

VIRGINIA STATE EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

The Value of Mental Health in the Commonwealth



Meet the Project Team



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The Problem

76%

- Of workers reported at least one symptom of a mental health (MH) condition.

84%

- Said workplace conditions had contributed to at least one MH challenge.

81%

- Of workers reported that they will be looking for workplaces that support MH in the future.

The Problem (Continued)

>60%

- Of people with mental health problems & mental illness won't seek the help they need. Stigma is one of the main reasons why.

70%

- Of people suggest that their manager has more impact on their mental health than their therapist.

Action Is Needed

85% of employees say that actions from their employer would help their mental health.

Only one third (1/3) of responses were related to higher salaries.

Two-thirds (2/3) of responses were related to:

- More meaningful work.
- More flexibility.
- More social events.

Framing the Issue

Our Objective

Increase awareness of mental health issues and resources for leaders & employees of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Our Goal

Better mental well-being and more satisfied employees, which leads to increased retention, engagement, & productivity for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Our Comprehensive Solution

State Level Framework

Agency Level Strategic Plan

Supervisor/Manager Level Training

State Level Framework

- Provide goals & objectives for mental health programs.
- Enable state agencies to develop mental health strategic plans.
- Make mental health part of the daily routine.



Agency Level: Mental Health “Stand-Down Day”

- Leverage Mental Health Awareness Month (May)
- Kick off the mental health strategic planning process
- Solicit feedback on employees’ needs through group sessions/surveys
- Educate employees on existing programs
- Address common issues
- Address issues unique to the organization.



Agency Level: Strategic Plan



- Develop a Mental Health Strategic Plan
- Connect mission to work to make it meaningful
- Employee survey to determine priorities
- Focus on Top 3
- Encourage flexibility in updating & modifying policies/procedures to reduce stress
- Increase agency social events.

Supervisor/Manager Level Training



Required training on
mental health awareness
and strategies



Manager toolkit and
resources



Vendor training for
managers as Mental
Health Ambassadors

Expected Outcomes

- Positive work environments & prioritizing mental health resources will:
 - Attract top talent.
 - Retain employees.
 - Improve morale.
 - Increase productivity.
 - Reduce sick days & workplace injuries.
- For every dollar that US employers spend treating common mental health issues, they receive a return of \$4 in improved health and productivity.



Source: World Health Organization (WHO), American Psychological Association (APA), US Dept of Labor - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Success Stories



- Kent State University's Workplace Mental Health & Wellness Initiative
 - Normalized Mental Health
 - Increased EAP awareness.
 - Encouraged Connections: Walk & Talks.
- University of Virginia's Hoos Well Program
 - Comprehensive physical & mental wellbeing program
 - Increased awareness & accessibility of benefits
 - Focus on education

Summary & Call to Action



- Mental Health is an important workplace issue
- Plans are required at the state and agency level
- Training for leaders will reduce the stigma and set the tone

Questions?

