

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR A MENTALLY HEALTHY MUSIC INDUSTRY

BACKGROUND

Many people who work in music statistically experience a disproportionately high instance of mental illness, when compared to the general population. This can be due to extensive hours, lower pay, high risk environment and being away from friends and family for extended periods of time.

Using targeted prevention education and training to boost health literacy and early help-seeking, Support Act is improving mental health outcomes for our workforce of musicians, managers, crew and music workers; driving productivity, boosting creativity, and keeping people connected to their work and colleagues.

As the [results of our most recent survey](#) show, however, there is still a long way to go before we have achieved our goal of an industry where good mental health and wellbeing are at the centre of everything that we do.

With that in mind, Support Act has developed a set of Minimum Standards for a Mentally Healthy Music Industry in consultation with representatives from the music industry and regulatory authorities that we believe we can all work and live by.

These standards are not intended to be a Code of Conduct or to impose compliance obligations on workplaces, especially small businesses. They are designed to be adopted voluntarily and to be self-regulating.

We encourage all music businesses to use these standards as a foundation for the development of their own policies and procedures, and to ensure that the standards are reflected in agreements with contractors.

We recognise that creating mentally healthy workplaces takes time and requires ongoing attention, and that different workplaces may have different needs depending on their size. Larger organisations may need to focus more on systems and processes, while small businesses and sole traders may need to focus more on relationships. Regardless, we hope that all businesses will commit to taking action to create a more mentally healthy culture and a greater sense of belonging for all in our industry.

SUPPORT ACT MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR A MENTALLY HEALTHY MUSIC INDUSTRY:

Healthy organisations are powered by healthy people. People make critical decisions, produce and deliver essential products and services, and interact with customers and the public on behalf of organisations and businesses.

To function at their best, people need healthy environments, cultures and practices to protect them during challenging times, support recovery from mental ill-health and provide opportunities to develop.

The National Workplace Initiative has identified three areas for action to create mentally healthy workplaces¹:

- **PROTECT:** identify and manage work-related risks to mental health
- **RESPOND:** build capability to identify and respond to support people experiencing mental ill-health or distress
- **PROMOTE:** recognise and enhance the positive aspects of work that contribute to good mental health.

A recent study by Support Act and the Centre for Social Impact² showed that people who work in the music industry statistically experience a disproportionately high instance of mental illness, when compared to the general population.

It also showed that respondents to the study want to see action towards improved working conditions and work environments that are safe for everyone's mental and physical health.

Support Act's Minimum Standards for a Mentally Healthy Music Industry were developed in consultation with representatives from the music industry and regulatory authorities, and aim to bring our industry together to Protect, Respond and Promote the development of mentally healthy workplaces by highlighting the following standards:

¹ <https://haveyoursay.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/blueprint-for-mentally-healthy-workplaces>

² <https://supportact.org.au/mental-health-survey/>

PROTECT

- We value our colleagues and our industry and are committed to providing workplaces that are psychologically safe, and supportive of individual differences, identities and experiences (including but not limited to disability, gender, gender expression, national origin, race / ethnicity and sexual orientation). We value and are committed to cultivating a work environment that fosters respect, equity, and inclusion for everyone.
- We recognise and acknowledge the gap in participation and inclusion for First Nations workers in our industry and commit to working in partnership with First Nations musicians and music workers to create culturally intelligent workplaces that support their wellbeing and full participation.
- We identify psychosocial risks and hazards³ that are specific to our industry and to our work, and put in place protective measures to manage these wellbeing risks.
- We provide clarity on priorities and goals so that our people understand their roles and how they contribute to the success of our work together.
- We are flexible and consultative, and provide the opportunity for all music workers to provide feedback on workload, work patterns, work environment and work culture.
- We make it safe for people to disclose mental health conditions and concerns by communicating this commitment and by taking proactive measures to address safety at work issues including bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, racism, ageism, homophobia and transphobia.
- We will regularly and systematically share information about resources and services that people can access to support their mental health.

³ <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/mental-health>

RESPOND

- People who disclose a mental health condition can expect that we will protect their privacy and treat any disclosure with an appropriate level of confidentiality. We will respond to disclosures of mental health conditions in a compassionate, non-judgemental, supportive and respectful way that does not victimise or discriminate.
- We will partner with people who disclose a mental health concern to implement reasonable adjustments to their role or working environment which will enable them to recover at work, in a sustainable and healthy way. People who disclose mental health concerns to us can be confident that we will refer them on to services and resources where they can find help.

PROMOTE

- We recognise that the nature of our industry means that it is hard to maintain a healthy work/life balance at all times. While this might be unavoidable in certain situations, we will do our best to ensure that work is designed so that people can take appropriate breaks, avoid burn-out and manage fatigue, maintain connection with family and friends, and have opportunity to look after their mental and physical health.
- We believe our industry does meaningful and purposeful work and will seek to regularly celebrate and enable connection to this meaning and purpose.
- We will aim to recognise and reward positive, inclusive behaviours.
- We will respect people's rights to take their leave entitlements and to disconnect from work while they are on leave.
- We commit to being part of ongoing discussions about mental health and wellbeing so it becomes part of our daily practice.
- We commit to supporting others in our industry in their efforts to create mentally healthy and psychologically safe workplaces, especially where these interests intersect to create mutually beneficial outcomes.

AT SUPPORT ACT, WE COMMIT TO:

- Playing a leadership role in the promotion and awareness of the Standards through advocacy, workshops, social media and training support.
- Raising awareness of legal requirements related to work health and safety, workers' compensation, workplace relations, privacy and discrimination.
- Working in partnership with other projects such as the Music Industry Review to promote culture change in relation to systemic harassment, bullying and sexual misconduct in the industry.
- Ensuring that First Nations voices and perspectives are incorporated into the Standards.
- Providing access to wellbeing and psychological services such as the [Support Act Wellbeing Helpline](#), [Crisis Relief](#), and the [Workplace Wellbeing Check-In](#) programs.
- Providing access to education and training programs, such as [Mental Health First Aid](#) Training, [Access All Areas](#) (Active Bystander Training), [Suicide Prevention Training](#), [Diversity Equity and Inclusion Training](#), [Empathy Training](#) and [First Nations mental health support](#).
- Providing access to online workshops that provide information and peer support on a range of mental health and wellbeing issues that are of specific relevance to the industry.
- Providing access to resources such as policy documents and regulatory requirements that can be used as templates by anyone who adopts the standards.
- Providing ongoing consultation with industry in relation to the above, including through data collection and analysis, and sharing of case studies.
- Developing an easy sign-up process and transparent list of companies / businesses that adopt the Standards, and supporting assets for use on their websites.
- Providing a formal review process of the Standards at least every 2 years.

Show your commitment to making cultural change and to creating a sense of belonging for all in our industry by signing up to the Standards at supportact.org.au.