

PUNCH

**Mental Health and Wellbeing
Policy 2025**

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1. Overview

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines work-related stress as *“the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.”*

At Punch, we take this seriously. We're committed to designing roles that don't place undue pressure on you, and we recognise that sometimes, additional pressures can arise — whether from workload, change, or other factors. We aim to support you in managing these pressures and will take all reasonable steps to reduce health and safety risks linked to stress to as low a level as reasonably practicable.

The HSE has identified six key factors that contribute to work-related stress: **demands, control, support, relationships, roles, and change**. These standards help us meet our duty of care and assess risks effectively.

This policy outlines how we support your mental health and wellbeing, how we manage stress-related risks, and what you can expect from us. It applies to all employees of Punch and may be updated to reflect changes in legislation or best practice. It does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services, and we may amend it at any time.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy is designed to support you if you're at risk of, or experiencing, stress at work. It outlines the process for identifying and managing work-related stress and the support available to you.

It applies to all employees of Punch, regardless of role or location.

3. The Procedure

Line Managers have a responsibility for health and safety in the workplace, which includes carrying out annual risk assessments for their teams. If you or your manager believe that additional pressures are affecting your wellbeing, you should speak to your HR Representative. They'll support you in carrying out further assessments and identifying any actions needed.

These discussions and assessments may include:

- Seeking your views to understand if stress is a concern.
- Reviewing job descriptions to identify tasks or roles that may contribute to stress.
- Identifying who may be affected and evaluating the risks.
- Recording significant findings and planning actions to reduce risks.
- Considering changes to working procedures, communication, training, or equipment.
- Consulting with you on any proposed changes.
- Providing support such as counselling, special leave, or back-to-work assistance.
- Investigating any reports of stress and identifying root causes.
- Ensuring managers and employees are trained to recognise signs of stress.
- Promoting a culture where talking about stress is encouraged and not seen as a weakness.
- Reviewing risk assessments annually or when significant changes occur.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of any actions taken.

If you're feeling overwhelmed or under pressure, please speak up. We're here to help.

4. Responsibilities of the Line Manager

As a Line Manager, you're expected to be involved from the start of any wellbeing concern, through reviews, and until resolution.

You should:

- Carry out annual risk assessments for your team.
- Instigate further assessments if an employee shows signs of stress.
- Work with employees to identify and manage sources of pressure.
- Ensure risks are assessed and reduced through safe systems of work, training, and support.
- Investigate any reports of stress and provide appropriate support.
- Encourage open conversations and create a safe space for your team.
- Promote wellbeing and lead by example.

You're not expected to have all the answers, but your role in supporting your team is vital.

5. Responsibilities of the Employee

You also have a role to play in maintaining a healthy workplace. You should:

- Make proper use of any equipment or systems provided for your safety.
- Inform your Line Manager (or another suitable person) if you're experiencing excessive pressure or stress.
- Follow agreed systems of work designed to keep you safe.
- Engage in wellbeing initiatives and take care of your own mental health.

We encourage you to speak up early — the sooner we know, the sooner we can help.

6. Where to find additional support

- Support is available through:
- Your Line Manager or HR Representative.
- Our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) – confidential 24/7 support.
- Mental Health First Aiders within the business.
- Internal wellbeing resources and campaigns.
- External organisations such as Mind, Samaritans, or NHS services.
- If you're unsure where to start, just ask — we'll help you find the right support.
- External organisations such as Mind, Samaritans, or NHS services.

If you're unsure where to start, speak to your manager or HR – we'll help you find the right support.