

PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARD MANAGEMENT

Leader Quick Guide

for more detailed information, please visit [Total Worker Health & Wellbeing Support Guide](#)

Practical Overview for Leaders

Psychosocial hazards arise from **how work is designed, organised, and managed**.

They are **organisational risks** and should be addressed systematically using the same risk management approach applied to other workplace hazards.

Leaders are responsible for managing risks within their teams, with support from **Health & Safety and Human Resources** where appropriate.

When Psychosocial Risk Support May Be Helpful

Support may be appropriate when **multiple indicators suggest a potential psychosocial risk** within a team or work environment.

Indicators may include:

- Staff Values Survey results
- Sick leave patterns
- Staff turnover data
- Complaints or formal concerns
- Staff meeting feedback or minutes
- Themes emerging through HR or wellbeing discussions
- Other workplace indicators identified by leaders

These indicators help determine whether a **psychosocial risk assessment** may be appropriate.

Psychosocial Risk Management Process

PLAN – Assess & Identify

Understand the potential psychosocial hazard and how it may be affecting staff.

This may include:

- Reviewing available evidence (survey results, sick leave, turnover data etc.)
- Understanding the work context
- Worker participation sessions or facilitated discussions
- Identifying psychosocial hazards and potential impacts



DO – Identify Controls & Implement Actions

Once risks are understood, practical actions can be developed.

This may include:

- Completing a **Vault Psychosocial Risk Assessment**
- Identifying risk controls or corrective actions
- Supporting leaders to implement workplace changes
- Focusing on improvements to **work design, systems, and leadership practices**
- Providing **individual support where harm has occurred**

CHECK – Review & Monitor

Evaluate whether actions are improving the situation.

This may include:

- Reviewing team feedback
- Monitoring workplace indicators
- Ensuring corrective actions remain effective
- Conducting **pulse check surveys** where appropriate

ACT – Improve and Embed

Use what has been learned to strengthen workplace practices.

This may include:

- Adjusting controls if risks remain
- Embedding effective changes into team practices
- Updating risk assessments and actions in **Vault**
- Escalating broader organisational issues if required

Governance Responsibilities

Psychosocial hazard management is a **shared organisational responsibility**.

Leaders

- Manage work design, workload, and team culture
- Address concerns early

Human Resources

- Support employment processes
- Manage mediation and formal processes
- Advise on organisational change impacts

Health & Safety / Occupational Health

- Provide psychosocial risk assessment framework
- Support hazard identification
- Advise on prevention strategies

When to Use Vault

Vault may be appropriate when:

- There are ongoing health and safety concerns

- A psychosocial hazard may be affecting multiple people or the wider work environment
- Concerns have not improved despite local discussions

Many workplace concerns can initially be addressed through early conversations with leaders and/or HR.

Sensitive Event Reporting

Sensitive Event Reporting in Vault allows kaimahi to raise concerns about **serious** workplace issues that may affect health, safety, or wellbeing and a more confidential pathway is required. For more information please ask your DHRM, H&S advisor/officer and/or write to harassment@otago.ac.nz.

This may include concerns relating to:

- Bullying, harassment or discrimination
- Unsafe behaviour
- Serious workplace conflict
- Psychosocial hazards affecting multiple people or the wider work environment

Related Documents and Resources:

- [Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- [Total Worker Health & Wellbeing Support Guide](#)
- [Staff Wellbeing at Otago University](#)
- [EAP](#)
- Occupational Health Team, ohn@otago.ac.nz
- Human Resources, <https://www.otago.ac.nz/humanresources/contacts/staff>