

# COVID-19 BACK TO WORK MENTAL HEALTH PROTOCOLS

## FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

Feeling stressed is an experience that you and many of your MATES are likely going through.

It is normal to be feeling this way in the current situation.

Stress and the feelings associated with it are by no means a reflection that you cannot do your job or that you are weak.

Recognise where you are sitting with your emotions and take some time to stay focused on the now.

Consider if your emotions are more extreme than usual and if so, you might need some further support.

## WELLBEING

Managing your stress and wellbeing during this time is as crucial as:

- Looking after your physical health.
- Take care of your everyday needs and ensure rest and time out during work or after work, eat healthy, engage in physical activity, and stay in contact with family and friends.
- Continue to use the self-care strategies that you know work for you.
- Consider your wellbeing bucket – you will need to fill it up as it will feel empty at times.

## CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR

There could be changes that you or a MATE might be showing. These are not one-off incidences but are happening more often than usual.

Are they:

- Angry or agitated
- Isolating themselves  
“Not wanting to talk to people”
- Using alcohol or drugs as a way of coping
- Being distant  
“Not replying to messages”
- Finding it hard to cope with everyday things
- Not looking after themselves, washing, looking unkempt
- Struggling to concentrate
- Struggling to finish work
- Coming into work late or being absent a lot

## SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Sometimes what might be happening for us might require more help.

Talk to someone that you trust at work or a friend or family member.

We know there is a range of support in the community that is available.

MATES in Construction Team can help navigate you through some of the supports available.

MATES in Construction is a free confidential service available 24/7.

Simply ring MATES in Construction on 0800 111 315 and one of our staff will support you.

## WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS DO?

Clear communication during Covid-19 is essential. Make mental health part of the conversation.

Know your workers. Look out for any changes in their behavior.

Proactively support workers who identify as being at risk of workplace psychological injury.

Use the MATES induction tools on site.

Talk about how everyone is travelling at Toolbox Talks and breaks.

If you have an Employee Assistance Programme, inform your workers that it is available.

Have MATES signage as much as you can across the site to encourage help seeking behaviors.

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