

Managing Stress and Mental Health in the Workplace Policy Employee Wellbeing

2026-2029



sirgar.llyw.cymru
carmarthenshire.gov.wales

Contents

1. Purpose	2
2. Scope of the Policy	2
3. Statement	2-3
4. Responsibilities	3-5
5. Arrangements at Schools	5
6. Supporting Documentation	5
7. Ensuring Equality of Treatment	5
8. Definitions	6

This document should be used in conjunction with the [Corporate Health and Safety Policy](#)

1. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to provide information on stress and mental health, their possible symptoms and causes, and how they can be managed in the workplace. The Council also has a duty of care to ensure that no employee is knowingly subjected to circumstances in which their ability to maintain their mental and physical wellbeing is compromised. It is therefore a key consideration for the Council, in terms of employee health and safety, sickness absence management, morale of employees and employee relations, that stress and mental health in the workplace are managed effectively.

This policy will assist Managers and Supervisors to acknowledge that stress and mental health-related ill health can seriously reduce employees' ability to contribute fully to the expectations of their role within the Council and will aid in the recognition and management of stress and mental health in the workplace.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy will apply to all employees of Carmarthenshire County Council and Elected Members.

3. Statement

Carmarthenshire County Council is committed to taking all reasonably practicable steps to prevent, manage and reduce work-related stress and to promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the organisation. In fulfilling its duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Council will ensure that risks to mental health arising from work activities are identified, assessed and effectively controlled.

This policy forms part of the Council's overarching approach to health and safety and should be read in conjunction with the Corporate Health and Safety Policy. It establishes a proactive and preventative framework for the effective management of workplace stress and mental ill health.

The Council is committed to fostering a supportive, open and inclusive working environment in which mental health is treated with the same importance as physical health. A culture will be promoted where employees feel able to raise concerns about stress and mental ill health without fear of stigma or discrimination and are supported to access appropriate help at the earliest opportunity.

The Council will ensure that all employees are treated fairly, consistently and with dignity in relation to sickness absence and management processes, irrespective of whether the condition relates to mental or physical health.

The Council aims to create and maintain a working environment in which the risks associated with workplace stress are minimised and managed through a structured and systematic approach. This will be achieved by:

- Confirming the Authority's commitment to the effective management of stress and mental health as a core health and safety priority
- Establishing and maintaining a consistent, organisation-wide approach to identifying, assessing and managing work-related stressors
- Increasing employee and manager awareness, understanding and competence in recognising the causes, signs and impacts of stress and mental ill health
- Providing clear guidance, tools and support to enable Managers and Supervisors to identify, assess and manage stress-related risks within their teams
- Supporting Managers to undertake suitable and sufficient stress risk assessments, implement proportionate control measures, and review their effectiveness
- Promoting positive mental health, resilience and overall employee wellbeing across the workforce
- Providing a structured and supportive framework for employees experiencing stress or mental ill health, including access to appropriate internal and external support services

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Chief Executive / Directors / Heads of Service / Senior Managers

Senior leaders are responsible for the strategic leadership, governance and oversight of this policy. They will:

- Promote a positive organisational culture where mental health and wellbeing are prioritised and openly discussed.
- Ensure adequate resources, training, supervision and support mechanisms are in place.
- Monitor organisational data relating to stress, mental health and sickness absence and act on emerging risks or trends.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and corporate policies, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations.
- Provide clear leadership and hold managers accountable for implementing this policy effectively.
- Ensure that stress risk management is embedded within service planning, risk management and organisational change processes.

4.2 Line Managers and Supervisors

Line managers and supervisors are responsible for the day-to-day management of stress and mental health within their teams. They will:

- Undertake suitable and sufficient stress risk assessments and implement appropriate control measures.

- Monitor workloads, working environments and organisational change to minimise stress-related risks.
- Maintain regular contact with employees, including structured wellbeing discussions.
- Identify early signs of stress or mental ill health and take timely, supportive and appropriate action.
- Support employees in accessing internal and external support mechanisms (e.g. HR, Occupational Health).
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained while fulfilling their duty of care.
- Record, review and manage cases consistently and in line with Council procedures.

4.3 Employees (including Agency and Casual Workers)

All employees, including agency and casual workers, have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and wellbeing and that of others. They will:

- Engage positively with this policy and contribute to a supportive and respectful working environment.
- Raise concerns relating to stress, mental health or workload at an early stage with their manager or appropriate contact.
- Co-operate with risk assessments, support plans and any reasonable adjustments implemented.
- Treat colleagues with dignity and respect and challenge stigma associated with mental ill health.
- Make appropriate use of the support services available.

4.4 People, Digital and Policy (including HR, Health & Safety, Occupational Health and Learning & Development)

The People, Digital and Policy function will provide professional advice, support and monitoring to ensure effective implementation of this policy. They will:

- Provide guidance to managers and employees on managing stress and mental health in the workplace.
- Support risk assessment processes, case management and the implementation of control measures.
- Deliver training, awareness programmes and supporting guidance materials.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy through data analysis, reporting and review processes.
- Promote a proactive, preventative and consistent approach across the organisation.

4.5 Elected Members

Elected Members have a responsibility to uphold the principles of this policy in their interactions with employees and the public. They will:

- Promote equality, dignity and respect in line with the Council's values.

- Support the creation of a positive working environment free from stigma and discrimination.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour where it is identified.
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct and associated policies when undertaking their duties.

4.6 Contractors, Volunteers and Visitors

Contractors, volunteers and visitors are expected to act in a manner that supports the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves and others. They will:

- Comply with relevant Council policies, procedures and site rules when undertaking activities.
- Take reasonable care of their own mental health and wellbeing and that of others who may be affected by their actions.
- Report any concerns relating to stress, wellbeing or unsafe practices to a Council representative.
- Co-operate with any reasonable instructions or control measures in place to manage health and safety risks.

5. Arrangements at Schools

Governing Bodies of all schools are encouraged to adopt this policy, with a recommendation that schools may wish to develop appropriate wording to include pupils or signpost to the appropriate policy or guidelines for pupils.

6. Supporting Documentation

Supporting information, guidance and documentation will be available to assist with the management and implementation of this policy.

7. Ensuring Equality of Treatment

This policy must be applied consistently to all employees irrespective of race, colour, ethnic or national origins (including citizenship), language, disability, religion, belief or non-belief, age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, parental or marital status, pregnancy or maternity.

If you have any equality and diversity concerns in relation to the application of this policy and procedure, please contact a member of the HR Team who will, if necessary, ensure the policy/procedure is reviewed accordingly.

If you require this information in an alternative format, please contact The People, Digital and Policy Division on CEHR@carmarthenshire.gov.uk.

8. Definitions

Mental Health – Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn and work well, and contribute to their community. It has intrinsic and instrumental value and is a basic human right. (*World Health Organisation, 2025*)

Stress is the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them (Health & Safety Executive). This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive if managed correctly, whilst stress which can be detrimental to health. These demands may arise from home or work, or both and can lead to both physical and psychological problems. Stress is now recognised nationally as a major cause of employee ill health and sickness absence and is often linked to musculoskeletal disorders.