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# Just Getting Started

Sample Anti-Stigma Policy Statement

***Our Company*** is committed to fostering a workplace where our employees are protected from stigma associated with mental illness. This organization will ensure that all employees are treated with respect and dignity, this includes those suffering from mental illness and those who support other workers suffering from mental illness.

Harassment and acts of discrimination will not be tolerated. Anyone who is found to be stigmatizing another individual may be subject to disciplinary action. Types of behaviour and acts that contribute to stigma include:

This policy applies to all current employees and all behaviour that is in some way connected to work including off-site meetings, training and day to day operations.

Senior Leadership of ***Our Company*** is responsible for providing all employees a psychologically healthy and safe workplace, free of stigma, discrimination or harassment. The leadership of the ***Our Company*** will ensure that this policy is applied in a timely, consistent and confidential manner, determining whether or not allegations are substantiated and determining what corrective action is appropriate if required. To support a stigma-free workplace ***Our Company’s*** leadership will

provide PTSD awareness training and education

regularly monitor organizational practices and systems for barriers to achieving a stigma-free workplace

providing an effective and fair complaints process

leading by example

Supervisors are responsible for fostering a stigma-free workplace and setting an example of appropriate behaviour. This includes communicating the policy and procedures for bringing forward a complaint, address situations of which they become aware in a timely fashion, taking appropriate action in a sensitive and confidential manner for all employees.

Employees are responsible for treating coworkers with respect in the workplace, bringing forward complaints and cooperating with investigations into complaints. Employees are also responsible treating all parties and situations in a sensitive and confidential manner.

Managers Tips for Reducing Stigma at Work/Promoting a Positive Work Environment

Establishing an effective Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Plan has to take into consideration the organizational culture and the individuals that work within this culture. To be effective it needs to consider the aspects that have potential to cause trauma and stress to workers. As a leader it is important that you communicate the importance of this to the entire organization and share the responsibility of promoting a positive and psychologically healthy and safety work environment. You need to also provide your managers with the tools they need to engage and communicate the importance of working in a psychologically healthy and safe way.

Below are some tips on creating a stigma free workplace and promoting a positive work environment.

Set the tone by treating coworkers with respect and valuing their contributions

Engage staff to helping to identify, build and implement the PTSD prevention plan, encourage ongoing input and contributions to improve plan

Clearly communicate the PTSD prevention plan and the reasons for new policies, procedures or structures to meet the goals of the plan

Recognize accomplishments, and promote staff cohesiveness and dialogue.

Resolve conflicts early and quickly.

Identify training needs and provide training

Acknowledge that work on it’s own is stressful as well as the exposure to traumatic incidents, explain the importance of self-awareness and awareness of others

Promote an atmosphere where attention to one's emotional state is acceptable and encouraged rather than stigmatized or disregarded

Explain the options for assistance – through Employee Assistance Programs, Crisis Lines or other more formal channels if available, encourage active participation in these programs and address any employment concerns