

Gallagher Bassett:

# OHS Checklist For Managing a Flexible Workforce



# CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to help your team navigate the new normal, with simple steps you can take to keep your people productive, healthy and safe.

## Keeping your people – and your business – safe

Workplace injury claims represent massive costs to businesses every year. With an increase in people working from home in response to Covid-19, the associated risks and costs have increased in 2020. With 18 years' experience, Gallagher Bassett's Injury Management team has a proven history of reducing injury costs and minimising productivity losses for Australian businesses. This Checklist, and our Ultimate WFH Toolkit for Employees, are based on learnings we've collated from claims spanning thousands of organisations worldwide.



**But first...**

### Who are we, and how we can help

As a powerful pre-claim service, Gallagher Bassett Injury Management provides the necessary expertise to manage the entire injury management cycle. Standing apart from the industry norm, we oversee all activities from the time of injury to managing and closing cases, including workers' compensation claims, public liability or independent non work-related injuries. Our team can help you achieve injury and cost claims savings through our diverse expertise across clinical, technical, financial and legislative areas. We're driven to reduce premiums and lost time injuries while enhancing your culture, employee engagement and productivity. To help your business be prepared, get in touch with us today to discuss how a pre-claims service can save your business time, money and stress long-term.

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# Checklist: Communication Ground Rules

## Communication is key

When meetings move from the boardroom to the living room, important social cues can be lost and misunderstandings rife. Simple ground rules help everyone manage expectations and mental health while enhancing productivity. Use the checklist below to support your people, teams and leaders as they navigate the remote working context, from managing their mental health to how they communicate with each other.

## For managers

- ▶ **Onboarding new starters:** Setting up strong communication, expectations and providing the right information from the start can ensure a positive 'first impression' experience for your new starters.

**DID YOU KNOW A GOOD ONBOARDING PROGRAM CAN REDUCE EARLY DEPARTURES (THE FIRST 12 MONTHS) BY 30%?**

- ▶ **Create an open-door management policy:** Let your team know your (virtual) door remains open. Initiate regular 1:1 catch-ups, and invite them to get in touch – clear guidance on communication preferences can overcome reservations about reaching out.
- ▶ **Set response expectations:** Decide what works for your team, and communicate your expectations clearly. Engage employees by making them a part of this process – their buy-in during planning will pay dividends in adherence. Set a meeting and invite the whole team to share their personal preferences (for example, one may prefer phone rather than email) and decide together how communication will be managed. Agree on how quickly you all expect to be responded to and what to do if an issue arises.

- ▶ **Set up a reporting framework to monitor workflow:** Create a system for remotely tracking deliverables and monitoring blockages. This could be as simple as an excel spreadsheet that notes dates and responsibilities; or integrated project management software. Understanding where blockages are – and their cause – can help the team to identify and resolve issues that would otherwise create frustrations, and delays in work.
- ▶ **The most important thing: Communicate!** Share your expectations and the processes you've put in place. Be clear that the business is learning through the transition – and if there's a problem, people can speak up without fear of reprisal. Explore avenues for anonymous feedback to give people a voice, such as using a free survey tool (like SurveyMonkey) that employees can use to register thoughts, ideas and concerns.

## For HR/WHS/OHS professionals

- ▶ **Pursue active learning:** Review the suggestions in this checklist to see if your organisation has any gaps in how your people, teams and managers are being supported. Covid-19 represents an extraordinary situation where businesses are learning as they go, so it's always a good idea to take stock, including learning from what worked and didn't work for your organisation.
- ▶ **Create a culture of communication:** Lead the way in demonstrating the benefits of openly communicating. Empower leaders to encourage their teams to speak up, create tools such as anonymous feedback (through online survey tools like SurveyMonkey) and implement communication practices, such as starting meetings with a personal share or insight.
- ▶ **Update materials for new working arrangements:** Refresh key OHS policies and procedures and ensure workers understand how they apply in WFH environments. Things to consider include:
  - ▶ How to set up your workspace
  - ▶ Managing your mental health
  - ▶ Supporting others through difficult times – and recognising when there's a problem
  - ▶ How to prevent and report injuries
  - ▶ Healthy habits (see list on the following page)
  - ▶ Managing your day – including managing time, workload and disruptions
- ▶ **Support leaders in creating new objectives:** if your business's services or products are impacted by Covid-19, work with leaders to help employees set new objectives to guide their actions. Without this clarity, employees can lose focus and motivation. Ideally, objectives should be set at both team and individual employee level.



- ▶ **Harness your organisation's values to bring people together:** With physical distance separating teams, reference your organisation's values to contextualise the important things teams need to bear in mind to help them – and the organisation – succeed. For example, if 'innovation' is a core value, consider implementing a company-wide competition for innovations that could be implemented in the new working arrangements, or to enhance operations. For values around health, encourage habit tracking for activities that can be safely done at home, such as star jumps or push ups; or using mindfulness apps to track time spent meditating or doing yoga.
- ▶ **Explore resilience training:** Work with the business to adopt remote resilience training. Many trainers in this space have adapted their programs to deliver online and in-person programs to grow the skills needed to operate in the Covid-19 environment. Research the best option for your business, or create your own package to deliver in-house.
- ▶ **Share self-care resources:** Encourage employees and teams to take up self-care practices by sharing tools they can use at home. Mindfulness and meditation apps such as Insight Timer and 10 Percent Happier offer free and low-cost tools for managing stress and anxiety through meditation.
- ▶ **Communicate:** Check in with leaders and ask where they need your support. Set regular meetings and work with leadership to create an expectation that communication matters now more than ever.
- ▶ **Create communication tools:** Support your leadership with templates for 'leader conversations' to help them conduct conversations on:
  - ▶ Seeking feedback
  - ▶ Wellbeing checks
  - ▶ Lessons learnt
  - ▶ Opportunities for improvement
  - ▶ Opportunities for efficiencies

# Checklist: Healthy Habits for Employees

Support employees with tools and resources to create healthy habits, from correct workspace set up to managing their day.

## ONBOARDING

### Checklist: Virtual induction and onboarding

Essentials for onboarding new starters virtually:

- Does your new starter have the technology tools and platforms to allow set up to work from home?
- How will health & safety aspects be communicated – to cover both legislative Workplace Health & Safety Regulations, but also to make them comfortable and confident?
- Have you provided a list of the key contact people so new starters know who to contact for support? Remember, they don't know what they don't know, so providing a key contact list is important to ensure issues can be resolved swiftly.
- A good Corporate Orientation program that outlines the mission, purpose, values and strategy of the company. Establishing the written and unwritten ground rules early on are important to ensure bad habits and behaviours don't creep in.
- Ensure new starts understand the client mix, the business units and key leaders.

## CHECKING IN

Before you get started, run a quick status check to understand what's working, what needs to be improved, and what learnings can inform your next steps.

### Checklist: Status check

Ask your people:

- Is your desk set up correctly - and do you know how?
- Do you take regular breaks? Helpful tip: Create a list of things you can do on your break – such as a quick burst of exercise or housework.
- Have you created a regular work structure and routine? Helpful tip: Having balance and boundaries between work and personal time is critical when working from home
- Are you looking after yourself by drinking enough water, eating well, getting enough sleep and making time for self-care and exercise?



## SET UP FOR SUCCESS

Educating employees to correctly set up their workspace is one of the best ways to avoid injuries. By preventing harm you're keeping people safe, mitigating lost productivity and saving the expense and hassle of a workplace injury claim.

### Checklist: Ergonomics

- Has the business communicated what a safe office environment is?
- Do employees know how to set up their workspace?
- Do you have educational resources to share? (Check out our Ultimate WFH Toolkit for Employees).
- Do your employees have access to the equipment required to safely work from home\*?
- Does your business have a process for helping employees adhere to safe working practices in the home environment (beyond initial set up)?

\* Consider the resources your business has available, and the equipment employees are likely to have on hand - such as a stable stack of books for raising monitor height.

## MANAGING MENTAL WELLNESS

The transition to working from home – and then back again – can disrupt mental wellness for even the most resilient employee. From overcoming fears about technology to dealing with feelings of isolation, having resources in place to support your team is critical for the wellness of your people, and your business.

### Checklist: Mental wellness in the WFH environment

- Does your business have self-service mental wellness tools employees can easily access?
- Does the business have robust support mechanisms, like an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?
- Does the business have resources for recognising and supporting mental wellness challenges in others?
- Does the business have, and clearly and regularly communicate, appropriate contacts and processes for employees struggling with mental wellness challenges?

## THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

With employees split between office and home, it's important to create opportunities for social interaction. You're not just letting the team blow off steam – these shared experiences foster bonds and open lines of communication, building connections across the business.

### Checklist: Team building opportunities

- Virtual Friday Drinks: invite the team to grab a drink (alcohol optional) and switch off at the end of the week. Virtual chats are a great time for employees to get to know their colleagues, with kids and pets even making an appearance.
- Team building initiatives: Engage a professional team building company for a fun and functional way to bring your people together. Many of these businesses have transitioned to an online offering, perfect for teams spanning locations – or where restrictions limit physical get-togethers. Alternatively, download a team building exercise and facilitate it yourself.
- Games and contests: Get creative with games and contests, such as a bingo board with answers unique to your team (for example: 'Saw Bob's dog during a video conference'), and general responses ('Forgot to unmute myself').

### Other ideas

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**IF YOUR BUSINESS IS READY TO IMPROVE  
TOMORROW'S OUTCOMES TODAY, FIND OUT MORE  
ABOUT GB'S INJURY MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

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