



# Mindful Workplaces



## Outcome:

Implementing the Mindful Workplaces program will lead to reducing the stigma related to mental health in the workplace, help to reduce chronic and toxic stressors in the workplace, enhance equity through recognizing the needs of diverse groups and backgrounds, decrease substance misuse, and increase suicide prevention. The Mindful Workplaces program aims to deliver a proof-of-concept pilot program throughout Michigan that braids together workplace mental health awareness training, outreach in the workplace, and employer commitment to address the ever-growing mental health crisis and increased suicide rates that have become even more evident through the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Background

In 2022, **Governor Whitmer** provided a plan to expand Michigan's access to mental health and **tasked the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) with establishing a dedicated workgroup to focus on mental health, trauma, and resiliency in the workplace** which released the Workplace Mental Health Report. In Fall 2022, the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General released the Framework for Workplace Mental Health & Well-being encouraging workplaces to promote and become engines of mental health and well-being.

Based on the findings reported by LEO and the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General, mental health in the workplace is no longer a nice-to-have but has become a must-have.

## PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENTS:

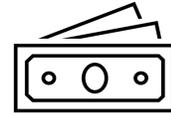
- Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW)
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- Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council
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- Michigan Manufacturers Association (MMA)
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- National Council for Mental Wellbeing
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- Small Business Association of Michigan
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- University of Michigan, Eisenberg Family Depression Center
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- Michigan State University
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- Michigan AFLO-CIO

## Five Steps to Building a Resilient Workplace:

- *Assess Your Workplace and Culture.*
- *Consider Workplace Policies, Practices and Procedures*
- *Recommit to Employee Assistance Programs (EAPS)*
- *Develop Ways to Engage and Empower Employees*
- *Consider Adding Mental Health to Joint Employer/Employee Safety Committees*

## Objectives

1. **Promote awareness** and understanding of mental health issues among workforce, **reduce stigma** creating a supportive, nonjudgmental environment, **provide resources** offering access to mental health resources such as counseling, EAPs and online mental health platforms.
2. **Policy creation & implementation** prioritizing mental health, flexible work arrangements, mental health days and guidelines for managing stress and workload, **Training & Support** equipping management with skills and knowledge to recognize signs of mental distress, supportive conversations and effectively manage mental health issues within their teams (Mental Health First Aid Certification).
3. **Encourage self-care** such as mindfulness, exercise and stress management techniques, **foster a positive work environment** cultivating a workplace culture that values kindness, empathy and inclusivity, promote **life-work balance**.



### IGNORING IS EXPENSIVE

The Chicago Resiliency Network found a **\$4 return for each dollar invested** in mental health treatment. <sup>1</sup>

## Audience

From Michigan's labor force population of 5,045,000, the Mindful Workplaces program will target small businesses with a workforce of 20-499 employees. **Program outreach is scalable and anticipate a reach of 6,000 employees and 80-100 employers for each consultant** after 5 years.

**1.5 million households are below the Alice threshold.** The proposed service area will have great focus on **small businesses located in the Geographically Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (GDBE)** as defined in Executive Directive 2019-8 - Michigan based business located in low-income communities and underutilized business areas. The target audience for the Mindful Workplaces initiative includes employees at all levels who seek a holistic approach to well-being. Employers play a pivotal role in fostering workplace mental health by implementing policies that promote a supportive environment.

## Staffing and Partnerships:

The Mindful Workplaces program proposal includes developing and implementing internal LEO consultative resources focused on organizational psychology and development to enhance whole worker wellbeing in workplaces. Further, we have strong commitments from external providers to develop and provide resources for workplaces in specific areas of specialty.

The program proposal has strong support from business, labor, and other partners which includes promoting, working to implement, and ensuring employer/employee engagement with the program.

Among many outcomes, we anticipate changing how we work to ensure maximum wellness and eliminate policies or practices that may be negatively impacting mental health. This may include the way certain workplaces operate to focus on the chronic stress, bullying, harassment, or other characteristics that may be causing harm.

Through our expert partners, we will also ensure individual behavioral health supports and training both inside and outside of the workplace including creating awareness and understanding of how chronically stressful situations such as poverty, racism, adverse childhood experiences, and more may impact people over long term and how to accommodate wellbeing for all. This will include resources and support for substance misuse prevention, mental health support services, recovery friendly workplaces, and suicide prevention trainings.

**Employers who invest in their employees' mental health** and safety see a **significant return on investment** including **improved employee satisfaction, increased productivity** and **reduced absenteeism and turnover**.

1: <http://www.corpcoalition.org/chicago-resiliency-network#CRN-First-Section>