

MENTAL HEALTH MINUTE



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Takeaways From the New Framework for Mental Health and Well-being in the Workplace

Putting mental health at the center of workplace policies is more vital than ever as the nation faces a mental health crisis driven by the COVID-19 pandemic's ripple effect, financial worries, stress and burnout. As such, the U.S. surgeon general released a new framework for employers outlining how the workplace can promote employee mental health and well-being.

The average person will spend 90,000 hours at work over their lifetime, making the workplace a vital place to provide additional support and resources for Americans. Based on the new five-part framework, here's what you could expect from your employer:

1. Protection from harm—Physical and psychological safety is critical for ensuring your mental health and well-being in the workplace. Speak up if you don't feel comfortable and ask for additional mental health support from your manager or employer.

2. Connection and community—Positive workplace social interactions and relationships can support your well-being. Focus on collaborating and contributing to a culture of inclusion and belonging.

3. Work-life harmony—Work-life harmony involves incorporating work into the rest of your life in a way that promotes happiness during and outside of the workday. It's important to set boundaries between work and nonwork time and respect others' boundaries.

4. Mattering at work—You likely want to know that your work matters and is important. When you feel appreciated and recognized for your work, you may experience lower stress.

5. Opportunities for growth—You may be more optimistic about your abilities when there are more opportunities to achieve goals based on your skills and growth.

The workplace is a critical environment that can help support your mental health and overall well-being. Talk to your manager if you have any ideas or concerns about your work environment.

The Impact of Sleep on Mental Health

Not only is your physical health affected when you don't get enough sleep, but it also takes a toll on your mental health. You should generally get at least seven to eight hours of sleep per night, but many Americans struggle to get a good night's sleep.

Some of the most common mental health issues linked to lack of sleep are depression and anxiety. Sleep disturbances are also linked to higher levels of psychological distress. Sleep sharpens your cognitive skills such as attention, learning and memory. As a result, inadequate sleep can impact your ability to respond to stressors and events.

Consider the following tips for a better night's sleep:

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule and bedtime.
- Establish a bedtime routine.
- Make your bedroom quiet and relaxing.
- Turn off electronic devices at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
- Don't eat a large meal before bedtime.
- Avoid consuming alcohol, caffeine or excessive fluids before bedtime.

Getting adequate sleep is extremely important to improving and maintaining good mental health. Contact your doctor to address sleep issues or for more information on improving your sleep habits.

