



# Managing work demands CHECKLIST



This checklist provides a starting point for employers, managers, supervisors, and workers to prevent and manage the risks of adverse work demands. If work demand issues are not effectively managed workers are far more likely to experience work-related stress. Extreme or long-lasting stress is harmful and can lead to serious illness or injury to workers.

Please note, this information should be used in conjunction with detailed guidance from your employer.



## EMPLOYER

Consult with workers regularly to understand and identify risks relating to work demands, including work demands that are too high (e.g. unrealistic timeframes or resource constraints) or too low (e.g. highly repetitive or monotonous work).

Identify the skills and capabilities workers need to do the work; have a process to identify and support training and development.

Put systems and procedures in place that enable safe work practices, including health monitoring, early intervention, training and support services such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).

Ensure staffing levels and resources align to meet expected organisational outputs.

Analyse issues that arise and review the data to determine if there are underlying or contributing factors, including risks and consequences.

Verify compliance with procedures and other work practices.

Set reasonable and attainable key performance indicators for managers and their teams.

Monitor workloads so peaks and troughs can be effectively resourced and managed.

Provide access to support services for managers, such as a manager assistance program.

Provide effective training around managing workplace and individual stress levels.

Offer flexible working arrangements such as working from home or remotely.

Ensure your leaders and managers commit to WHS, including duties and obligations under WHS laws and demonstrating due diligence.

Conduct regular feedback sessions with workers, including focus groups and staff surveys to review systems, procedures and general ways of working.



### Getting started – pulse check

You can complete a free risk assessment to understand what psychosocial hazards or factors that may be impacting the psychological health of their workers using **People at Work** – Australia's only validated psychosocial risk assessment survey. It covers work demands, change management, relationships at work, work-related violence and aggression, and psychological health and wellbeing.



# Managing work demands CHECKLIST



## MANAGERS

Consult with workers and teams regularly, via team meetings or one-on-one discussions. Remember to consider worker feedback and insights from employee surveys or forums conducted by your employer.

Set clear roles and responsibilities where workers are aware of priority tasks, so when workload is high, these tasks are completed.

Ensure staffing levels align with expected outputs and reallocate or redistribute tasks as required.

Have a learning and skills development process to ensure workers maintain the skills and capabilities needed to do the work.

Monitor the workloads of your team, consider their skills and experience when assigning tasks and help workers to readjust or reprioritise their work where necessary.

Encourage workers to raise concerns at an early stage if they are having difficulties with job demands.

Encourage your team to take regular breaks and remember to set the standard of behaviour you would like your team to follow, e.g. not working through lunch or working longer hours to meet demand.

Manage issues that arise and consider whether worker feedback highlights underlying or contributing work demand issues.

Provide feedback to your organisation about system effectiveness, including the resources, training, worker feedback mechanisms and issue escalation processes.

Stay informed about your organisational benchmarks and communicate any changes to your team/s.

Inform your teams about support services available to them such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).



## WORKERS

Talk with your manager or supervisor about your workload and raise any issues at an early stage so tasks can be reallocated or reprioritised.

Ask your supervisor for training and development to obtain and maintain the skills and capabilities you need to do your work.

Take regular breaks and encourage your team members to do the same to help promote a supportive workplace culture that fosters work-life balance.

Speak to your manager about training related to managing work demands, such as time management or project management.

Escalate any issues that may arise with your manager in the first instance and explore other options, if necessary, e.g. via Human Resources or your Health and Safety Representative (HSR).

Access services available to you via your employer if you need further support, such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).



**Remember:** consultation and feedback are key elements of providing and contributing to a psychologically healthy and safe work environment. Workplaces where employers, managers, supervisors, and workers regularly discuss and act upon safety issues are safer workplaces.

For more information about how you can play your part in preventing and managing work demands, view Comcare's **practical guidance** for employers, managers and supervisors and workers.

