

# **Example Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Policy**

Created by the Wyoming Department of Health

**CONSTRUCTION  
SUICIDE  
PREVENTION  
PARTNERSHIP**

## **A Note About this Policy**

This sample policy was created by the Wyoming Department of Health and included in "An Employer's Guide to Policy Approaches to Address Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, Mental Health, Suicide, and Chronic Disease." **[Find the full guide here.](#)**

**Please Note That Changes have been made to some of the original links in this document because they are expired or inactive.**

The materials presented in this toolkit are provided to support employers but are not intended to replace legal counsel. Employers are encouraged to seek legal counsel to ensure that any policies implemented are in compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations including, but not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA); the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA); the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA); Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA); and workers' compensation laws. Additionally, employers should consider the impact of collective bargaining agreements before implementing policies, such as those described in this toolkit.

## Rationale

Mental health problems affect an estimated 43.7 million adults ages 18 and older in the United States. The prevalence of mental health problems impact individuals, families, workplaces, and communities. Mental health problems that employees face range from stress, anxiety, and attention issues to serious mental health problems such as major depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder. While mental health problems are surprisingly common, mental health is not always recognized as an issue that should be addressed comprehensively as part of overall health and well-being. Additionally, mental health problems can contribute to an increased risk of substance misuse and abuse as well as suicide.

## Purpose

[EMPLOYER] is committed to supporting and promoting the health and well-being of all employees and other individuals visiting our workplace. We recognize that mental health problems, if untreated, can significantly impact our employees. We have established a mental health promotion policy to productively engage our employees and reduce the stigma associated with mental health problems. This organization encourages employees to voluntarily seek treatment when mental and emotional health are not optimal.

## Definitions

As used in this policy:

- A. "Mental health" means a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.
- B. "Mental health problem" means any changes in mental health, such as thinking, mood, and/or behavior that can affect how an individual relates to others and makes choices.
- C. "Serious mental health problem" means a diagnosable mental, behavior, or emotional disorder that causes serious functional impairment that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities.

## Scope

Our mental health/suicide prevention policy applies to all employees of [EMPLOYER].

## **Screening (Optional)**

[EMPLOYER] commits to providing employees with access to annual online mental health screening, as provided through [CHOSEN SCREENING RESOURCE] All employees are encouraged to take advantage of this service to identify and detect mental health issues to inform their treatment decisions. [CHOSEN SCREENING RESOURCE] is dedicated to the anonymity of screening participants. No employer, healthcare company, or sponsoring organization can identify any individual who has taken the screening. Employees can find more information related to privacy and security here: [LINK TO SCREENING RESOURCE INFORMATION].

## **Mental Health Services and Resources (Optional)**

[EMPLOYER] commits to providing employees with access to qualified mental health services and resources. A list of community mental health counselors and providers, as well as relevant resources, will be maintained by the human resource office. In addition to local resources, [EMPLOYER] will offer support through the provisions of the employee assistance program (EAP), and/or through the provisions of the employee health insurance plan (reference employer health insurance plan provision(s), if necessary).

## **Suicide Prevention Training**

To support the identification of employees who may be at risk for suicide, all employees are required to participate in suicide prevention gatekeeper training. For new employees, training will be required within 90 days of employment start date. All current employees will be required to participate in training when training is coordinated with existing trainer(s). Upon completion of training, employees are required to submit a certification of completion to the human resource office.

## **Life Skills and Social Network Promotion (Optional)**

[EMPLOYER] commits to creating a culture that is inclusive and engaging for all employees. Additionally, [EMPLOYER] commits to providing access to learning opportunities related to life skills (such as problemsolving, stress management, and conflict resolution).

## **Crisis Management**

[EMPLOYER] will actively promote the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, which can be reached by calling 988. Proper signage and other promotional materials will be ordered from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and sufficient inventory will be maintained.

## Education and Advocacy

[EMPLOYER] commits to educating employees about common mental health problems and advocating for inclusion of all employees. [EMPLOYER] education and advocacy activities will be designed to raise awareness and reduce stigma around mental health problems.

## Exemptions/Exceptions

There are no exemptions or exceptions included in our mental health/suicide prevention policy.

## Communication

Communicating our mental health/suicide prevention policy to both supervisors and employees is critical to our success. To ensure all employees are aware of their role in supporting our mental health/suicide prevention policy:

- All employees will receive a written copy of the policy.
- The policy will be reviewed in orientation sessions with new employees.
- The policy and assistance programs will be reviewed at safety meetings.
- All employees will receive an update of the policy annually.
- Posters and brochures will be available at all locations.
- Employee education about common mental health problems and the availability of resources will be provided to all employees.

## Implementation

This policy is in full force and effect. Questions arising regarding the policy for any particular [EMPLOYER] employee shall be directed to the employee's acting supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for either making a determination or requesting additional support from human resources or other management team members as necessary. Management and supervisory staff are responsible for ongoing compliance with this policy. In addition, management and supervisory staff are expected to adhere to standard practice in resolving any issues of noncompliance.

## Evaluation

Every [enter interval of time, e.g., quarter, year, etc.], [EMPLOYER] will review relevant health and safety information to determine whether or not compliance with this policy is effective in protecting the safety, health, and well-being of employees. If at such time the policy is proving ineffective, [EMPLOYER] reserves the right to make necessary policy revisions.