

# Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

## Introduction

This Policy is part of the Health & Wellbeing Framework which is made up of a number of elements which together encompass all formal policy, procedure and statement documents, including associated forms, relating to health & wellbeing in Devcon Limited.

## Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to all employees. Devcon Limited is committed to achieving a healthy workforce by placing value on both physical and mental health. Devcon Limited also recognises that mental health issues can be triggered by excessive levels of work related stress and it is Devcon Limited's duty of care to take measures as reasonably practicable to preserve the mental health and well-being of its employees whilst at work. Devcon Limited recognises the importance of ensuring that all employees are able to work in a supportive, professional and caring environment, where they are valued and respected. By applying these values to our work practices we aim to promote mental wellbeing and prevent stress by promoting a supportive work place culture. The concept of positive mental health and well-being implies a state of health characterised by emotional and spiritual resilience that allows us to enjoy life and to survive pain, disappointment and sadness.

Mental health problems can be triggered by stress arising from the workplace or outside world; mental wellbeing at work is determined by the interaction between the working environment, the nature of the work and the individual. Devcon Limited promotes a comprehensive approach to tackling mental health issues arising from the workplace or personal circumstances by addressing prevention, management and support.

This policy requires a shared understanding between employees and managers that mental ill health can be a legitimate health issue in the workplace. Employees experiencing difficulties that could lead to them experiencing mental ill health should be encouraged to seek help and support. Employees have a duty to themselves and others to help minimise mental ill health in the workplace and should take an active part in mental well-being management initiatives. This policy should be read in conjunction with Devcon Limited's other policies and procedures. Devcon Limited will identify and detail the factors which may cause increased stress in the workplace by Risk Assessment.

## Definitions

The term "mental ill health" is one which encompasses a wide range of experiences which affect an individual's ability to balance his/her life. The difficulties can range from stress and anxiety through to serious mental health conditions diagnosed and treated by the health services. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as an adverse reaction to excessive pressure or other type of demand placed on them. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

## Policy Aims

Our policy aims to:

- Not tolerate any discrimination attached to mental illness, which includes barriers to employment in accordance with the equal opportunities policy;
- Prevent so far as is reasonably practicable, those circumstances detrimental to mental health by providing a working environment where hazards to health are identified, assessed, removed or reduced;
- Raise awareness of mental ill health including stress, its causes and associated factors;
- Ensure that employees who have, or have had, symptoms of mental ill health are treated responsibly and in an understanding manner;
- Promote mental health support available to Devcon Limited's employees;
- Ensure that all employees, especially those with management and supervisory responsibilities, take proactive steps to ensure that the overall working environment it provides are conducive to mental wellbeing;
- Ensure that managers provide employee support during periods of sickness absence and return to work interviews to support individuals in their return to and rehabilitation in work in accordance with Devcon Limited's sickness absence policy;

## Principles

- All cases will be dealt with in accordance with Devcon Limited's policies on equality and diversity;
- Cases will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and related documentation will be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act;
- Devcon Limited will not disadvantage unfairly an employee who admits to suffering from work related stress or and mental health problem.

## Responsibilities

Devcon Limited is responsible for ensuring that:

- Stress, which is likely to lead to ill health, is reduced as far as practicably possible in the work environment;
- Devcon Limited's culture promotes a positive attitude to mental health and wellbeing;
- Information is provided for employees on positive coping mechanisms and general health improving activities within the workplace;
- Advice, information, and how to access support is provided for all employees including recognising the symptoms of poor mental health;
- Managers are knowledgeable in their duty of care for employees;
- Supervision is in place to ensure confidentiality where people can gain support in dealing with poor mental health;
- A plan is implemented to reduce work place stress, and promote mental wellbeing.
- Encouraging a workplace culture where mental health, wellbeing and physical wellbeing are regarded as equally important;
- Carrying out risk assessments in their work areas to identify any hazards that could give rise to mental health issues and act upon these hazards to eliminate or minimise them where practicable;
- Ensuring employees are fully trained to do their job and understand their role;
- Effective communication with employees, particularly when there are organisational and procedural changes;
- Considering the implications for employees of any changes to working practices, ways of working, work location, new policies or procedures, and the need for appropriate support and training;
- Recognising and resolving work-related issues at individual and team level where possible;
- Liaising with HR to maximise support to employees who have mental / physical health issues;
- Managing absence in accordance with the policy;
- Ensuring employees are managing the demands of the job by monitoring work loads, working hours and monitoring absence;
- Carrying out exit interviews;
- Ensuring that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their work area;
- Ensuring that employees returning to work after a period of absence due to mental ill health are treated in a sensitive and sympathetic manner. If the cause absence is thought to be due to work related issues, managers must ensure that these are risk managed before the individual resumes their duties.

Employees are responsible for:

- Using Devcon Limited's support, supervision, and employee counselling appropriately;
- Reporting to their line manager or HR of any risk to mental health within the work place that may pose a risk to themselves or others;
- Supporting their colleagues if they are experiencing poor mental health encouraging them to talk to their manager;
- Seeking support from their G.P. or other appropriate agencies if they have health issues;
- Discussing with their manager any appropriate measures to make their work less stressful;
- Recognising the principles and importance of work life balance;
- Exercising their right to attend stress management courses;
- Taking positive steps to safeguard their own mental health, in particular by taking regular allocated breaks and by working reasonable hours.

HR is responsible for:

- Ensuring that Occupational Health and Employee Counselling services are accessible for all employees;
- Monitoring the application of the policy to ensure that is applied with consistency;
- Making sure that policies and codes of conduct are appropriate;
- Monitoring and evaluating recruitment practices in relation to equal opportunities;
- Participating in Devcon Limited's plan to reduce stressors and promote positive mental health;
- Offering advice and support for managers in dealing with instances of mental ill health at work;
- Liaising with managers over return to work arrangements following a period of absence;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L N Pope', with a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the signature.

**L N Pope**

Managing Director

16 April 2024