

Work-Related Chronic Mental Stress Policy Consultation

Good mental health is key to having healthy and productive workplaces in Ontario. We want anyone suffering from work-related chronic mental stress to get the support and help they need to return to work.

The WSIB has developed a draft policy to support legislation (**Bill 127**) tabled by the Ontario government on April 27, 2017 as part of its 2017 Budget that would, if passed, allow compensation for work-related chronic mental stress.

To take part in this consultation, please review the materials linked below, and provide your feedback to the consultation_secretariat@wsib.on.ca by July 7, 2017.

Consultation materials:

1. [Background information](#) (PDF)
2. [Draft Chronic Mental Stress Policy](#) (PDF)
3. [Illustrative examples](#)
4. [FAQs](#)

We will carefully consider all the feedback we receive, and will post all submissions to the WSIB website after the consultation has ended.

Illustrative examples

Here are examples of what would and would not likely qualify for benefits under the proposed legislation and policy:

SITUATION	LIKELY ENTITLED TO BENEFITS?
 <p>A factory worker witnesses a horrific workplace accident.</p>	Yes



A factory worker is bullied by co-workers

Yes



A factory worker's shift schedule is changed by the employer.

No

FAQs

Q1. Why is the WSIB proposing a policy on work-related chronic mental stress?

A1. Good mental health is key to having healthy and productive workplaces in Ontario. We want anyone suffering from work-related chronic mental stress to get the support and help they need to return to work.

The proposed policy supports legislation tabled by the Ontario government as part of its 2017 Budget that would, if passed, allow compensation for work-related chronic mental stress.

Q2. What is work-related chronic mental stress?

A2. Work-related chronic mental stress is caused by a substantial work-related stressor or series of stressors that are not necessarily traumatic.

A work-related stressor would generally be considered substantial if it is excessive in intensity and/or duration compared with the normal pressures and tensions experienced by workers in similar circumstances.

For example, work-related chronic mental stress could be the result of being subjected to harassment or bullying such as humiliating jokes, demeaning conduct, or persistent criticism by a co-worker over several years.

Q3. Who would be entitled to support for work-related chronic mental stress under the proposed policy?

A3. If the legislation passes, three conditions need to be met for a person to be entitled to support:

- an appropriate regulated health professional, such as a family physician, provides a diagnosis based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)
- the person has experienced a substantial work-related stressor(s), like workplace bullying or harassment, and

- the work-related stressor(s) must have caused or significantly contributed to the chronic mental stress.

Q4. What's the difference between work-related chronic mental stress and traumatic mental stress?

A4. Work-related traumatic mental stress involves events that are generally accepted as traumatic, such as a criminal act or a horrific accident. In most cases a traumatic event will be sudden and unexpected.

For example, being held up at gunpoint at work (such as a gas station or store) could be the cause of work-related traumatic mental stress.

Q5. What would not be considered a cause of either work-related chronic mental stress or traumatic mental stress?

A5. There would be no entitlement for traumatic or chronic mental stress caused by an employer's decisions or actions that are part of the managerial function, such as

- terminations
- demotions
- transfers
- discipline
- changes in working hours, or
- changes in productivity expectations.

Q6. When would the proposed policy take effect?

A6. If the legislation passes as introduced, the policy will come into effect on January 1, 2018. This date is set out in the proposed legislation (Bill 127) which is posted on the website of the **Legislative Assembly of Ontario**.

Q7. When will people with chronic mental stress be eligible under the proposed legislation?

A7. People who first seek medical attention or are diagnosed (referred to as the "accident date") with a work-related chronic mental stress disorder on or after January 1, 2018 may be entitled to benefits, if the legislation passes. The policy reflects the requirements set out in the **proposed legislation**.

Q8. How can I provide comments on the proposed policy?

A8. You can submit feedback to the WSIB's Consultation Secretariat at **consultation_secretariat@wsib.on.ca**.

We're taking comments until July 7, 2017.

Q9. Will the WSIB publicly share the input it has received about the proposed policy?

A9. We will carefully consider all the feedback we receive, and will post all submissions to the WSIB website after the consultation has ended.

