

The Importance of Mental Health Days

Physical, mental, emotional, and social work demands can hurt the health and well-being of any employee over time. Mental health days help reduce the potentially serious consequences of stress and burnout by providing time off for employees to relax and recharge.

 BURNOUT

65%

of employees say that if employers encouraged time off and offered mental health days, it would **help with their experience of burnout.**¹

 HAPPINESS

68%

Employees who reported that their company encourages vacation (68%) **are much happier** with their jobs than those who work at places where either vacation is discouraged or managers are ambivalent about taking time off (42%).²

 PRODUCTIVITY

84%

of managers reported employees' **increased productivity** after a break.³

 TURNOVER

80%

of employees would consider quitting their current position for a job that focused more on employee's mental health.⁴

What are Mental Health Days?

Sometimes called wellness days, mental health days provide a true break from the demands of work that can contribute to burnout and mental and physical illness. They can be approved on an individual, group/team, or organization-wide basis.

Company or team-wide mental health days are sponsored by leaders for more than one individual. These group-wide events allow an employee to take time off without pressure to "catch up" on the work they missed while they were gone.



Sources:

1. <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20210922005693/en/Burnout-Could-Be-New-Contagion>
2. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/workers-taking-more-vacation.aspx>
3. <https://blog.totalbrain.com/do-work-sponsored-mental-health-days-make-an-impact>
4. <https://blog.totalbrain.com/do-work-sponsored-mental-health-days-make-an-impact>

Offering Mental Health Days at Your Workplace

Considerations, FAQs, and Best Practices:

How and when should you allow time off for mental health days?

- Provide employees with the option to take mental health days with no questions asked.
- If you're concerned an employee is taking advantage of the policy, evaluate their performance first and meet separately about performance concerns.

What are some uses of mental health days to avoid?

- Mental health days are not designed to be time that an employee can take off for any reason, like attending a big game or a concert. There should be an intentional reason that the employee takes mental health days.
- Mental health days should not be used as a reason to exit an employee or to press an employee for personal information.

Should mental health days be paid or unpaid?

- Paid mental health days are highly recommended.
- The decision has likely implications for an employee's potential willingness to use the policy. Employees who take an income hit from taking a mental health day may be less inclined to take appropriate and needed time off.

How should you support an employee upon return?

- Check-in while respecting the employee's privacy.
- Ask what additional support the employee might need.

Please reach out to Modern Health if you have any questions on how to offer mental health days at your workplace.