



Stress at Work

**A policy on work-related stress for
Waltham Forest Council**

Contents

Introduction	3
Definition of stress	3
Policy Commitments	3
Responsibilities	4
Management Board and Senior Managers.....	4
Managers and Supervisors.....	4
Employees.....	5
Health & Safety Advisors.....	5
Human Resources & Organisational Development	6
Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Services	6
Trade Union Safety Representatives.....	6
Role of the Corporate Health & Safety Committee	6
Informing employees of the policy.....	7
Implementation, monitoring and review	7
Changes to the policy	7
Consultation	7

Stress at Work

A policy on work-related stress for Waltham Forest Council

Introduction

1. As an employer, the London Borough of Waltham Forest recognises and accepts its responsibilities for providing a safe and healthy working environment for all its employees.
2. The Council recognises that work-related stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and controlling workplace stressors in order to promote the health, safety and welfare of staff. The Council also recognises the contribution that this can make to improve business performance.
3. The policy applies to everyone in the organization. Managers and supervisors are responsible for its implementation and the Council is responsible for providing the necessary resources.
4. This policy document relates to the organisational structure of the Council as at 1st January 2013.

Definition of stress

5. The Health and Safety Executive define stress as '***the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them***'.
6. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress, which can be detrimental to health.

Policy Commitments

7. The Council will identify workplace stressors through risk assessment by line managers in order to eliminate work-related stress or control the risks from work-related stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
8. The Council will develop training for managers and supervisory staff in good management practices through its organisational development and management development strategies.
9. The Council will provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress whether work-related or not.
10. The Council will provide adequate resources to enable managers and supervisors to implement the policy.

Responsibilities

Management Board and Senior Managers

11. The Management Board and Senior Managers are responsible for the actions listed below.
12. Ensuring that managers in their directorates and service areas are competent in good management practice including assessing the risks from work-related stress.
13. Ensuring that risk assessments for their directorate or service area are conducted and that appropriate control measures are implemented.
14. Managing their staff in line with the Council's policies and procedures under the Health, Well-being and Sickness theme of the Human Resources Employment Lifecycle.

http://forestnet.lbwf.gov.uk/index/hr/health_well-being_and_sickness.htm

Managers and Supervisors

15. Managers and supervisors are responsible for the actions listed below.
16. Conducting risks assessments within their work areas and to implement the control measures identified.
17. Monitoring and reviewing risk assessments and the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress.
18. Managing their staff in line with the Council's policies and procedures under the Health, Well-being and Sickness theme of the Human Resources Employment Lifecycle.

http://forestnet.lbwf.gov.uk/index/hr/health_well-being_and_sickness.htm

More particularly the guidance on work-related stress available at:

<http://forestnet.lbwf.gov.uk/index/cor-health/cor-hs-framework.htm>

19. Ensuring that all employees participate in the Performance Management and Development Scheme.
20. Ensuring good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.

Stress at Work

A policy on work-related stress for Waltham Forest Council

21. Ensuring that their employees are fully trained in all aspects of their work in order to discharge their duties effectively.
22. Ensuring that their employees are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
23. Monitoring workloads to ensure that their employees are not overloaded.
24. Monitoring working hours and overtime to ensure that their employees are not overworking.
25. Monitoring holidays to ensure that their employees are using their leave entitlement.
26. Ensuring that bullying and harassment are not tolerated within their work areas in line with the Council's policies in these areas.
27. Being vigilant and offering additional support to members of staff who may be experiencing stress outside the workplace, e.g. bereavement or separation.
28. Attending relevant training in good management practice and in health and safety to ensure competence to carry out the actions above.

Employees

29. Employees are responsible for the actions listed below.
30. Ensuring their own health and safety and that of others.
31. Participating in the risk assessment process.
32. Participating in the Performance Management and Development (PMD) Scheme.
33. Attending appropriate training as identified through the PMD process above.

Health & Safety Advisors

34. The Health and Safety Advisors are responsible for the actions listed below.
35. Providing advice for managers and employees on assessing the risks from work-related stress and advising on appropriate control measures.
36. Providing guidance to managers on the stress policy and managing stress.
37. Advising on appropriate training for managers and employees on Stress awareness and building resilience.

Stress at Work

A policy on work-related stress for Waltham Forest Council

Human Resources & Organisational Development

- 38. Human Resources and Organisational Development are responsible for the actions listed below.
- 39. Assisting in monitoring the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics and other HR metrics.
- 40. Providing continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and supporting referral to occupational health and counselling services where appropriate.
- 41. Developing policy and procedures on organisational development, management standards and good management practice.

Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Services

- 42. Occupational Health and Employee Assistance services are responsible for the actions listed below.
- 43. Providing guidance for managers on reasonable adjustments where stress has become an issue of disability for staff.
- 44. Advising managers and employees on planned return to work and reasonable adjustments.
- 45. Referral to specialist agencies or counselling services as required.
- 46. Supporting and counselling employees who have experienced or have been absent through stress-related issues.
- 47. Informing the Council and the Corporate Health and Safety Committee of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.

Trade Union Safety Representatives

- 48. Safety Representatives should be allowed access to collective and anonymous data from Human Resources related to stress at work where requested.

Role of the Corporate Health & Safety Committee

- 49. The CHSC will monitor the efficacy of the policy and other measures to reduce stress and promote well-being at work.

Stress at Work

A policy on work-related stress for Waltham Forest Council

Informing employees of the policy

- 50. This policy will be communicated to staff via the Council's internal communications mechanisms.
- 51. This policy document will be made available to all staff via ForestNet. Managers should provide access to the policy for those employees that do not have access to the intranet.
- 52. Access to this policy should be made available to all new employees as part of their induction.

Implementation and review

- 53. The responsibility for implementing this policy rests with all managers and supervisors. Guidance will be provided for managers and supervisors on implementing the policy via the Health, Well-being and Sickness theme of the Human Resources Employment Lifecycle.

http://forestnet.lbwf.gov.uk/index/hr/health_well-being_and_sickness.htm

More particularly the guidance on work-related stress available at:

<http://forestnet.lbwf.gov.uk/index/cor-health/cor-hs-framework.htm>

- 54. A review of the policy will be conducted after 2 years or where there are significant changes to the organisation.

Changes to the policy

- 55. CHSC will be consulted about any proposed changes to the policy as a result of review or significant changes.

Consultation

- 56. This policy has been devised in full consultation with Trade Unions and representatives concerned with health and safety in Waltham Forest Council.

Stress at Work

A policy on work-related stress for Waltham Forest Council

Document Information

Title	Stress at Work
Document Type	A policy on work-related stress for Waltham Forest Council
Document summary	This document outlines the process and triggers for escalation for health and safety risks.
Strategy Owner	Director of HR& Transformation; Health & Safety Manager
Location of original	O:\Health & Safety Unit\HSU\Council Policies & Info\Stress

Version History

Revision date	Summary of changes
January 2013	To be agreed by CHSC – effective [??] 2013
December 2014	Review date