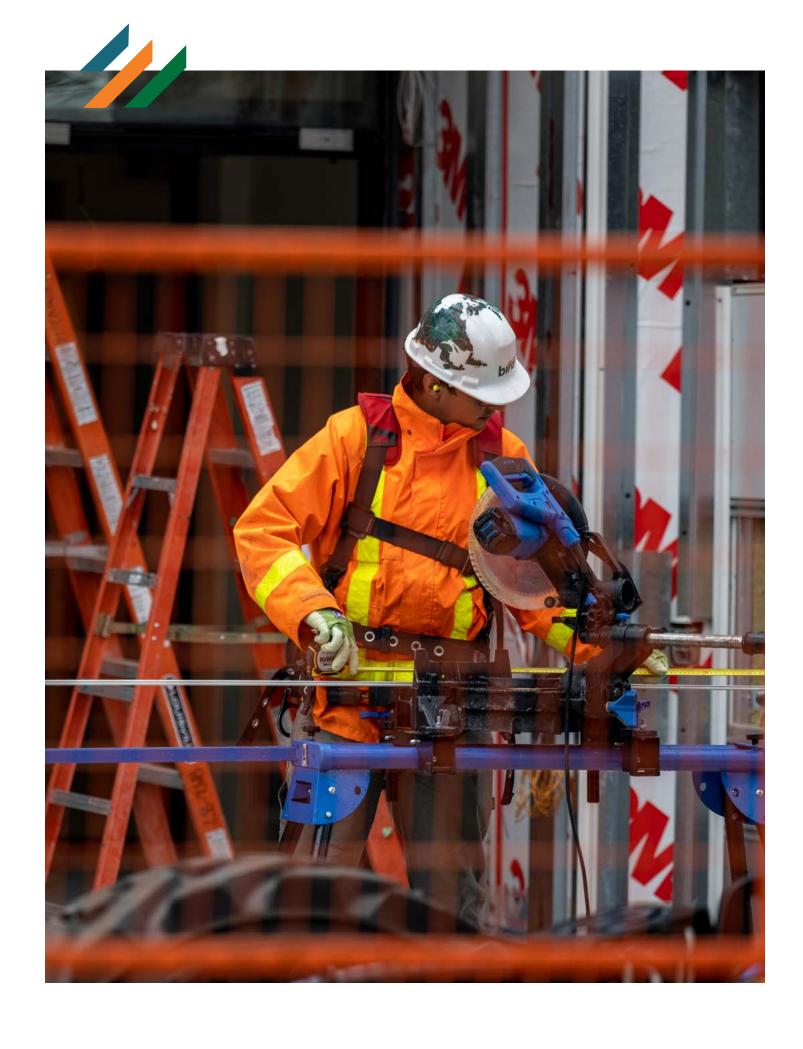![bird]

Mental Well-Being Playbook

Mental well-being is key to overall health, effecting how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices day-to-day. At Bird, mental well-being of our team members is priority.

This comprehensive playbook is designed to equip leaders and employees with practical strategies, resources, and insights to promote mental health awareness, resiliency, and maintaining positive work environments.

This playbook also aims to educate employees and leaders on recognizing signs, break down the stigma and provide a framework for open communication on mental well-being. By empowering employees with the knowledge and tools to navigate challenges related to mental health, our goal is to create a workplace where individuals feel valued, supported, and able to perform at their best.

Through a combination of content and actionable steps, this playbook:

WILL	WILL NOT
1 Help you recognize when someone is suffering in the workplace	1 Act as therapy or clinical expertise
2 Support understanding through empathetic listening tools	2 Help with diagnosis of any kind
3 Encourage proactive mental health management	
4 Promote a positive, psychologically healthy workplace culture	
5 Improve access to quality mental health benefits and treatment options	

Contents

Mental Well-Being Playbook
For Employees

Recognizing

Regular check-ins with mental well-being can help identify and address potential concerns early on, preventing them from escalating.

Self-check

Healthy
- "Am I doing OK?"
- Use simple coping tools: walk, talk to friends, music
- Limit news and media

Reacting
- "What has changed?"
- Get good sleep and eat well
- Seek support from others

Injured
- "How long have I been feeling this way?"
- Time to get professional help

Illness
- "I need help!"
- Get help now
- Call a crisis line

Mental Health Continuum Model

Healthy	Reacting	Injured	Illness
• Normal fluctuations in mood, calm, takes things in stride	• Nervousness, irritability, impatience, sadness, feeling overwhelmed	• Anxiety, anger, pervasive sadness, hopelessness	• Excessive anxiety, easily angered, depressed mood, suicidal thoughts
• Normal sleep patterns, few sleep difficulties	• Trouble sleeping, intrusive thoughts, nightmares	• Restless or disturbed sleep, recurring images or nightmares	• Unable to fall or stay asleep, sleeping too much or too little
• Physically well, good energy level	• Tired/low energy, muscle tension, headaches	• Increased fatigue, aches and pains	• Exhaustion, physical illness
• Consistent performance	• Procrastination	• Poor performance and concentration or workaholic, presenteeism	• Unable to perform duties/ control behavior/ concentrate, overt subordination, absenteeism
• Sense of humour, in control mentally	• Displaced sarcasm, forgetfulness	• Negative attitude	• Isolation, avoiding social events, not going out or answering the phone
• Physically active and socially active	• Decreased physical and social activity	• Social avoidance or withdrawal	• Alcohol/gambling addition, other addictions
• Limited or no gambling/ alcohol use	• Regular but controlled gambling/ alcohol use	• Increased gambling/ alcohol use	

Actions to take at each phase of the continuum

• Focus on task at hand	• Recognize limits	• Identify and understand own signs of distress	• Seek consultation as needed
• Break problems into manageable chunks	• Identify and minimize stressors	• Seek social support and talk with someone instead of withdrawing	• Follow health care provider recommendations
• Identify and nurture support systems	• Engage in healthy coping strategies	• Seek help	• Regain physical and mental well-being
• Maintain healthy lifestyle	• Get adequate food, rest, and exercise		

Mental Well-Being Continuum Tool Self-Check: https://openingminds.org/continuum-self-check/

Mental Well-Being Playbook
For Employees

Addressing

The following four strategies can help you enhance your mental well-being: Smart Goal setting, visualization, positive self-talk, and diaphragmatic breathing. These techniques not only foster resilience but also contribute to a positive mindset, supporting your overall mental well-being journey.

Smart Goal Setting	• Specific: Your behaviour • Measureable: See progress • Attainable: Challenging and realistic • Relevant: Want it or need it • Time-bound: Set finish time
Visualization	• Be calm and relaxed • Use all senses • See positive mental images • Keep it simple • Use movement
Positive Self Talk	• Become aware of self-talk • Stop the negative messages • Use Positive affirmation statements • Practice thought stopping: "I can do this." "I am trained and ready." "I will focus on what I can do."
Diaphragmatic Breathing	Rule of 4: • Inhale to count of 4 • Exhale for count of 4 • Practice for 4 minutes • Breathe into the diaphragm

Support And Resources

If you are concerned with your well-being or the well-being of others, reach out to:

- Family and friends
- Colleagues, managers, HSE team member, or People & Culture (human resources or labour resources)
- Employee and family assistance program (EFAP) providers
- Family doctor and other healthcare providers
- Community resources (link to national resources handout)
- Insured or private services, including psychologists and mental health professionals

Additional Resources

- Self-directed courses and apps: BounceBack, Workshop Description
- Free online training: Being a Mindful Employee: An Orientation to Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace: https://www.ccohs.ca/products/courses/mindful_employee/
- Suicide Crisis Helpline (text or call 9-8-8): https://988.ca/

For Leaders

Recognizing

As a leader, your ability to recognize, address, and support your team's mental well-being is essential for creating a supportive and successful work environment. Keep an eye out for early warning signs—they can differ from person to person. Also, keep in mind that your well-being plays a key role in supporting your team effectively. Changes in behavior, mood, and performance over time are signals worth paying attention to.

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Early Warning Signs

1 Changes in Workplace Performance

- Decline in productivity
- Frequent errors or mistakes
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Increased absenteeism or tardiness

2 Shifts in Behaviour

- Withdrawal from team activities
- Unexplained mood swings
- Increased irritability, frustration, or anger
- Noticeable changes in personal hygiene or appearance

3 Communication Patterns

- Decreased communication with colleagues
- Difficulty expressing thoughts or ideas clearly
- Heightened defensiveness or sensitivity to feedback

4 Physical Symptoms

- Unexplained aches, pains, or physical complaints
- Changes in appetite, weight loss, or gain
- Fatigue or difficulty sleeping

5 Emotional Well-Being

- Expressions of feeling overwhelmed or hopeless
- Frequent expressions of self-doubt or worthlessness
- Increased anxiety, fear, or worry
- Tearfulness or unexplained crying

6 Social Isolation

- Avoidance of social interactions
- Decreased participation in team events or activities
- Spending an unusual amount of time alone

7 Work Relationships

- Strained relationships with colleagues or superiors
- Increased conflicts or tension in the workplace
- Difficulty collaborating or working in a team

8 Changes in Work Habits

- Procrastination or missed deadlines
- Difficulty initiating or completing tasks
- Decreased motivation or enthusiasm for work
- Respect and leverage the unique expertise and experiences of others (ex. Working genius, work history)

9 Excessive Absenteeism

- Frequent unplanned absences from work
- Presenteeism (being physically present but not fully engaged or productive)

10 Expressed Personal Struggle

- Open discussions about personal challenges or stressors
- Seeking support for non-work-related concerns

Mental Well-Being Playbook
For Leaders

Addressing

It is important for leaders to approach warning signs with empathy, respect, and sensitivity. If concerns arise, encouraging open communication and offering support can help employees feel comfortable seeking help when needed. Providing access to mental health resources and maintaining confidentiality are also essential components of a supportive workplace.

Start the Conversation
Building trust and understanding with your team members is crucial, and one way to do this is through empathetic listening. This might involve:

Approach & Assess
- Invite the person to talk.
- If there's risk of suicide or harm, reach out to a first responder.

"I've noticed that...?"

"How are you doing? How long have you been feeling this way?"

Respond & Follow-up
- Observe your team and follow-up with them.
- Develop a plan.
- Walk the talk by modeling healthy coping strategies and seeking help if needed.

"How else can I support you?"

"How might a family member or friend help?"

Inform & Remind
- Respond with a supportive message that helps counter any stigma attached to mental health.
- Emphasize the importance of taking care of themselves.

"Given the situation, it's understandable that you're experiencing this. There are supports available that have helped

Encourage Professional Help
- Help them identify appropriate professional supports.

"What has helped in the past?"

"Would it help to call...?"

Acknowledge & Listen
- Acknowledge that something happened.
- Help the person speak freely by listening and asking questions without judging or telling the person what to do.

"These are challenging times. Whatever you're feeling is okay"

"It sounds like... is that right?"

Support And Resources

As a leader, your role involves listening without judgment, acknowledging your team member, and providing support. This may include making workplace adjustments, directing them to additional resources, and maintaining regular check-ins to assist them through the situation.

Healthy Conversations Guide

Actions	Sounds like
Approach the person Set a time when you are both available and able to listen to each other face-to-face, by phone or online. Ensure confidentiality.	"I would like to put aside some time for us to have an informal chat. When would be a good time for you?"
Share your observations Stick to the facts and remain objective. Use "I" statements to talk about the specific behaviour(s) you are worried about and show that you are concerned. This is a good way to say what you think/sense without blaming or criticizing.	I've noticed that…" "I feel…" "I'm worried about…" "You seem distracted/frustrated/ exhausted lately." "I sense something is bothering you."
Use open-ended questions/statements to encourage more conversation. These can help the person open up and help you understand the situation better. Ask them with a genuine interest in what's going on	"What changes have you noticed in yourself lately?" "What do you feel comfortable sharing?" "What's going on?" "How can I help you?"
Listen without judgement Stop what you are doing and listen to what they are saying. Don't interrupt and let them say everything they need to.	Relaxed posture, eye contact, nodding "I see…yes…hmm" "Okay. I see."

Mental Well-Being Playbook
For Leaders

Actions	Sounds like
Keep calm and objective Be open to what the person has to say. If you feel yourself getting impatient or upset, take some deep breaths, or take a break.	Calm, even tone of voice "I need some time to think about this. Can we continue this conversation later?"
Acknowledge the person and try to understand it from their point of view (empathy) Recap what you've heard and acknowledge that you hear what they're saying/feeling.	"I'm hearing that…" Is that correct? "It's normal to feel…" "I understand that you are feeling…" "It sounds like you feel…"
Encourage them to find their own solutions if it's appropriate Help them figure out what options they have and what will make them feel better.	"What do you need right now?" "Is there anyone else you trust that you can talk to about this?" "What resources would help?"
Check in often Continue to check in with them to see how they are doing and let them know you are there to support them. Set a date to check back (within a week) to see how they are progressing and to work out a plan. Connect with the employee as planned to see how they are doing.	"I'm here for you if you need to talk." "Let's check back in with each other next week."
Take appropriate action(s) If the person is in distress and refuses help, offer to help them contact EAP or someone else they trust. If you think they might harm themselves or they express suicidal thoughts, get immediate help or call emergency services.	"I'm going to call for help." "Let's contact EAP/other service/ person together."

Resources

In some situations the person should seek external professional help and resources. Here are some resources:

Crisis/Suicide Prevention
- Hotline call or text 9-8-8 (link: https://988.ca/)
- Canadian Crisis Support: link to resource (https://cmha.ca/find-help/if-you-are-in-crisis/)

Substance Use
- Substance Use Professional programs - speak to HSE or P&C
- Canadian Resources: https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/get-help-with-substance-use.html

HSE Critical Incident Response Plan (CIRP)
- Critical Incident Response Plan 2024.pdf

Resource Support
- 13 Psychosocial Workplace Factors (Posters)

Additional Resources

If you need immediate support, several crisis lines are available in Canada:

- Call 1-888-668-6810 or text WELLNESS to 686868 for youth
- Call 1-866-585-0445 or text WELLNESS to 741741 for adults
- For Quebec residents: Call 1-866-APPELLE (277-3553) (or text 535353, 24-7)
- Kids Help Phone: Call 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868
- Hope for Wellness Helpline for Indigenous peoples: Call 1-855-242-3310 (24-7)
- Trans Lifeline: Call 1-877-330-6366
- National and Regional Suicide / Risk Intervention Resources for Canadians
- Suicide Crisis Helpline 9-8-8 (https://988.ca/)
- Use Support (contact HSE or P&C to explore support from SureHire, CannAmm or another provider)
- Government Mental Health Support Across Canada

Mental Well-Being Playbook
Additional Resources

Reference Guide - Safer Language

Combating stigma related to mental concerns, suicide, and substance use starts with how we use language — something that continuously evolves. Everyone can be a champion against stigma when advocating the use of accurate and respectful language. That is why we must all be aware of any outdated language being used in the media and around us every day. So, as you communicate with others, be mindful of the impact of your language.

Stigmatizing	Respectful
It drives me **crazy**	It **bothers/annoys/frustrates** me
This is **nuts**	This is **interesting/strange/ peculiar/funny**
This individual suffers from depression	They **live with/are experiencing** depression
Mentally ill or **insane** person	Persons **living with mental health concerns**
Committed suicide, **successful** suicide	**Died** by suicide
Failed or **unsuccessful** suicide attempt	**Attempted** suicide
Substance **abuse**	Substance **use** or **substance use disorder**
Everyone who is a **junkie**	Everyone who **uses substances**
They used to be an **addict**	They are in **recovery**

Glossary & Key Definitions

Crisis Intervention
Crisis intervention refers to immediate and focused assistance provided to individuals experiencing acute emotional or psychological distress. It aims to stabilize the individual and connect them with appropriate resources and support.

Critical Incident
Traumatic accident at a Bird site resulting in serious personal injury to, or the death of, one or more Bird employees or other persons; or

A significant event resulting in property damage or potential environmental impact of enough severity to merit the immediate marshalling and intervention of all necessary Bird District and Corporate resources to mitigate further harm or risk to our people, the company, or the public.

May also include any egregious act of discrimination or harassment.

Mental Health
Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It involves the individual's ability to handle stress, relate to others, and make decisions. Mental health influences how people think, feel, and act and is vital at every stage of life.

Mental Illness
Mental illness refers to a wide range of conditions that affect an individual's thinking, feeling, mood, or behavior. These conditions may vary in severity and can impact a person's daily life, relationships, and ability to function effectively.

Psychological Well-Being
Psychological well-being encompasses various aspects of mental health, including positive emotions, life satisfaction, personal growth, and the ability to cope with stress. It reflects an individual's overall mental health and happiness.

Resilience
Resilience is the ability to adapt and bounce back from adversity, trauma, or stress. In the mental health context, resilience is crucial for individuals to maintain positive mental well-being despite facing challenges.

Stigma
Stigma is a mark of disgrace or shame associated with a particular condition, quality, or person. In the context of mental health, stigma often involves negative attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes that contribute to discrimination and hinder individuals from seeking help or disclosing their mental health challenges.

The Mental Well-Being Continuum

Bird is working to shift the perception that mental health concerns only needs to be addressed at times of crisis, and to increase the understanding that we're all on a mental well-being continuum that's constantly changing. Part of being human is to experience the ebb and flow of your mental well-being. Some of us are thriving, others are experiencing struggles or burnout and still others are in distress.

The workplace can support employees at every stage of that continuum by:

- Protecting the mental well-being of employees who are thriving by creating an environment that minimizes exposure to unnecessary stressors.
- Making sure managers are equipped to ask the right questions and provide support and referrals for employees who are newly experiencing mental well-being challenges.
- Offering appropriate benefits for individuals and their family members who have greater or prolonged mental well-being needs, including access to high-quality benefits and reasonable accommodations.
- Connecting employees in crisis to immediate care and treatment.

Top Mental Health Concerns

Mental health is a complex and multifaceted aspect of our well-being, influencing various aspects of our daily lives. Below are some of the top mental health concerns that affect individuals.

Addiction/Substance Use
Refers to the problematic & harmful use of a substance or of problem gambling, that can range from mild (e.g., feeling hungover, being late for work) to severe (e.g., homelessness, disease).

Anxiety
Everyone experiences symptoms of anxiety, but they are generally occasional and short-lived, and do not cause problems. When the cognitive, physical, and behavioural symptoms of anxiety are persistent and severe, and anxiety causes distress in a person's life to the point that it negatively affects his or her ability to work or study, socialize and manage daily tasks, it may be beyond the normal range.

Depression
Depression is much more than simple unhappiness. Clinical depression, sometimes called major depression, is a complex mood disorder caused by various factors, including genetic predisposition, personality, stress and brain chemistry. While it can suddenly go into remission, depression is not something that people can "get over" by their own effort.

Grief
Although grief and mourning are normal responses to loss, for some people they can persist, and may overlap with traumatic experiences and significant lasting mental health or substance use challenges.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
Is a natural emotional response to frightening or dangerous experiences that involve actual or threatened serious harm to oneself or others. However, for some people, the thoughts or memories of these events seriously affect their lives, long after any real danger has passed. These types of experiences are called "traumatic."

Stress
A certain amount of stress is a normal part of daily life. However, long-term stress can become harmful when prolonged and the risks for mental health problems and medical problems increase.

Suicide
Suicide is the act of intentionally causing one's own death. Suicide can be prevented. Call or text the Suicide Hotline (9-8-8) if you or someone you know is considering self-harm.

bird Values

WE PUT SAFETY FIRST

A healthy and safe work environment is non-negotiable. We build a culture of operational and psychological safety through engagement, learning and leadership.

WE LEAD WITH HONESTY

We speak and act with integrity, clarity and care so people can trust our word and our work. Being honest means we can deliver the best outcomes and consistent results.

WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER

Success is a team effort. Our inclusive workplace enables our combined expertise, humility and creativity to unlock our greater potential.

WE ARE DRIVEN TO DO GREAT WORK

We built our name on quality. We have a passion for excellence in our work and relationships that honours our businesses and our industry.

WE CREATE OPPORTUNITY

Rooted in a solid foundation, we adapt and grow to face the future. We are committed to elevating each other to chart the best path forward in an evolving world.