-traders, small business, not-for-profit organisations, for profit organisations, government organisations and volunteer organisations. Either the term "**workplaces**" or "**organisations**" has been used in this framework as a catch-all to represent all different types of businesses and places where people conduct work. Unless specifically mentioned, the information provided is guidance for all Victorian business types and all workplace types, including working from home or remote work, and working outdoors.

Employment Type: This framework has been developed for all Victorians engaged in work. It recognises that people are engaged in work as full-time, part-time or casual employees, self-employed, contractors, volunteers and other types of work. The term "**worker**" has been used in this framework to represent all different ways Victorians are engaged in work. This includes all forms of work, including short term, casual, irregular or insecure work.

Acknowledgement of Lived and Living Experience

We acknowledge people with lived experience of mental ill-health and recovery and the experience of people who have been carers, families, or supporters. Some of the most powerful evidence to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System came from the personal experience of people living with mental ill-health, their families, and carers. There has been extraordinary determination and courage as people have revisited painful memories in the hope of shaping a better future for themselves and others. We and other Victorians are deeply appreciative for this.

This website uses language to describe and discuss themes and concepts relating to mental health, but we acknowledge others might use different words to communicate their experience which are also valid.

Crisis support services

If you or someone you know or work with are experiencing a mental health crisis, please contact one of these 24 hours, 7 days services

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978

QLife: 1800 184 527 (3pm to midnight daily)

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800

13YARN: 13 92 76

Template 1: Your Vision and Goals for your mentally healthy workplace

1. Introduction

Briefly explain the purpose of your Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

For example: The purpose of our Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy is to provide clarity on how we as a business create a safe workplace which supports our employee's mental wellbeing. The Strategy lays out the ways in which we will drive change within our business to ensure our leaders and staff prioritise wellbeing and are actively involved in building a respectful and inclusive culture.

State your organisation's commitment to promoting mental health and wellbeing among workers.

For example: We are committed to dedicating the time, resources and effort necessary to ensure we build a mentally healthy workplace. We will create opportunities for our people to be actively involved and transparently report progress over time.

2. Strategy vision

Outline your vision for a mentally healthy workplace. Your vision should describe an achievable future state for your organisation.

For example: We strive to create a workplace of inclusion and acceptance where everyone feels looked after, respected, well and safe. Importantly, we aim to create a workplace that individuals feel proud to be part of and represent because of our commitment to their wellbeing.

3. Strategy goals

State the goals you wish to achieve through the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. To come up with your goals, discuss what is realistic for your workplace to achieve given your size and the resources available to you. If you are a sole trader or small organisation, you may wish to create two to three goals. If you are a medium to large sized organisation, four to six goals might be achievable.

A great way to come up with your goals is to follow the SMART goal setting framework. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound. Below is a guide for how you might go about creating a SMART goal. The guide walks through an example of a goal which is built upon as it progresses to each letter.

How to create your SMART goals



Specific – For a goal to be effective, it needs to be specific; a specific goal should answer questions like:

- What needs to be achieved?
- Who is responsible for it?
- What steps need to be taken to achieve it?

For example (sole traders and organisations of all sizes): Our goal is to become a psychologically safe workplace by prioritising wellbeing through new policies, practices and our culture.



Measurable – create goals you can quantify and measure, that way it is easier to track progress. Ways you can measure your goals include:

- Worker surveys
- Absenteeism and sick days
- Workers' compensation claims
- Retention rate

For example (for medium to large organisations): Our goal is to become a psychologically safe workplace by prioritising the wellbeing of workers through new policies, practices and our culture. Worker perceptions / attitudes towards this can be determined by our team experience data (that measures psychological safety), worker survey engagement data (that asks questions about wellbeing and worker experiences of policies and practices), and retention rates.

For example (for sole traders and small businesses): Our goal is to become a psychologically safe workplace by prioritising wellbeing through new policies, practices and our culture. Perceptions/attitudes towards this can be determined by the level of comfort and openness workers have towards discussions about mental health and wellbeing.

A Achievable – goals should be realistic for you to achieve and not just something that sounds good. When thinking about realistic goals, consider the size of your organisation and the resources you have available to accomplish this.

How will we achieve this – exploring what initiatives, programs, projects or interventions may be needed?

- What expertise and resources will we need, and are they available to us?
- What are the better practice approaches that we may be able to adopt?
- How might we achieve this in our organisation?
- **For example (for medium to large organisations):** Our goal is to become a psychologically safe workplace by prioritising the wellbeing of workers through new policies, practices and our culture. Worker perceptions / attitudes towards this can be determined by:
 - our team experience data (that measures psychological safety),
 - worker survey engagement data (that asks questions about wellbeing and worker experiences of policies and practices), and
 - retention rates.

We will achieve this by upskilling our leaders and workers to understand how to create psychological safety which includes having sensitive conversations and role model positive mental health behaviours at work.

- **For example (for sole traders and small businesses):** Our goal is to become a psychologically safe workplace by prioritising wellbeing through new policies, practices and our culture. Perceptions/attitudes towards this can be determined by the level of comfort and openness workers have towards discussions about mental health and wellbeing. This will be achieved through upskilling individuals to confidently have sensitive conversations within the workplace around mental health and wellbeing to support one another.

R Relevant – the goal needs to matter to you and your workplace, and align with other relevant goals or overarching strategies. A relevant goal should consider questions like:

- Does it seem worthwhile?
- Is this the right time?
- Does this match other workplace efforts or needs?
- Is it applicable for where your organisation is currently at and wanting to go in the future?



- **For example (for medium to large organisations):** Our goal is to become a psychologically safe workplace by prioritising the wellbeing of workers through new policies, practices and our culture. Worker perceptions / attitudes towards this can be determined by:
 - our team experience data (that measures psychological safety),
 - worker survey engagement data (that asks questions about wellbeing and worker experiences of policies and practices), and
 - retention rates.
- We will achieve this by upskilling our leaders and workers to understand how to create psychological safety which includes having sensitive conversations and role model positive mental health behaviours at work. This goal aligns with our efforts to increase our co-design and worker input efforts across the organisation.



Timebound – your workplace needs to agree when a goal should be achieved. A designated timeframe helps to keep everyone on track.

Timebound goals should consider questions like:

- When will the workplace / teams / individuals start working on tasks to achieve that goal?
- When will the tasks be finished?

- **For example:** Our goal is to become a psychologically safe workplace by prioritising the wellbeing of workers through new policies, practices and our culture. Worker perceptions / attitudes towards this can be determined by:
 - our team experience data (that measures psychological safety),
 - worker survey engagement data (that asks questions about wellbeing and worker experiences of policies and practices), and
 - retention rates.

We will achieve this by upskilling our leaders and workers to understand how to create psychological safety which includes having sensitive conversations and role model positive mental health behaviours at work. This goal aligns with our efforts to increase our co-design and worker input efforts across the organisation. We can achieve this within the next 12 months if our leaders and workers begin to act on these behaviours immediately.

- **For example (for sole traders and small businesses):** Our goal is to become a psychologically safe workplace by prioritising wellbeing through new policies, practices and our culture. Perceptions/attitudes towards this can be determined by the level of comfort and openness workers have towards discussions about mental health and wellbeing.

This will be achieved through upskilling individuals to confidently have sensitive conversations within the workplace around mental health and wellbeing to support one another. This investment is worthwhile as the wellbeing of individuals in the workplace is so important for overall mental health and has many positive flow on effects. We will begin working towards this goal immediately by accessing both formal and informal training and information.

Where practical, engage your workers when developing your workplace goals. Depending on the size of your organisation, you may wish to include all your workforce, or a smaller representative group (accounting for adequate representation across different roles, divisions and location for example).



TIP: Workshop sessions are a great way to get worker input, insights and perspectives. Keep your workshop group size to a maximum of 8-10 people at a time (you may need to run multiple sessions) and host sessions for approximately one hour; this way everyone has an opportunity to contribute.

If relevant, briefly explain the process you undertook to engage and co-design with your workers:

For example (a business with 80 employees): This Strategy has been created with the input of more than 60 employees who represented the voices and opinions of our workforce. Input was gathered through a variety of ways including one-on-one conversations, workshops, focus groups and a survey.

5. How this Strategy will be used

Provide a brief description of how this document will be used

For example: This Strategy will be referred to monthly by leadership teams to keep the organisation accountable and track progress against the goals and priority action areas. The Strategy will also be used by management teams to keep individuals accountable to the roles and responsibilities they have under the Strategy.



