

Press Release
Department of Labor and Employment
Bureau of Working Conditions
27 May 2020

Building a resilient workplace

As the country is in a collective state of trauma from the COVID-19 pandemic, the DOLE recognizes the importance of all workplaces in providing emotional distress to buffer the effects of the pandemic and help workers tread the “new normal.”

Employers have a vital role in recognizing the paramount importance of mental health in their workforce especially at this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. The end goal is to have a workforce that is resilient - the ability to recover from or adjust easily to any difficulty or stressors.

The DTI and DOLE Interim Guidelines on Workplace Prevention and Control of COVID-19 stressed the importance of healthy lifestyle in achieving resiliency. This was related to Department Order No. 208, Series of 2020 (DO 208-20) or the Guidelines for the Implementation of Mental Health Workplace Policies and Programs for the Private Sector. The primary objective of which is to guide employers and workers in the private sector for its effective implementation of mental health policies and programs that is in accordance with existing laws such as Republic Act No. 11036 (Mental Health Act) and Republic Act No. 11313 (Safe Spaces Act of 2019), among others.

DO 208-20 provided the following recommendations that shall help promote and enhance workers’ well-being to attain healthy and productive lives:

- (a) Provide psychosocial support in disaster management of extreme life events;
- (b) Increase workers awareness on mental health and other common conditions like depression, anxiety and substance abuse including alcohol;
- (c) Promote healthy lifestyle and work-life balance;
- (d) Identify and manage work-related stress and stressors;
- (e) Management effectively changes in work organization and utilization of human resources systems (e.g., addressing burnout, review of workload);
- (f) Establish mental health programs to support workers (e.g., recreational activities);
- (g) Develop a program for worker’s achievements and efforts recognition;
- (h) Conduct capacity building of managers and human resource personnel in identifying and managing workers with mental health problem; and
- (i) Other programs and activities as may be recommended by the company’s Occupational Safety and Health committee as deemed necessary to promote and sustain the well-being of its workforce.

In view of the pandemic, the inclusion of workplace mental health program in the company's COVID-19 Mitigation Plan will likely result to a strong influence in improving the holistic health and well-being of its workers amidst this pandemic.

-MASV-