



# **Racial Harassment Forum Brighton & Hove**

## **RHF\***

### **Stress at work policy**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as ‘...the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them’. It highlights that stress is not an illness – it is a state. If stress becomes excessive and prolonged, mental and physical illness may develop.

The HSE make a distinction between stress and being under pressure. It states pressure can often improve performance and be a good thing.

#### **POLICY**

With pressure to perform and conflicting demands, many of us will experience stress at some point. Since stress is a human perception, what might be stressful for one person may not be for another. We are all different. We have different life experiences, different genes and different states of health and levels of coping skills.

Stress can arise in any job and we will take reasonable steps to identify and deal with stress. We make use of risk assessments, good management practices and staff involvement. Stress caused by factors outside of the workplace can also have a detrimental impact on individuals and the charity.

#### **MANAGING STRESS CAUSED BY PERSONAL FACTORS**

You are encouraged to speak to your manager when stress caused by home or personal factors impact on your work. We will take what steps we can to support you to manage or resolve the cause of stress.

This may involve agreement to flexible working, temporarily reducing workload or responsibilities. We may also agree to time off to attend doctors, counsellor or solicitor appointments and so on.

## **MANAGING STRESS CAUSED BY EMPLOYMENT**

Regular staff supervision, annual appraisal, team meetings and an 'open door' policy should provide the opportunity for staff and managers to discuss any concerns about stress. Our policies and procedures provide guidance on expectations to ensure good staff relations and clarity.

Talk to your line manager if you feel pressures building up in your job. This will enable your manager to discuss the causes of stress and to take steps to reduce levels of anxiety.

Your manager (in some situations an alternative person may be more appropriate) will meet with you to:

- identify the nature of the problem
- discuss the causes of stress
- discuss actions to reduce or manage the stress.

Your manager may need to make enquiries to decide what could help. A stress risk assessment helps to identify the causes. Your manager will agree an action plan with you and will organise a date on which to review the plan.

If these steps do not help reduce stress, then you should talk to your manager as soon as possible without waiting for the review date. Your manager will discuss what further steps could reduce levels of anxiety either on a temporary or permanent basis.

## **THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT IN PREVENTING AND MANAGING STRESS**

Your manager will meet with you from time to time to support you and give you feedback through one-to-one meetings. During these meetings they will discuss your workload, any challenges you are facing and explore what support you might need.

Your manager will try to spot signs of stress in you and offer support. However, they will not always be able to identify how you are feeling.

### **Your role in preventing and managing stress**

If you are feeling overwhelmed or anxious, please tell your manager who will try and help.

Remember that you can take some measures to look after yourself by:

- managing your annual leave to allow yourself to rest.

- if you are working at home, trying to separate your workspace or at least do not open up your email after hours.
- [following a healthy lifestyle](#).

For further information about stress and what to do about stress at work access:

- [HSE tools and templates](#)
- [NHS information](#) on recognising and dealing with stress.

Date to be reviewed: 01 October 2025