



# Mental Health Toolkit

- Mental Health Matters
- Stigma Reduction
- Mental Health Awareness Month
- Mental Health in the Workplace
- Sample Policies



## Mental Health Matters

Environments in which we live, work, and play contribute to our experience of mental wellbeing and mental distress.

Mental health is an essential part of overall health and wellbeing and affects thoughts, feelings, and actions. It is important at every stage of life, impacts everyone, and can change over time, depending on many factors.

Mental health conditions are among the most common conditions in the United States. One in five Americans experiences a mental health condition.

Unfortunately, many harmful attitudes and misunderstandings around mental health conditions fuel stigma and create barriers that keep people from speaking up or seeking help.

Fear of facing discriminatory behavior, social exclusion, and being perceived as lacking in competence prevent people with mental health conditions from seeking the help they need.

Mental health conditions should be treated just like physical conditions. When thinking about diseases like cancer or heart disease, we don't wait to treat them. The same is true with mental health conditions. You can take action beginning with prevention, identifying symptoms, and developing a plan of action to stop and reverse the progression.

## Resources

- [Mental Health America](#)
- [Online Mental Health Screening Tools](#)

# Mental Health Matters: A Local Perspective

## Mental Health Matters



About half of the people across the area have experienced a mental health condition.



## The State of Mental Health in Our Region

**17.3%**  
of Black/African  
Americans

Source: 2021  
Community  
Health  
Assessment  
CHA

**& 17.7%**  
of Latinos

report that most days are "extremely" or "very" stressful compared to only 12% of White/Non-Latino people.



## Ways to advocate for mental health:

**Connect with community leaders and elected officials.**

### Ask them to take action to:

- Reduce stigma of mental health and substance use disorders
- Increase connections to mental health and preventive resources
- Connect people to increased social supports
- Reduce trauma



 If you are struggling with your mental health, you are not alone. For immediate help, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by dialing 988.

**Take action to promote better mental health for all.**



## State of Mental Health in Our Region

**40%**

would hide their mental health condition from friends and family.

Source: Public Good Projects

**6.1%**

had difficulty accessing mental health services in the previous year.

Source: 2021 Community Health Assessment

**17%**

reported fair or poor mental health.

Source: 2021 Community Health Assessment



**Resource** • <https://thewellbeingpartners.org/advocacy/>

# What is Stigma?

Stigma is negative attitudes (prejudice) and behaviors (discrimination) against those with a mental health condition. Navigating life with a mental health condition can be challenging. The isolation, blame, and secrecy often encouraged by stigma can create challenges and barriers to getting support and living well.

## Stigma Reduction

### **Talk openly about mental health.**

Normalizing the conversation about mental health helps break down barriers and empowers people to get the help they need. Sharing our stories shows that no one is defined by a mental health condition.

### **Educate yourself and others.**

Most individuals know a little about mental health issues, but ensuring you know the facts can help you educate others and help reduce stigma. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is a great place to start.

### **Be conscious of language.**

Words matter. Person-first language is less stigmatizing and focuses on the person's humanity rather than the condition. Preferred terms emphasize that a person \*has\* a condition rather than \*is\* a condition, such as "a person living with" or "a person diagnosed with." Less stigmatizing words avoid negative thoughts or associations.

### **See the person, not the condition - show compassion.**

Each person has a story, path, and journey that says more about them than their condition. Get to know someone for who they truly are and treat them with kindness and empathy.



## Resources

- [Learn more about stigma \(NAMI\)](#)
- [Pledge to Be Stigma-Free \(NAMI\)](#)
- [WhatMakesUs stigma reduction campaign](#)





# Mental Health Awareness Month

May is mental health awareness month. Mental health conditions are common and treatable. One in five U.S. adults experience mental conditions each year, and less than half receive treatment.

During mental health awareness month, make it a priority to discuss mental health with your friends, family, coworkers, and neighbors. The more open conversations had around mental health, the more it is normalized, and stigma is reduced.



## Resources

- [NAMI Mental Health Awareness Month](#)
- [MHA Mental Health Awareness Month](#)
- [SAMHSA Mental Health Awareness Month](#)
- [ADAA Mental Health Awareness Month](#)
- [American Hospital Association](#)
- [TWP Mental Health Resources](#)

## Get Involved

### Wear Green

Show your support and bring attention to mental health awareness by wearing green on Wednesdays in May. #OnWednesdayWeWearGreen

### Turning Green

Businesses are encouraged to use green lights outside or on their buildings when possible. Individuals can add green light bulbs to their porch lights.

### Advocate

Reduce barriers to mental health through advocacy. Actively listen when others talk about mental health. Support organizations that prioritize mental health. Speak up when stigmatizing language is used. Submit a letter to the editor of your local newspaper on the topic.





# Mental Health Awareness Month Communications

The Wellbeing Partners invites community members, organizations, and businesses to bring attention to mental health during Mental Health Awareness Month this May. Use this communications document, with images and suggested copy, as a resource.

Tag @TheWellbeingPartners and @WhatMakesUsMW and use hashtags #WhatMakesUs and #Turning Green when posting on social media channels so we can help amplify your messages and gauge participation.

We also invite everyone to wear green on Wednesdays in May to honor Mental Health Awareness Month and share your pictures with us or on social media with the hashtag #OnWednesdayWeWearGreen.

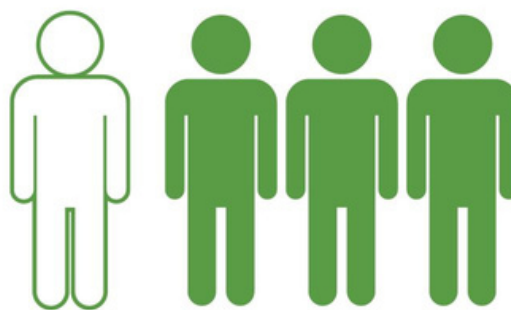
## Message 1

May is mental health awareness month. Mental health conditions are common and treatable. One in four Americans will be diagnosed with a mental health condition at some point in their life.

During mental health awareness month, make it a priority to discuss mental health with your loved ones.

@TheWellbeingPartners  
@WhatMakesUsMW  
#WhatMakesUs  
#TurningGreen

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH  
AWARENESS MONTH



1 in 4 people will be affected by a mental health condition at some point in their life.



## Message 2

When someone is in crisis, you can be a lifeline. If someone you know needs support, they can call or text 988 or chat at 988Lifeline.org.

This mental health awareness month, help normalize asking for help when needed.

@TheWellbeing Partners  
@WhatMakesUsMW  
#WhatMakesUs  
#TurningGreen



## Message 3

Everyone's mental health experience looks different, and no two conditions are the same. However, everyone living with a mental health condition deserves love and support. During May, commit to having conversations to de-stigmatize mental health.

If you are ready to share a story about your mental health journey, visit <https://whatmakesus.com/us>.

@TheWellbeing Partners  
@WhatMakesUsMW  
#WhatMakesUs  
#TurningGreen



## Message 4

In the metro region, we are working to reduce the stigma around mental health. Knowing mental health facts is important when having open and honest conversations.

If you are ready to share a story about your mental health journey, visit <https://whatmakesus.com/us>.

@TheWellbeing Partners  
@WhatMakesUsMW  
#WhatMakesUs  
#TurningGreen

### Mental Health is Not:

- ✗ Something to be ashamed or guilty of.
- ✗ All in your head.
- ✗ Something you can snap out of.
- ✗ Feeling good all the time.



### Mental Health is:

- ✓ Something you can ask for help, support, and advice on.
- ✓ Linked to your physical and social health.
- ✓ Treatable and recovery is possible.

### SELF-CARE CHECKLIST

- ✓ Read a book
- ✓ Have a hot cup of tea
- ✓ Drink water
- ✓ Spend time in nature
- ✓ Go for a walk
- ✓ Journal
- ✓ Get plenty of rest



## Message 5

How are you taking care of yourself? Setting aside time for yourself can help prevent burnout. You can use this self-care checklist as a starting point. It is easier to care for others if you take care of yourself. Self-care isn't selfish, it's service.

@TheWellbeing Partners  
@WhatMakesUsMW  
#WhatMakesUs  
#TurningGreen



## Message 6

Well-being combines your mind and body and how you feel inside and out. Take time to check in with yourself and consider these tips to improve your overall well-being.

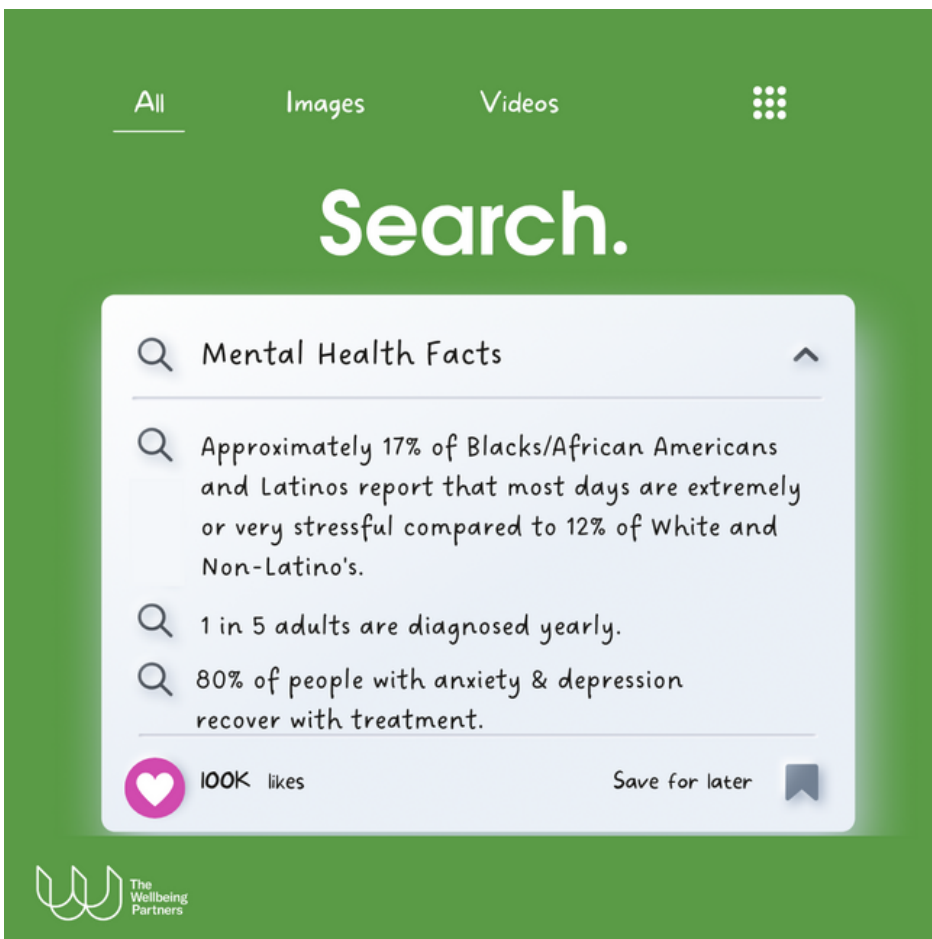
@TheWellbeing Partners  
@WhatMakesUsMW  
#WhatMakesUs  
#TurningGreen



## Message 7

It is critical that everyone has a solid foundation of knowledge about mental health. Promoting mental health equity contributes to the overall health in the community. This mental health awareness month, learn the facts about mental health and have a conversation with people in your life.

@TheWellbeing Partners  
@WhatMakesUsMW  
#WhatMakesUs  
#TurningGreen



## Message 8

How are you treating yourself? Are you being kind and listening to your needs? Often, we care for others without checking in with ourselves. During mental health awareness month, be kind to your mind. Take the time you need to fill your cup.

@TheWellbeing Partners  
@WhatMakesUsMW  
#WhatMakesUs  
#TurningGreen



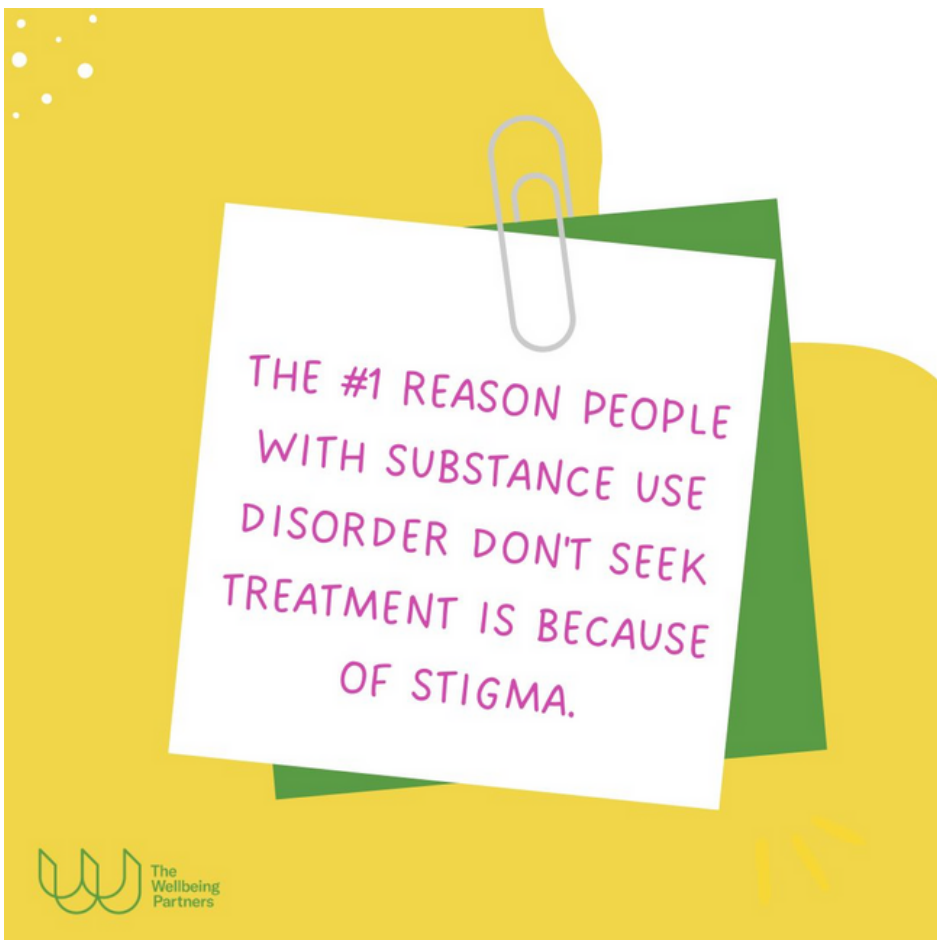
## Message 9

Stigma is a problem that many people face when seeking treatment. Words matter as they reflect our thinking. When talking about substance use disorder, consider using people-first language and avoid stigmatizing words.

For more information on substance use resources, visit:

<https://thewellbeingpartners.org/resources>.

@TheWellbeing Partners  
@WhatMakesUsMW  
#WhatMakesUs  
#TurningGreen



## Message 10

This month, we are turning our building green for mental health awareness month! You can join too. Did you know that your physical surroundings impact both individual and population health? During May, consider how the places and spaces you're in support your mental health. For more information on mental health resources in our community, visit:  
<https://thewellbeingpartners.org/resources>.

@TheWellbeing Partners

@WhatMakesUsMW

#WhatMakesUs

#TurningGreen

ON WEDNESDAYS WE  
WEAR GREEN.



WE TURNED GREEN FOR  
MENTAL HEALTH



## Message 11

On Wednesdays in May, wear green in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month. The Wellbeing Partners and RAYGUN are selling this limited-edition Be Kind To Your Mind shirt.

Order yours during May, starting May 1, at  
<https://www.raygunsite.com/products/be-kind-to-your-mind>.

@TheWellbeing Partners

@WhatMakesUsMW

#WhatMakesUs

#TurningGreen

#OnWednesdayWeWearGreen



## Message 12

"MENTAL HEALTH...IS NOT A DESTINATION,  
BUT A PROCESS. IT'S ABOUT HOW YOU  
DRIVE, NOT WHERE YOU'RE GOING."

— NOAM SHPANCER, PHD



As Mental Health Awareness Month ends, we want to remind you that mental health matters. Always remember to be kind to your mind year-round. For mental health resources, visit: <https://thewellbeingpartners.org/resources/>

@TheWellbeing Partners @WhatMakesUsMW

#WhatMakesUs

#TurningGreen

# Starting a Conversation Around Mental Health

Talking about mental health with others may not feel easy, but starting the conversation helps everyone around you. Talking about mental health can often be the first step to understanding someone's headspace. Try these questions to get the conversation started:

- How are you, really?
- Would you like to share how you're feeling?
- What can I do to support you?



## Tips to Get You Started



Be open about your mental health. This helps others know that you are a safe and willing person to speak with.



Talking about mental health should be as common and stigma-free as discussing other conditions. Words matter! When starting any conversation, avoid stigmatizing language such as crazy, bipolar, etc.



If you aren't able to immediately speak with someone the moment you notice that they may be struggling, find time to check in with them at another point soon after.



Keep what was shared confidential as long as there is no issue with harm or self-harm. Respect their privacy and be a safe place to share.



The most important part of being an ally is showing people you are there for them. You can do this by texting or calling to ask how they're doing. A little act of kindness can go a long way.

For more tips on talking about mental health, follow the WhatMakesUs campaign on Facebook and Instagram @whatmakesusmw

# Mental Health in the Workplace

Work is a significant part of many people's lives and affects our overall well-being positively and negatively. The impacts can be significant when a workplace fosters an environment of care and support for its employees' overall wellness and mental health.



## Resources

- [U.S. Surgeon General Workplace Mental Health & Wellbeing](#)
- [Mental Health America Research and Reports](#)
- [The Essential Aspects of Parity: A Training Tool for Policymakers](#)
- [Mental Health in the Workplace Advocacy Resource](#)
- [MHA Workplace Mental Health and Wellness](#)

## Employer Action Steps

### Lead Compassionately With Vulnerability

When leaders at all levels of an organization talk about mental health and show vulnerability and compassion, they normalize the topic and show support for employees.

### Model Desired Behavior

Organizations must model the behavior they want. Do this by setting reasonable expectations and workloads and training leaders at all levels to do the same.

Normalize and support employee boundary setting, train leaders to respect appropriate boundaries, and encourage breaks throughout the day in addition to utilizing vacation time.

### Educate and Train

Provide training to all levels of leadership on how to lead people effectively. [Mental Health First Aid](#) training is an excellent example of training to provide

### Communicate Effectively and Often

Regular communication in various ways helps increase awareness and reduce stigma. Be sure to provide facts and use person-first language in your messaging. Creating a safe space for employees at all levels to communicate openly without discrimination is crucial.

Becoming a TWP Workplace Partner enhances your organization's health and wellbeing strategy and saves you time and money with customized design, personalized guidance, and ready-to-use resources. Learn more at <https://thewellbeingpartners.org/membership/>.



# Mental Health in the Workplace: Assess Your Current Culture



Employers must create an organizational culture that destigmatizes mental health issues while normalizing and encouraging help-seeking behaviors. The most common ways to improve workplace mental health include education and awareness, improving access to services and support, and creating a safe and supportive culture. To do that, it is essential to determine what employees and leadership on all levels know, how they feel, and what they need. This may include surveys, needs assessments, and focus groups.

## Consider the following questions:

1. What are employees' most pressing mental health concerns?
2. How comfortable are employees expressing their mental health concerns to their colleagues and managers?
3. How much do employees know about the company's mental health benefits and services?
4. Do employees feel their managers can understand and support mental health concerns within their team?
5. What mental health-related resources are employees using most?
6. Which services and benefits do they find most helpful?
7. What is your organization currently doing to create and maintain a healthy culture in the workplace?

## Resources

- [NAMI Stigma-Free Quiz](#)
- [MHA Workplace Mental Health Survey](#)
- [Health Links Workplace Mental Health Survey](#)
- [fivestarwellbeing Workplace Mental Health Assessment](#)
- [Reflection Questions for Workplace Mental Health & Wellbeing](#)

# Sample Work Culture Health Survey

This survey is anonymous and aims to determine baseline and progress of our work culture as it relates to mental health and overall well-being.

Rate each question/statement below using the following scale:

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree

1. My company cares about my overall health and well-being.
2. My company provides access to mental health training.
3. My company provides access to mental health resources/services.
4. I know what mental health services I can use when I struggle at work.
5. I would be comfortable using my company's services for a mental health concern.
6. I would be comfortable asking my manager or HR for accommodations if needed.
7. My manager cares about my overall health and well-being.
8. My company invests in developing supportive managers.
9. My manager actively encourages me to take time off when I need it.
10. I am comfortable providing feedback to my manager about their performance.
11. I can negotiate my responsibilities and workload with my manager.
12. My company's leadership (board, CEO, HR) is invested in their employees' well-being.
13. My company's leadership speaks openly about mental health in the workplace.
14. My company would support me if I needed to take leave for a mental health concern.
15. My company invests in an inclusive environment where employees of all identities feel valued and represented.
16. The stress from work affects my relationships with friends, family, and co-workers.
17. The stress from work has led to other mental health concerns (e.g., anxiety, depression, substance use, etc.).
18. I find it difficult to concentrate at work.
19. My work directly impacts the overall organization.
20. I feel a sense of purpose in the work I do.



# Sample Workplace Mental Health Policy

## Overview

### Purpose

This policy aims for [organization name] to establish a company culture that values mental health by offering workplace wellbeing activities and empowering staff to take responsibility for their overall wellbeing. [Organization name] believes that our staff's mental health and wellbeing are critical to organizational success.

### Goals

All workplace wellbeing activities should address the following goals:

1. To maintain a workplace environment and culture that supports overall employee wellbeing.
2. To increase employee awareness of the resources available to them.
3. To reduce stigma around mental health.
4. To facilitate employees' active participation in various initiatives supporting mental health and wellbeing.

### Scope

This policy applies to all [organization name] employees, including contractors and visitors.

## Guiding Principals

Commitment from staff and management to the following principles will facilitate the achievement of this policy:

### Individuals:

All employees shall have a clearly defined role within the organization, appropriate to the individual, with relevant training, supervision, and support provided.

### Physical Environment:

[Organization name] will provide a physical environment that is supportive of mental health, including a workspace with appropriate lighting, noise levels, heating, and ventilation; wall posters and decorations that are free of stigmatizing language; and through the provision of adequate facilities for rest breaks.





# Sample Workplace Mental Health Policy

## Culture:

[Organization name]...

Will promote a culture of partnership and participation through open channels of communication that fosters feedback and provides straightforward methods of conflict resolution.

Will offer predictable working hours, reasonable workloads, and flexible working practices, where appropriate.

Will promote and support opportunities to enhance professional development.

Will provide and promote a range of support resources for those in need of personal assistance.

## Responsibility

All employees are encouraged to:

- Understand this policy and seek clarification from management where needed
- Consider this policy while carrying out work-related duties and while representing [organization name] in the community
- Support and contribute to [organization name]'s aim of providing a wellbeing-focused environment
- Support fellow workers in their awareness of this policy

All employees have a responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care of their mental health and wellbeing to the best of their ability
- Be mindful to ensure that their actions do not affect the health and safety of other people in the workplace

Managers have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that all workers are made aware of this policy
- Manage and support the implementation of this policy
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of the EAP and additional resources available to their staff so they can make referrals and provide information
- Keep up-to-date on mental health training so that they can recognize the signs of a mental health crisis and assist and refer to appropriate help to the best of their ability as necessary

# Sample Workplace Mental Health Policy

## Communication

[Organization name] will ensure that:

- Employees receive a copy of this policy upon hire.
- This policy is easily accessible to all members of the organization.
- Employees are notified when a particular activity aligns with this policy.
- Employees are empowered to actively contribute and provide feedback on this policy.
- Employees are notified of all changes to this policy.

## Monitoring and Review

[Organization name] will review this policy six months after implementation and annually after that.

The effectiveness of the policy will be assessed through the:

- Feedback from staff, the Wellness Committee, and all levels of management.
- Review of the policy by management to determine if objectives have been met and identify barriers to policy implementation.



# Sample Flexible Work Arrangement Policy

To our valued workforce,

To empower our collective talent and deliver the best customer experience, we must start with the best employee experience. [Organization Name] is dedicated to collaborating with employees to identify flexible work arrangements that are mutually beneficial in supporting employee and business needs. Flexible work arrangements include flexible or alternative work schedules, hybrid work, remote work, flextime, and part-time employment options.

This document is designed to provide information about flexible work arrangement options and details on employee resources and benefits available to [Organization Name]'s employees

We have a dynamic and diverse workforce, which means some jobs can be done remotely while others require an employee to be on-site. Leaders are empowered to discern what works best for their teams.

We remain committed to caring for our workforce, being empathic to each other's needs, and making accommodations when possible while delivering the best employee and customer experiences possible.

**Name**  
**Title**  
**Signature**



# Overview

Requests for a flexible work arrangement will be evaluated individually, considering whether an employee can achieve the required business results. Employees interested in a flexible work arrangement should discuss it with their supervisor for approval before logistics are put into motion.



If business conditions change or the arrangement is not working effectively, the organization reserves the right to modify or discontinue a flexible work arrangement for any reason. [Organization Name] will allow the impacted employee up to two weeks to transition to the revised schedule.

This document provides a framework for flexible work arrangements and does not grant employees a contractual right to them. The organization has sole discretion in approving or denying these requests and reserves the right to make changes at any time to this document. Nothing in this document shall constitute an employment contract or change the organization's relationship with its employees.

## Eligibility

Employees may request one or more flexible work options described in this document. Key considerations for approval include, but are not limited to:

- The ability to achieve goals, objectives, tasks, and deliverables without negatively impacting customers, team members, the department, or business outcomes.
- The employee is in good standing with no open performance issues.



# Compressed Work Schedule

A compressed work schedule allows employees to work 40 hours in fewer than five days or 80 hours in fewer than ten days.

Examples:

- 4/10: Four 10-hour workdays with three days off per week.
- 9/80: Eight 9-hour days and one 8-hour day in the pay period (two weeks).

Before you reach out to your supervisor to request a compressed work schedule, please review the following questions and be prepared to discuss how your specific role and needs fit this option.

Employee considerations

- Will the quality and quantity of your work be maintainable on a compressed schedule?
- How will this schedule impact your ability to collaborate and communicate with coworkers and customers?
- Do you have specific job responsibilities that only you perform? How will these be handled on days when you are not working?

Supervisor considerations

- Is coverage available from other employees in your area to ensure you have uninterrupted operation during the organization's standard business hours?
- Do the job responsibilities of the employee allow for this schedule?



# Hybrid & Remote Work

[Organization Name] allows for work in-office or remotely on a flexible basis. This document outlines in-office and remote work expectations, technology, communication, and how meetings will work company-wide. We want you to perform at your best, regardless of where you work.

## In-Office Expectations

Employees are expected to attend team-building events and all-staff meetings in person. The frequency of these meetings will be determined by leadership and communicated to employees with ample notice.

## Tools & Support

All employees will be granted a one-time stipend up to [\$\$\$] for home office-related expenses like furniture or technology. Employees must submit a request for the stipend through their manager. All employees will be provided with a company laptop. An annual stipend of [\$\$\$] will be provided to all remote employees to cover phone and internet.

## Communication

While working remotely, employees must be available via email, phone, and/or the organization's messaging system (Zoom/Slack/Teams/etc.) during pre-determined working hours in their time zone.

## Meetings

All employees, both remote and in-person, are required to attend meetings. If the employee is working remotely, they are required to attend via video conferencing. If video conferencing is not available, employees may call in via phone as a secondary option. If an employee is unable to attend a given meeting for any reason, they must notify their manager or the person hosting the meeting.

