

Covid-19 and Mental Health

For Employers

Maintain a positive work/life balance and encourage your team to do the same

It's easy to work longer hours and take fewer breaks when working from home. Why not put a reminder in your diary when you plan to finish working? You can also make sure you take at least a 30-minute lunch break. If you can, try to get some fresh air and go for a short walk. It's important you look after your own wellbeing so you can also be there to support your team.

Check in with team members regularly

Working from home can be isolating; ensure you and your team have regular check-ins virtually. Find an online tool like Zoom that is easy for everyone to access and use. Make sure these regular check-ins are scheduled in advance with your team members: have some daily scheduled chat time with each of them and regular time in the diary as a team.

Establish new ways of working

Working remotely will require consideration as to how you will deliver work as a team - what collaborative working platforms will be used, how you will communicate and how you support each other through challenges. Some of it might be trial and error so it is also important to think about how you will reflect on what's working and what isn't.

Encourage your team to use the support tools available

If you or your team feel you are not coping, it is important to talk with a health professional. For support with grief, anxiety, distress or mental wellbeing, you can call or text 1737 – free, anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – to talk with a trained counsellor.

For Everyone

Managing your mental wellbeing

Reach out to your usual supports – family and whānau, friends and workmates. Sharing how we feel and offering support to others is important.

We also recommend sticking to a routine such as having regular mealtimes, bedtimes and exercising.

Keep active – going to work, doing usual leisure activities and seeing friends can improve general wellbeing and help distract from distressing feelings.

Seek accurate information from legitimate sources

Limit yourself to reading information only from official and reliable sources. These credible sources of information are key to avoid the fear and panic that misinformation may cause.

Set limits around news on COVID-19

Try to avoid excessive exposure to media coverage. Constant monitoring of news updates and social media feeds about COVID-19 can intensify feelings of worry and distress. Consider turning off automatic notifications and taking a break from the news. Setting boundaries to how much news you read, watch or listen will allow you to focus on your life and actions over which you have control, as opposed to wondering 'what if?'

Reach out to others and support people around you

Keeping in touch with your friends and family may ease the stress caused by COVID-19. Talking through your concerns and feelings may help you find ways of dealing with challenges. Receiving support and care from others can bring a sense of comfort and stability. Assisting other people in their time of need and reaching out to someone who may be feeling alone or concerned can benefit both the person receiving support as well as the helper.

If you feel you are not coping, it is important to talk with a health professional. For support with grief, anxiety, distress or mental wellbeing, you can call or text 1737 – free, anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – to talk with a trained counsellor.

Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking

We will get through this.

Kia kaha.