

# Coronavirus (COVID-19) and mental health at work

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, you may be working from home, leaving your home to go to work or on furlough.

In any of these situations, you may find it hard to look after your mental health and wellbeing. For example, you may be working longer hours, be under pressure, have childcare responsibilities or find it difficult to cope with minimal social contact.

There is no right or wrong way to feel in your situation. But some common feelings may include stress or anxiety.

If you already have a mental health problem, it's particularly important to talk to your manager about how you're feeling. Your manager may be able to give you extra support.

To help support your wellbeing you can:

- stay in contact with people – talk to colleagues or friends about how you're feeling
- have a routine so you plan in advance what you'll be doing each day
- keep active and exercise
- make time for activities you enjoy
- reflect on what helps you feel more positive and what does not

## 1. Working from home

Working from home can be an isolating and challenging time, particularly as you may need to adjust to this new way of working.

You might find it helpful to keep in touch with other people at work. You may want to think of ways you can keep social contact, for example by having coffee breaks or doing online social activities to talk about things outside of work.

### **Talk to your manager**

It's a good idea to talk to your manager about your situation and how you're doing. They can help you work through problems, for example with managing your workload or working around childcare responsibilities.

You and your manager may want to discuss changing your working pattern to suit your situation. For example, your manager may change your start and finish time.

You can also let your manager know what kind of contact you'd like. For example, talking over the phone or through video meetings or having online social events with your team.

## If you're going to work outside of your home

If you have any concerns around how health and safety at work may affect your mental health and wellbeing, you should raise them with your manager. They should listen to your concerns and be supportive.

[Find out more about working safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.](#)

## Support available through work

You can check with your employer what support is available if you have concerns about your mental health.

Employers have a 'duty of care'. This means they must do all they reasonably can to support your health, safety and wellbeing.

For example, some workplaces offer counselling. If it's offered it'll usually be through a scheme known as an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

Your workplace might also:

- have a mental health 'champion' – someone at work who leads on changing attitudes to mental health
- offer support in other ways, such as a mental health support group, or mental health network with other businesses or organisations

[Find out more about the law and mental health.](#)