

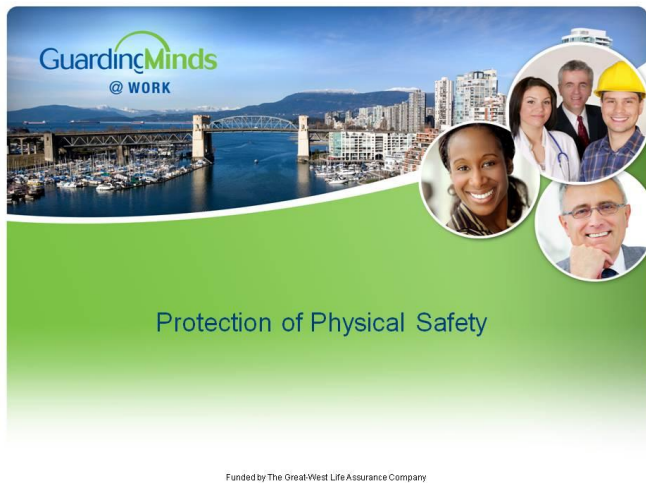
On the Agenda



Facilitator's Guide

Protection of Physical Safety

Protection of Physical Safety



Slide # 1

For this slide, you want to ensure that you have already introduced:

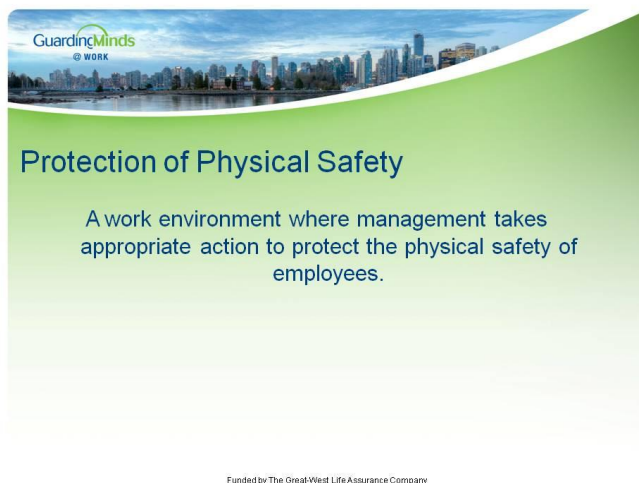
- yourself
- your role within the organization, if unknown to the group
- why you are engaging the group in this discussion
- the importance of addressing psychological health and safety in your organization

The importance of addressing psychological health and safety in your organization can be highlighted by stating the following:

1. Depression will rank second only to heart disease as the leading cause of disability worldwide by the year 2020, which can impact the workplace in areas such as bottom-line production and team work.
2. There are current and emerging legal requirements in Canada for the protection of employee psychological health and safety and the promotion of civility and respect at work.
3. Organizations that value and improve the health of the workplace can improve their organization profile. An improved profile can result in better recruitment and retention rates, enhancing the potential for growth. We want you and potential employees to know that we value your contribution to the organization, that you do good work and that we want to help you to continue to be successful at work.

After these statements, you might say: “The focus of this session is to discuss protection of physical safety in the workplace”.

On the Agenda



Slide # 2

This slide provides a definition of protection of physical safety. We recommend starting with the definition provided by *Guarding Minds @ Work*[™]: “Protection of physical safety occurs in a work environment where management takes appropriate action to protect the physical safety of employees.” Following the definition, open the floor for questions about the definition. An idea to get employees to start participating in your presentation is to ask a volunteer in the audience to read the slide. You can also offer additional information such as:

1. How does protection of physical safety affect mental health?

Possible answer: Psychological health is our ability to think, feel and behave in a manner that allows us to perform effectively at work, at home and in our community. Psychological health and mental health are often used interchangeably.

2. Why is protection of physical safety important?

Possible answer: According to research, the more employees feel that they have protection of physical safety, the greater their job attachment, job satisfaction, job commitment and job performance. Plus, the greater the support, the stronger the likelihood that employees will seek and receive appropriate help for mental health issues, and return to work if they have an extended absence.

About PF13: Protection of Physical Safety

What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

What is PF13: Protection of Physical Safety?

GM@W defines PF13: Protection of Physical Safety as present in a work environment where management takes appropriate action to protect the physical safety of employees. Appropriate actions may include: policies to protect employees' physical safety; training in safety-related protocols; rapid and appropriate response to physical accidents or situations identified as risky; and clearly demonstrated concern for employees' physical safety.

Why is Protection of Physical Safety important?

Employees who perceive the workplace as protective of physical safety will feel more secure and engaged at work. Research has shown that when employees have higher levels of confidence in safety protection at work, they experience lower rates of psychological distress and mental health problems. The sense of physical safety protection is enhanced by: adequate training with regard to physical safety, trust that the employer minimizes physical hazards, confidence that the employer responds quickly and effectively to safety incidents, and the opportunity to have meaningful input into workplace policies and practices. The protection of physical safety is also an important bridge between traditional Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and the new area of Psychological Health and Safety. This factor is linked to the concept of "safety climate": "employees' perceptions of the importance of safety and how it is operationalized within the working environment"¹. Protection of Physical Safety is especially important in workplaces with high levels of safety-sensitivity.

Safety climate is consistent with, and part of, the larger culture or climate of the organization. Correspondingly, a psychologically safe climate is one where there is a shared and enduring belief in, and commitment to, the importance of promoting and protecting the physical and psychological safety of all involved by taking actions to identify and address risks. It involves the complex interaction between events in the workplace or organizational environment; management commitment and leadership; employee perceptions, thoughts and knowledge; and individual and organizational behaviours or practices. Safety culture is therefore dynamic and aspirational rather than fixed. As one author noted, "Like a state of grace, a safety culture is something that is striven for but rarely attained"².

What happens when employees' physical safety is not protected?

Workplaces that fail to protect physical safety are likely to be more dangerous. Also, workers who do not see the workplace as protecting physical safety will feel less secure and less engaged, and this will increase their vulnerability to psychological distress and potential mental health problems.

¹ Cooper, M.D., & Phillips, R.A. (2004). Exploratory analysis of the safety climate and safety behavior analysis. *Journal of Safety Research*, 35, 497-512.

² Reason, J. (1997). *Managing the risks of organizational accidents*. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate.

How can Protection of Physical Safety be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Protection of Physical Safety** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Protection of Physical Safety**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Protection of Physical Safety** can be enhanced.

Further information about Protection of Physical Safety:

- Clarke, S. (2010). An integrative model of safety climate: Linking psychological climate and work attitudes to individual safety outcomes using meta-analysis. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 83, 553-578. doi: 10.1348/096317909X452122
- Cooper, D. (1995). Measurement of safety climate: A component analysis. *Institute of Occupational Safety & Health Meeting*. Retrieved from http://www.behavioural-safety.com/articles/Measurement_of_safety_climate-a_component_analysis.pdf
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf
- Government of Alberta. (2011). *Best practices for the assessment and control of psychological hazards* (Vol. 5). Retrieved from <http://employment.alberta.ca/documents/bp013-bestpractices-volume5.pdf>
- Harvey, S., Kelloway, E.K., & Duncan-Leiper, L. (2003). Trust in management as a buffer of the relationships between overload and strain. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 8(4), 306-315. doi: 10.1037/1076-8998.8.4.306
- Health and Safety Executive. (2005). *A review of safety culture and safety climate literature for the development of the safety culture inspection toolkit*. Retrieved from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr367.pdf>
- Idris, M.A., Dollard, M.F., Coward, J., & Dormann, C. (2012). Psychosocial safety climate: Conceptual distinctiveness and effect on job demand and worker psychological health. *Safety Science*, 50, 19-28. doi: 10.1016/j.ssci.2011.06.005
- Rashid, M., & Zimring, C. (2008). A review of the empirical literature on the relationships between indoor environment and stress in health care and office settings: Problems and prospects of sharing evidence. *Environment and Behaviour*, 40(2), 151-190. doi: 10.1177/0013916507311550
- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2012). PF13: Protection of Physical Safety. In *Centre Resources by GM@W Factor and On the Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>
- World Health Organization. (1999). Adverse health effects of noise. In B. Berglund, T. Lindvall, & D. H. Schwela (Eds.), *Guidelines for community noise*. Retrieved from <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/1999/a68672.pdf>

The slide features a green background with a white curved top edge. At the top left, there is a logo for 'GuardingMinds @ WORK' with a green leaf-like icon. Below the logo is a photograph of a city skyline across a body of water. The main text is in a dark blue font. A bulleted list follows, and at the bottom, there is a small line of text: 'Funded by The Great-West Life Assurance Company'.

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What does protection of physical safety in the workplace look like?

Appropriate actions may include:


- Policy to protect workers' physical safety
- Training in safety-related protocols
- Rapid and appropriate response to physical accidents or situations identified as risky
- Clearly demonstrated concern for employees' physical safety

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Slide # 3

This slide details what protection of physical safety in the workplace might look like. Simply read the points on the slide. If you would like to expand on the information, we suggest elaborating on what a workplace without protection of physical safety may look like. You can suggest the following and why you don't want this for your group:

- Increased absenteeism and increased burden on those left to carry the load
- Strain
- Workplace conflict
- Turnover
- Greater risk of accidents, incidents and injuries



Our scores

Our scores from the Guarding Minds @ Work™ survey indicate that we have some room for improvement in this area of the workplace.

For example, some of the recommended suggestions are:

- Create a workplace environment where safety hazards can be discussed and reported without fear of reprisal
- Provide incentives and reinforcement for actions that promote physical safety

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Slide # 4

If your workplace completed the *Guarding Minds @ Work* (GM@W) Survey, you may wish to review the scores now. Let your employees know that there is always room for improvement, and it is also important to recognize and retain what is already working.

- Review the suggestions on the slide and let them know that putting psychological health on the agenda is an active step to increase workplace protection of physical safety.
- If your workplace has not undertaken the GM@W Review or Survey, ask the employees if they feel the suggestions on the slide would be helpful, and why or why not.

GM@W Suggested Responses

Please consult the *Selection of GM@W Suggested Actions* and *Selection of Effective Actions: Applying a Quality Framework* documents to help you select GM@W suggested actions to undertake for Protection of Physical Safety.

PF13: PROTECTION OF PHYSICAL SAFETY

OBJECTIVE: A work environment where management takes appropriate action to protect the physical safety of employees.

PF13: GM@W Survey Results (check rating, if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> SERIOUS CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> MINIMAL CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVE STRENGTHS
PF13: GM@W Organizational Review Results (check rating, if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> SERIOUS CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> MINIMAL CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVE STRENGTHS

Serious Concerns = 5 to 9 **Significant Concerns = 10 to 13** **Minimal Concerns* = 14 to 16** **Relative Strengths** = 17 to 20**

* Although this is a Minimal Concern, it is important to attend to it and review the GM@W Organizational Review Results and the GM@W Survey Results for any additional or individual-identified areas of concern.

** Although this is a Relative Strength, it is important to review the GM@W Organizational Review Results and the GM@W Survey Results for any additional or individual-identified areas of concern.

The list below contains actions that you can take to respond to actual or potential concerns related to **Protection of Physical Safety**. Many of these actions have been found to be effective in research studies, have been recommended as best practices, or have been found valuable in applied settings. Some have been informed by emerging case law and regulatory requirements. The actions are drawn from diverse industries and sectors, and not all may be applicable or feasible in your particular workplace. This list is not exhaustive, nor is it intended to be prescriptive. Rather, these are suggestions for possible courses of action.

If **Protection of Physical Safety** has been flagged as a **Relative Strength** in your workplace, it is important not to overlook this finding. You can do this by developing policies that protect this relative strength and engaging staff in discussions of how this strength can be enhanced by implementing the suggested actions below.

If **Protection of Physical Safety** has been flagged as an area of concern in your workplace, consider which of these actions might be appropriate. In making your decision, it can be helpful to keep the following six key quality dimensions in mind: Appropriateness, Acceptability, Accessibility, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Safety (see *Selection of Effective Actions: Applying a Quality Framework* for more information).

The actions below fall into four main categories: (1) norms, values and practices of the work environment; (2) training and development initiatives; (3) communication strategies and approaches; and (4) formal policies and programs. You may have already initiated some of the actions – but consider the others. You may also have other ideas for actions you could implement – there is a space for writing these down at the end of this document. **Remember, not every action that might enhance Protection of Physical Safety in your workplace is listed here. Implementing the following actions, however, will provide a strong foundation for building a psychologically healthy and safe workplace.**

Work Environment (Norms, Values & Practices)

- Review work-scheduling practices to ensure they do not impose undue risk of psychological harm
- Review and, if needed, revise job descriptions to include identification of physical hazards (with particular attention to those that may be hazardous to psychological health)
- Respond promptly and effectively to incidents, work-related illnesses and accidents
- Document all incidents and accidents, as well as responses
- Ensure that timely and effective supports are available following a critical incident (e.g., defusing, debriefing, Employee and Family Assistance Programs, psychological treatment)
- Provide additional supports and services for employees working in high-physical-risk positions and/or environments
- Ensure staff have sufficient opportunities and facilities for rest (particularly individuals working shifts or extended hours)

Training & Development

- Provide training on how to minimize exposure to, and impact of, physical hazards
- Train staff to understand how physical hazards can affect psychological health and safety
- Provide equipment to reduce the impact of physical risks on psychological health (e.g., proper lighting, noise reduction, panic alarms, ventilation)
- Train staff on the identification, reporting and investigation of physical hazards
- Provide employees with clear guidelines on the identification of physical hazards to encourage safe, timely and effective reporting
- Provide staff with the knowledge and skills needed to help cope with the psychological impact of incidents and accidents

Communication

- Ensure that health and safety programs and policies are clearly communicated to, and understood by, all staff, including new hires
- Make health and safety committee reports public and accessible to all staff (e.g., via posting on intranet, newsletter, staff room, bulletin boards)
- Communicate relevant provincial, territorial or federal legislative or regulatory changes in the area of health and safety to all staff
- Communicate organizational and industry safety policies to all staff

Formal Policies & Programs

- Maintain up-to-date protocols for monitoring, reporting and responding to physical hazards
- Include protection of employee physical safety in organizational vision and values
- Implement policies to protect and support employees who report physical risks

Additional resources have been created to help you take action, including: presentation slides and supporting materials (freely available at www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/ota) and a new resource - *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*, developed on behalf of the Mental Health Commission of Canada Workforce Advisory Committee, that is a practical tool designed to help employers develop implementation plans on the basis of GM@W findings (freely available at www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf).

We encourage you to review these resources for additional suggested actions.

Other Actions:

- _____

- _____

- _____

There won't be a perfect set of actions – often it's a matter of choosing the actions most likely to accomplish positive outcomes while generating the fewest potential problems.

Once you have selected one or more actions to undertake, enter them into the corresponding *GM@W Action Planning Worksheet*, pick your start date, identify who will be involved – your Action Team, and get started!



Activity

Review actions recommended by research or best practices

Choose the recommended actions that:

- Are most likely to be effective in providing protection of physical safety
- Are low cost or no cost in terms of both time and expense
- Will have a measurable benefit to the workplace as a whole

Slide # 5

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- Review the recommended actions in GM@W Suggested Responses document or choose those that you wish to share with the group as possibilities.
- Ask the employees to work in groups of three or more to review the suggested responses and discuss what each of these may mean for your workplace in regards to practicality, profit, cost and challenges.
- Ask that someone keep notes, and let them know that their group is to report back to the larger group in 15 minutes.
- Ask for a group to volunteer to start the report back and begin the discussion to choose which initiative(s) to begin with.
- Check out the Centre website at www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com for free resources related to protection of physical safety.



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Activity

Consider the first plan of action:
Choose or vote on the most valuable recommendation and develop a cost-benefit analysis for this team

Slide # 6

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- Ask the employees to vote on the most important recommendation that they heard from the previous exercise. Ballots, Post-it Notes, stickers or raised hands are all ideas that could be used for voting.
- If there is a discrepancy, see if you can narrow the options down to two and discuss the potential pros and cons of each option and then re-vote, or consider implementing more than one option at once if this would be practical.
- Develop a statement with the group about why the chosen recommendation is important to them; get to the underlying need that is being met.

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Activity

Create a plan to implement

Use the handout provided to:

- Describe the action
- Assign tasks to individuals on the team
- Create a start date
- Develop an indicator to determine if the action had the desired effect
- Create a date to evaluate

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Slide # 7

- Hand out the Action Planning Worksheet to each employee so he or she can follow along.
- Identify each step required to implement the chosen action(s).
- Review the steps and ask for volunteers to take on different actions. If individuals feel uncomfortable taking on an action by themselves, suggest working in pairs or groups.
- Set a follow-up date to review progress on the action items together, as well as an expected completion date.

GM@W Action Planning Worksheet

Name: _____

Position: _____ Date: ____/____/____

PF13: PROTECTION OF PHYSICAL SAFETY

OBJECTIVE: A work environment where management takes appropriate action to protect the physical safety of employees.

PF13 GM@W Survey Results

PF13 GM@W Survey Score: _____ (5 to 20)

Date administered: ____/____/____



PF13 GM@W Organizational Review Results

PF13 GM@W Organizational Review Score: _____ (5 to 20)

Date administered: ____/____/____



Serious Concerns = 5 to 9 Significant Concerns = 10 to 13 Minimal Concerns* = 14 to 16 Relative Strengths = 17 to 20**

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** Although this is a Relative Strength, it is important to review the GM@W Organizational Review Results and the GM@W Survey Results for any additional or individual-identified areas of concern.

	Selected Action(s) (What exactly are you planning to do?)	Starting Date (What is a realistic date to begin?)	End Date (Is the action ongoing or will it end? If so, when?)	Action Team (Who is involved? Be specific.)	Indicator(s) (What changes do you expect to result from this Action?)	Evaluation Date (When will you determine if the Action was successful?)
Action Priority 1:						
Action Priority 2: <i>(if applicable)</i>						
Action Priority 3: <i>(if applicable)</i>						



Slide # 8

For this slide, we suggest encouraging your employees to check out the *Workplace Strategies for Mental Health* website at www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com. The website features a number of employee-specific resources they can access for free:

- Self-assessment tools to check their current state of mental health
- Information about mental health, addiction and mental illness
- Approaches to mental wellness and coping with workplace stressors
- *Working Through It*, which is a video-based series of video clips by, and for, those struggling while at work, off work or returning to work