

Having a policy

As an employer, it's a good idea for your organisation to have a policy that covers mental health.

A policy can help make clear:

- the best way for workers to raise any concerns they have about their mental health
- how managers can respond and support staff with their mental health

You should support everyone to follow the mental health policy. You should:

- share the policy regularly across the whole organisation
- regularly review it
- use it as the basis for any mental health training for managers
- include it in any employee induction process

You should work with any recognised trade unions your organisation has when developing and reviewing a policy. You should also check if your organisation has an agreement with the trade unions that requires you to do this.

You should follow your policy but also consider workers' individual circumstances. You might need to adapt how you support workers because everyone's experience of mental health problems will be different.

What a mental health policy should include

A mental health policy should cover:

- what mental health is and how it can affect people – including how it can affect anyone at any time and how it can affect everyone differently
- how the organisation is open and trained to talk sensitively about mental health problems
- what mental health training is given to managers and individuals
- what support is available – including where to find internal and external support
- what happens if a worker needs time off for mental health
- what the return to work process is after someone has time off
- how conversations about mental health will be kept confidential
- what a worker can do if they have a concern about how they've been treated
- how and when the policy will be reviewed and updated and who with

If you need support creating a mental health policy, Acas offers [tailored support for employers](#).

Reviewing policies

Employers should review relevant policies to make sure they're suitable for workers with mental health problems.

It can help to consider if the policies:

- use language that demonstrates care
- use [trigger points](#) for absence that put employees with recognised and ongoing mental health problems at a disadvantage
- allow managers and employees to take a person by person approach
- are flexible to accommodate mental health conditions that might change over time