



Step 1: Understand

Signs of Mental Health Concerns

Disorder/ concern	Description	What they might experience	What you might see
Anxiety	When someone feels worried, tense, or on edge a lot of the time, even when there is no clear reason	• Constant worry or racing thoughts • Feeling restless or overwhelmed • Physical symptoms (e.g. fast heart rate, sweating) • Wanting to avoid some places or events	• Avoidance of certain tasks or situations • Difficulty concentrating or making decisions • Appearing tense, on edge, or easily startled • Seeking reassurance for work and decisions
Depression	When someone has ongoing low mood or loss of interest in their work, hobbies, or other activities	• Feeling sad, empty, or 'flat' • Loss of interest in usual activities • Low energy or fatigue • Trouble concentrating	• Reduced motivation or productivity • Withdrawal from colleagues • Slower work pace or missed deadlines • Increased sick leave or lateness



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Disorder/ concern	Description	What they might experience	What you might see
Stress	When someone feels overwhelmed when pressures are too much or last too long	• Feeling unable to cope • Irritability or frustration • Trouble sleeping • Physical tension or headaches	• Increased mistakes or forgetfulness • Irritability or short temper • Reduced concentration • Changes in attendance or reliability
Burnout	When someone is completely exhausted and worn out due to ongoing stress	• Emotional exhaustion • Loss of motivation • Feeling detached or negative about work • Reduced sense of accomplishment	• Disengagement or lack of enthusiasm • Decline in performance • Cynical or negative attitude • Increased personal leave • Increased absenteeism or presenteeism
Trauma-related difficulties (including PTSD)	When someone has ongoing distress after experiencing or witnessing something very upsetting, concerning or frightening	• Intrusive thoughts and memories • Avoiding reminders of the event • Feeling constantly on edge • Trouble sleeping	• Avoidance of certain tasks, people, or places • Strong emotional reactions to triggers/ things • Difficulty concentrating • Fatigue • Increased startle response
Substance or alcohol use concerns	When someone uses alcohol or other substances in a way that starts to cause other problems in their life	• Increased reliance on alcohol or substances • Difficulty cutting down alcohol or substance use • Using alcohol or substances to manage stress or emotions • Negative impacts on health or relationships	• Changes in behaviour or mood • Reduced reliability or performance • Increased absenteeism or lateness • Signs of impairment at work

Disorder/ concern	Description	What they might experience	What you might see
Gambling problems	When someone has difficulty over time in limiting money or time spent on gambling	• Having to spend more money gambling over time to get the same amount of excitement • Feeling irritated and/or restless when not gambling • Thinking a lot about gambling • Feeling guilty or ashamed	• Irritability or short temper • Reduced concentration • Loss of interest in work they previously enjoyed • Signs of financial issues (e.g. requests for pay in advance or a loan, continued requests for overtime)

This fact sheet provides general information and examples only. It is not a complete list of mental health concerns, and the signs described do not confirm a diagnosis. People can experience challenges in different ways, and some may not show obvious signs at work – so it's important to check in, focus on changes from someone's usual behaviour, and respond early, as timely support can make a real difference.



Key message for employers

If you notice changes, focus on:

- starting a **supportive, non-judgemental** conversation
- considering whether **workplace factors** may be contributing to the person's mental health
- encouraging access to support (e.g. GP, psychologist, EAP).



The Minds Matter Toolkit has resources to help employers and managers identify, respond to, and support workers experiencing mental health concerns – including how to start a conversation and connect people with appropriate help.

Mental Health Support Services

Beyond Blue beyondblue.org.au 1300 224 636 | Lifeline lifeline.org.au 13 11 14

For more information and guidance, please see www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/mindsmatter