

# Return to the Workplace – A Toolkit for Heading Back to Work

written by vickyp | January 19, 2021



Return to the workplace: A psychological toolkit for heading back to work is a guide to support the mental health of individuals as they plan safe transitions back into their workplaces and to help employers as they develop policies and procedures for supporting staff returning to the workplace.

This toolkit is part of an effort to support the mental health needs of Ontarians and promotes principles of positive mental health and well-being while encouraging the use of additional supports. It has been reviewed and informed by diverse perspectives, including clinical leaders from the mental health and addictions community across Ontario.

This toolkit aims to serve employees and employers across a variety of sectors. Readers are encouraged to use this as a guide to understanding how their mental health and the mental health of their colleagues has been affected by the pandemic and explore strategies to support themselves and others as the transition to the workplace occurs.

This toolkit aims to take a meaningful approach in offering guidance on how to support mental health concerns with respect to the pandemic for variety of organizations. The suggestions provided are meant to enhance the supports available to individuals during this challenging transition. The toolkit is not meant to be used in place of a mental health professional, but rather to provide psychoeducation on mental health concerns. Readers are encouraged to seek additional supports as they self-identify their needs.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

As the economy re-opens and workplaces begin to consider what this means for them and their employees, anxiety about returning to our previous ways of working and engaging with others is natural and expected. In response, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Ontario, in partnership with Mental Health Works and BounceBack Ontario, created this toolkit to support employees currently working from home and struggling with thoughts about returning to the workplace. For employers, this toolkit asks them to consider the different elements that need to be addressed as part of return-to-work planning.

This toolkit contains information about the common symptoms individuals may experience as they think about returning to their workplace and guides readers through coping strategies. Several examples are provided throughout, and additional

resources are hyperlinked where possible. The toolkit also provides employers with guidelines that may help them take their employees' mental health into consideration as they plan for a return to the workplace. Readers of this toolkit are encouraged to read both the employee and employer sections to fully understand the steps needed to create a psychologically safe return to the workplace...

Source: CMHA Ontario