

Office of Disability Employment Policy Mental Health

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/mental-health>

Approximately 1 in 5 Americans experience some form of mental health condition each year. For many of these individuals (and many without mental health conditions), work is key to their health, contributing to a sense of purpose and well-being. This is why it's important that employers understand how to foster a mental health-friendly work culture.

Employees are not the only ones to benefit from such a work culture. Workplace practices inclusive of people with disabilities—whether obvious or not—can deliver numerous bottom-line advantages, including greater productivity, reduced insurance costs, and improved employee retention and morale. Sending a clear message about a company's commitment to an inclusive and equitable workplace has many benefits, especially to federal contractors covered by Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act seeking to encourage employees and applicants with mental health conditions to self-identify as people with disabilities.

A number of resources are available to help ensure that disability-related policies and practices in the workplace consider the needs of people with mental health conditions.

Watch the recording of DOL's virtual event honoring Mental Health Awareness Month 2022. The event highlights the department's commitment to promoting equitable and inclusive mental health-friendly workplaces. Featuring insightful dialogues and knowledge sharing from key DOL leaders, the event explores mental health parity, the role of the workplace to address the nation's mental health crisis and strategies that foster work environments to support workers with mental health conditions.

During the pandemic, there was a marked increase in reported symptoms of anxiety and depression among U.S. adults. For employees with multiple marginalized identities, who experience ongoing systemic inequality and discrimination, many of these strains are even more acute.

Working is an important part of recovery, and the key to helping individuals with mental health conditions succeed on the job is an inclusive, supportive workplace. As the workforce returns to the workplace, many employees are experiencing fear and anxiety. That's why mental health and workplace well-being should be at the forefront of every employer's planning. Through collaboration, employers can create supportive, inclusive workplaces for all workers. Check out ODEP's one-page guide for "[Fostering a Mentally Healthy Workplace](#)."

Explore the Campaign for Disability Employment's "[Mental Health at Work: What Can I Do?](#)" campaign. Featuring a series of video public service announcements (PSAs), free posters and a [Workplace Mental Health Guide](#) (for mail order or download), the campaign's tools are designed to educate company leaders, managers, co-workers and people with mental health conditions about the roles we all can play in promoting a mental health-friendly workplace.

Discover additional resources that will help you foster mental health-friendly work cultures whether you are an employer, individual, service provider, policymaker or youth/young adult.