

Indications a Mental or Behavioral Health Referral May be Needed

If you suspect a mental illness or behavioral health problem including substance abuse, a referral can help the employee recover. You may notice changes in their ability to function, including impaired functioning evinced by the following signs:

- Self-care (grooming, working, leisure)
- Professional and personal attitude and work declines
- Stuck (not improving)
- Frequent relationship drama or anger



Signs of Depression

- **Difficulty concentrating**
- **Feeling fidgety or restless**
- **Feeling down, depressed, irritable, anger, or hopeless**
- **Have little interest in doing things; social withdrawal**
- **Not feeling pleasure** from things that are usually enjoyable
- **Sleep disturbances:** going or staying asleep; sleeping too much
- **Diet:** Poor appetite, weight loss, or overeating
- **Moving or speaking slowly; lack of attention to personal hygiene**
- **Disappointment: Feeling bad about themselves** or that they let themselves or their family down
- **Suicidal thoughts or thoughts of self-harm.**
- **Fatigue: feeling tired, or having little energy**

Signs of Anxiety

- **Racing heart; flushed**
- **Feeling on edge, restless**
- **Sleep Disturbances**
- **Racing mind** full of thoughts; **blank mind**
- **Persistent worrying** ideas that seem “silly or crazy”
- A constant need to double-check things are right or clean
- **Worries that increase out of proportion** to the problem as they think about them
- **Shaking, muscle tension, dizziness, chills**
- Tight feeling in the chest or chest pains
- Struggling to breathe, breathing too fast

Referrals are helpful behavior. The sooner treatment is sought, the less the person will suffer. Also, troubles tend to compound when mental health or behavioral health is ignored. The symptoms can cause secondary problems including insomnia, divorce, and substance abuse (to deal with the uncomfortable feelings). For example, insomnia worsens mental health problems which then makes the insomnia worse leading to downward spirals in performance and relationships. There are brief Cognitive Behavioral Therapies that are very effective with insomnia, which is generally the result of unhealthy habits of thought.

Handout accompanying Supervisor Support for CHW Mental Health

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