



Member Report

Preparing for the new Psychological Health Regulations 2025

**Critical
WorkSafe
Changes**



Introduction

From 1 December 2025, the **Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations** are expected to come into effect in Victoria, amending the existing **Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)**. Supported by a new Compliance Code to be released in October 2025, these changes set out clear and practical requirements for managing psychosocial hazards with the same level of care and rigour as physical risks.

Leaders have a powerful influence on the wellbeing and safety of their people. By addressing psychosocial hazards, you demonstrate care, respect, and commitment to your workforce; building trust and strengthening workplace culture. **When workers feel safe, valued, and supported, they are more engaged, productive, and loyal.** At the same time, taking proactive steps to manage these risks ensures compliance with legislative duties and reduces the likelihood of harm or costly claims.

This dual focus on people and compliance creates the strongest foundation for a sustainable, respectful, and high-performing workplace, and leads directly into the practical plan set out in the next section.

For our FCHR Member Businesses and Organisations, our role is to proactively support your business, leadership team, and workers through this process; driving you towards compliance while embedding safe, sustainable, and respectful workplace practices *that make best use of the resources you already have*. Existing and new FCHR Clients (non-members) may also request to participate in this facilitated process.

We recognise that new regulations can feel complex, particularly when they introduce an additional focus on workplace risk management. We want to reassure you that you're not navigating this alone. We will guide you through each stage of the process, manage much of the administrative work, and provide the tools, templates, and guidance your business needs to meet your obligations.

Our Commitment to You

Throughout this transition, we will:

- Provide timely updates so you are never caught off guard by changes.
- Facilitate worker consultation so your business meets legal requirements and gains genuine insight into workplace experiences.
- Deliver targeted training for duty holders and workers so everyone understands their role in preventing psychological harm.
- Review your current policies and processes and provide your gap analysis to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Support leadership decision-making by presenting findings and tailored recommendations.
- Manage documentation and administration for policies, risk registers, reporting tools, and, where suitable, prevention plans across an achievable timeline.

The following report outlines the key information you need to know and how FCHR will guide you through the process to prepare for and respond to the pending changes between now and December 2025. Key terminology is provided in the Appendix.

If at any time you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out. If you are not currently an FCHR Member but would like more information about participating in this process, please contact us at hello@fullcirclehr.com.au.

I look forward to working with you to confidently and competently respond to this important legislative change.

Sincerely,



Tania Goranitis

Senior Consultant: Operations & OHS

P.S.

It's never too late to start to do the right thing. If you are reading this after the new Regulations have commenced and realise that you need help, please reach out. Taking the first step now will put you and your workplace on the path to safer, healthier, and more sustainable outcomes.

Background

The Victorian Government is introducing the **Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations** to strengthen how workplaces prevent and manage psychosocial hazards. These regulations amend the existing **OHS Regulations 2017 (Vic)** and are part of a broader national focus on addressing the rising number of mental injury claims, which now account for a significant portion of workers' compensation cases.

From 1 December 2025, employers will have clearer legal duties and practical guidance to identify, control and review controls for psychological risks. The intent is to ensure that psychological health is managed with the same level of diligence and structure as physical health and safety, reducing harm and creating healthier, more respectful workplaces.

These changes align with other legislative reforms, including the **Respect@Work** framework and recent amendments to the **Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)**, which place a positive duty on employers to prevent sexual harassment, sex-based harassment, and discrimination. Together, these laws strengthen employer responsibilities to create safe, respectful, and inclusive workplaces.

Psychosocial Hazards

Workplaces have a duty to manage *both* physical and psychological health and safety. Psychosocial hazards are aspects of the way work is designed, managed, or carried out that can cause stress, harm, or injury to workers if not addressed. If unmanaged, they can lead to serious psychological injuries, high levels of absenteeism, and reduced productivity. Identifying and controlling these hazards is a critical step in creating safer, healthier, and more respectful workplaces.

The hazards as identified by WorkSafe Victoria are:

High Job Demands

Occurs when the amount of work expected from workers is excessive. It may involve too many tasks to complete in the time available, unrealistic deadlines, long hours, or constant pressure to perform without adequate breaks.

Over time, high job demands can lead to stress, fatigue, and burnout.

Low Job Demands

When workers do not have enough meaningful work to keep them engaged. It may involve long periods with no tasks, repetitive or monotonous duties, or being unable to use existing skills and experience.

Low job demands can lead to frustration, loss of motivation, and reduced sense of purpose.

Low Job Control

When workers have little say over how or when their work is completed. It includes having no input into how tasks are carried out, being unable to adjust priorities, not being able to take breaks when needed, or feeling micro-managed.

Low control can create feelings of helplessness and disengagement.

Poor Support

Arises when workers do not receive the assistance, information, or encouragement they need from managers or colleagues. This may include a lack of help when workloads increase, insufficient training or feedback, or being left to handle problems alone.

Without adequate support, workers can feel isolated and undervalued.

Poor Organisational Justice

Where workplace decisions are perceived as unfair or inconsistent. Examples include rules being applied differently to different people, some staff being treated more favourably, or decisions being made without clear or transparent reasons. Perceptions of injustice can damage trust and morale.

Low Role Clarity

When workers are uncertain about what is expected of them. It may involve tasks changing without explanation, overlap in responsibilities with others, or uncertainty about reporting lines.

Low role clarity can lead to confusion, duplication of effort, and workplace conflict.

Poor Environmental Conditions

Physical factors in the workplace that make it difficult or unpleasant to work. Examples include excessive noise, uncomfortable temperatures, poor lighting, limited access to facilities, or unsafe/unhygienic conditions.

Poor environments can cause both physical and psychological strain.

Remote or Isolated Work

When workers are required to work alone, in remote locations, or without ready access to support. Examples include having no one nearby in an emergency, poor phone reception, long-distance travel without contact, or working alone at night.

Such conditions can create risks to both safety and wellbeing.

Poor Organisational Change Management

When changes in the workplace are not well planned or communicated. Workers may be informed at the last minute, not asked for input, not provided with enough information, or left uncertain about how changes will affect their roles.

Poorly managed change increases stress and reduces engagement.

Low Recognition and Reward

When workers feel their efforts are not acknowledged or fairly compensated. It may include a lack of thanks for extra effort, achievements going unrecognised, inadequate pay or advancement opportunities, or a general sense that contributions do not matter.

Low recognition reduces motivation and loyalty.

Poor Workplace Relationships

Involves behaviours or interactions that create an unsafe or hostile work environment. Examples include:

- **Bullying:** Exclusion, shouting, undermining, or other repeated unreasonable behaviour.
- **Aggression or Violence:** Threats, intimidation, physical actions, or unsafe behaviour.
- **Harassment:** Including sexual harassment, sexist remarks, or discriminatory behaviour.
- **Unresolved Conflict:** Ongoing disputes between workers or teams that are not addressed.

These behaviours can severely undermine psychological safety and, if left unmanaged, cause both psychological and physical harm to workers, as well as long-term damage to the organisation.

You can learn more about Mental Health Safety Basics on the WorkSafe Victoria website:

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/mental-health-safety-basics>

Preparation Actions

In anticipation of the pending changes, there are several key actions that FCHR will lead participating Members and Clients through:

- **Training:** Educate both duty holders and workers on psychosocial hazards and the pending changes.
- **Consultation:** Survey workers on their current experiences of these hazards and gather their suggestions for improvement.
- **Risk Identification and Assessment:** Identify, record and assess psychosocial hazards in your workplace now.
- **Audit:** Identify any gaps in current policies, procedures, systems, and other control measures and provide your business with a clear Gap Analysis Report with recommendations specific to your business.

Our staged preparation plan has been designed to put Members on the front foot, so that when the Compliance Code is released, we will be well positioned to outline a clear roadmap for your business.

To make sure your business is well prepared, we've designed this project to be delivered in just 2 hours each month across the remainder of 2025.

For FCHR Members, your included Member Hours will be applied first. If your membership includes fewer than 2 hours per month, or if additional time is required beyond your allocation due to specific requests you make in relation to this activity, the balance will be billed at our standard hourly rate with the 15% Member discount applied.

If you do not wish to participate in this process, you will need to opt out.

Preparation Plan

September	October	November	December	Q1 2026
Training and Audit	Worker Consultation and Compliance Code	Gap Analysis and Recommendations	2026 Planning to close Gaps	Policy/process update, training and consultation

September: Training and Audit

Deliver targeted training for duty holders in preventing psychological harm and review your current policies and processes:

- **Duty Holder Training:** Deliver a briefing for owners and managers on the new legal duties and understanding psychosocial hazards via short video training.
- **Audit:** Audit on your existing HR/OHS policies, procedures, risk registers, and reporting systems as they relate to managing psychosocial hazards in your workplace. This may be conducted onsite or online. Please make yourself or a key person with suitable knowledge available for a 30 min consultation. Where FCHR already has information about your current policies and procedures we will pre-fill your audit responses and confirm they are currently operational.

October: Consultation and Compliance Code

Facilitate worker consultation so your business meets legal requirements and gains genuine insight into workplace experiences, and provide timely updates so you are never caught off guard by changes:

- **Worker Consultation:** Gather feedback on employees' experiences related to psychosocial hazards ahead of new OHS laws through an anonymous survey which can be completed either via computer or smartphone, using the standard survey template used for all FCHR Members/Clients that will take workers 5 to 10 minutes to complete (depending on how much detail they choose to provide).
- **Review new Compliance Code:** FCHR will review the recommendations in the new Compliance Code due to be released in October.

November: Gap Analysis and Recommendations

Support leadership decision-making by presenting findings and tailored recommendations:

- **Gap Analysis Report:** Based on the results of your audit and worker consultation (survey) results, and the recommendations laid out in the Compliance Code, we will prepare your Gap Analysis Report outlining your required actions for compliance.

December: Gap Action Planning

- **Gap Action Plan:** Develop your custom plan to address identified gaps in Q1 2026.

Q1 2026: Gap Closure

Manage documentation and administration across an achievable timeline and deliver targeted training so everyone understands their role in preventing psychological harm:

- Introduce or update policies and procedures as required
- Create or update your Risk Register and Reporting Tools
- Consider if a Prevention Plan is suitable based on the hazards and risk, and develop as necessary
- Provide a Psychological Health Scorecard to workers, outlining what gaps were identified and what action has been taken to address
- Provide opportunities for further consultation
- Schedule and/or deliver worker training as required such as Psychological Health and Hazards in the Workplace, Sexual Harassment and others as suitable
- Broad review after recommendations implemented to ensure compliance against the Psychosocial Compliance Code
- Set review date to measure success of risk control measures.

We will provide a Scope and Quote to provide the recommended services when suitable.

Conclusion

By committing two hours each month to this project, your business will stay on track to meet the new OHS Regulations on psychological health and be well prepared ahead of December 2025. More importantly, these actions will help create a safer, healthier, and more respectful workplace for your people. With FCHR guiding the process, you can be confident that compliance is achieved while building a culture where workers feel valued, supported, and engaged.

Appendix A: Terminology

- **Duty Holders:** Owners, Directors, and Managers, who have legal responsibilities under the OHS Act to keep workers safe, including from psychosocial hazards.
- **Psychological Health:** A worker's overall mental wellbeing, including emotional, cognitive, and social factors, which can be influenced by workplace conditions and practices.
- **Psychosocial Hazards:** Aspects of work that may cause psychological or physical harm, including job demands, poor support, bullying, harassment, and low role clarity.
- **Psychosocial Risks:** The likelihood that exposure to psychosocial hazards will cause harm, and the degree of that harm.
- **Psychological Injury:** Harm to a worker's mental health caused or contributed to by workplace factors, often resulting in stress, anxiety, depression, or trauma, and commonly linked to psychosocial hazards.
- **Compliance Code:** Practical guidance approved by WorkSafe Victoria that explains how to comply with legal duties under the OHS Regulations. While not mandatory, following a Compliance Code is one way to demonstrate compliance.