









What are Psychosocial hazards?


Psychosocial hazards are factors in the design, management, work environment, or workplace interactions can cause psychological or physical harm. Some hazards are inherent in certain roles (e.g., high workload in customer service), while others result from poor design or management (e.g., mismanaged changes, poor job descriptions, bullying, harassment). Some hazards can become protective factors when reversed, such as high recognition, good support, clear roles, and responsibilities. Here are the most common psychosocial hazards known to risk health and safety.

Psychosocial hazards and definitions

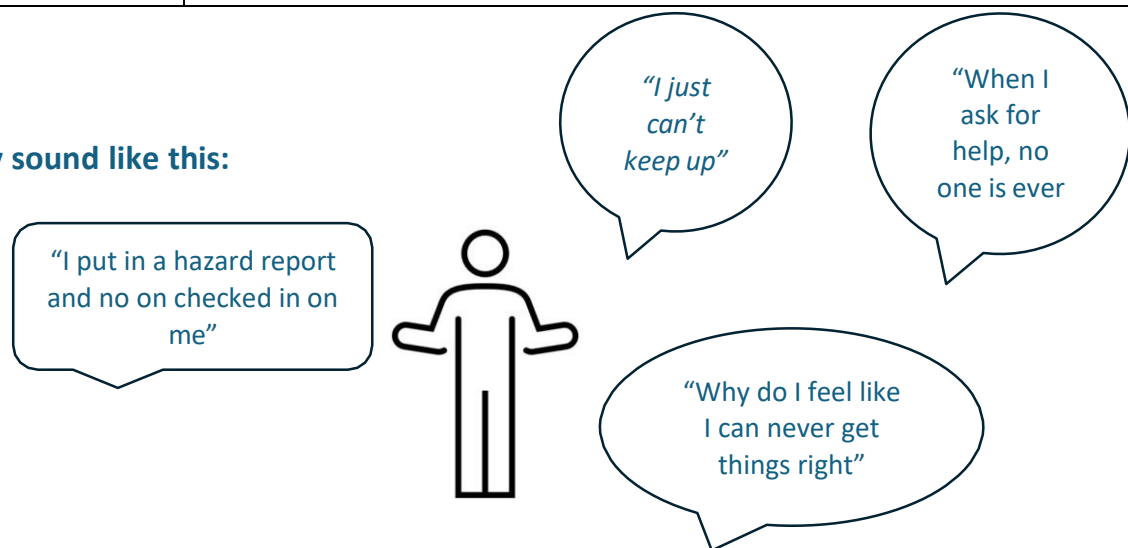
 <p>Poor Organizational Change Management</p>	<p>Poor organisational change management refers to organisational change management that is poorly planned, communicated, supported or managed. Poor organisational change management can cause a stress response which when frequent, prolonged or severe may cause physical or psychological injury to a worker.</p>
 <p>High Job Demands</p>	<p>A job can involve a combination of high and/or low physical, mental and emotional demands, which can create risks to the health and safety of workers.</p> <p>High job demands refer to sustained or intense high levels of physical, mental or emotional demands. It is more than sometimes 'being a little busy'. High job demands become a hazard when they are excessive or unreasonable, or chronically exceeds workers' capacity.</p>
 <p>Low role clarity</p>	<p>Low role clarity refers to jobs where there is uncertainty about, or frequent changes to tasks and work standards; where important task information is not available to workers; or where there are conflicting job roles, responsibilities or expectations.</p>

 <p>Poor workplace relationships</p>	<p>Poor workplace relationships or interpersonal conflict can occur between managers, supervisors, co-workers or others with whom workers are required to interact. It can appear as frequent or excessive disagreements, or rude comments, either from one person to another or between multiple people. Poor workplace relationships or conflicts can appear unresolved and excessive conflict regarding work tasks, processes, customers or other interpersonal issues. It can occur with other teams, organisations, clients or customers.</p>
 <p>Low Job Control</p>	<p>Low job control refers to work in which workers have little or no control over what happens in their work environment, how or when their work is done, or the objectives they work towards.</p> <p>Low job control can include work where there is excessive monitoring of work tasks or breaks, unpredictable work hours, precarious employment contracts (e.g. casual, labour hire or rolling term contracts) and work where workers have little or no involvement in decisions that affect them and their work.</p>
 <p>Poor Support</p>	<p>Poor support refers to tasks or jobs where workers have inadequate emotional and/or practical support from their supervisors and/or co-workers, inadequate training or information to support their work performance, or inadequate tools, equipment or resources to do their job.</p> <p>Poor support at work can include badly maintained or inadequate access to equipment/ tools or supervisory support, a lack of functional or adequate IT systems, limited opportunities to engage with peers and co-workers during the work shift.</p>
 <p>Remote and Isolated work</p>	<p>Remote work refers to work that is isolated from the assistance of other people because of location, time, or the nature of the work. It can involve working in locations where there is difficulty in immediate rescue or attendance of emergency services (where required).</p> <p>It can also include work at locations where access to resources and communications is difficult and travel times are lengthy. Isolated work includes work where there are no or few other people around or where workers must live away from home for extended periods.</p>
 <p>Low Reward and Recognition</p>	<p>Low reward and recognition refer to work where there is an imbalance between workers' efforts and recognition or rewards, they receive in return – both formal and informal.</p> <p>Low reward and recognition can include not being recognised for extra effort or commitment, receiving little or no constructive feedback. It may include not providing workers with reasonable opportunities for career development, not recognising workers' skills, or distributing rewards and recognition in a way that is unfair, biased or inequitable.</p>

 <p>Poor Organisational Justice</p>	<p>Poor organisational justice refers to work where there is a lack of procedural fairness (fair processes to reach decisions), informational fairness (keeping relevant people informed) or interpersonal fairness (treating people with dignity and respect).</p> <p>Poor organisational justice can exist where there are inconsistent, unfair, discriminatory or inequitable decisions, or application of policies and procedures at work. It can include things such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> failing to treat workers' information sensitively or maintain their privacy penalising workers for things outside their control failing to appropriately address (actual or alleged) underperformance, inappropriate or harmful behaviour, or misconduct allocating work, shifts and opportunities in a discriminatory or unfair way
 <p>Exposure to Bullying</p>	<p>Examples of behaviour, whether intentional or unintentional, that may be work-related bullying include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • abusive, insulting or offensive language or comments • unjustified criticism or complaints • deliberately leaving someone out of work-related activities • withholding information that is vital for effective work performance • setting unreasonable timelines or constantly changing deadlines • setting tasks that are unreasonably below or beyond a person's skill level • not giving someone information, supervision, consultation or resources they need to get the job done
 <p>Exposure to Traumatic Material or Events</p>	<p>Workers may be exposed to this hazard at work through investigating, witnessing or being directly exposed to traumatic events or situations. This may include reading, hearing or seeing accounts of traumatic events. A person is more likely to experience an event as traumatic when it is unexpected, is perceived as uncontrollable, where there is a threat to life or safety or where it is the result of intentional cruelty.</p>
 <p>Violence & Aggression</p>	<p>Violence or aggression at work refers to any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work. This includes verbal/physical abuse, threats or assaults by workers, clients, patients, visitors or others.</p>
 <p>Poor Environmental Conditions</p>	<p>Poor environmental conditions are those where workers are exposed to unpleasant, poor quality, or hazardous physical environments or conditions that create a stress response.</p> <p>Examples of poor environmental conditions include work environments where there is poor air quality, high or nuisance noise levels, extreme temperatures or uncontrolled biological hazards (e.g. blood or bodily fluids or infectious pathogens).</p>

 <p>Harassment including Sexual Harassment and Gendered Violence</p>	<p>Workplace sexual harassment at work is conduct of a sexual nature that could reasonably be expected to make someone feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated. This includes, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staring, leering, wolf whistling or gestures of a suggestive or sexual nature - Unnecessary familiarity or intimacy, unwelcome touching such as deliberately brushing up against a person, hugging or kissing - Sending or forwarding sexually explicit emails or text messages - Displaying sexually suggestive pictures, videos, music, emails, blogs, books or objects - Sexual taunts or innuendo, sexually explicit or offensive jokes - Questions or insinuations about a person's sexual or private life - Persistent requests for dates, propositions or pressure for sexual favours - Violence or harassment due to someone's gender or sexuality or because they do not follow socially prescribed gender norms, <p>Harassment and/or discrimination at work is witnessing a person being treated less favorably, being publicly or privately offended, being intimidating, harassed or humiliating on the basis of legally protected attributes or personal characteristics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gender -Sexual preferences -Race -Marital or family status or others.
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They may sound like this:



Assessing Psychosocial Hazards

Psychosocial hazards can interact and combine to create new or increased risks. It's essential to consider all hazards together, as some may not pose risks alone but can do so when combined. For instance, high workloads can become riskier if workers can't take breaks or lack support.