

Work Related Stress – A Practical Guide for Employer’s*

The focus of this guide is on ways to reduce the likelihood of stress arising in workplaces and ways to prevent short term stress becoming a long-term problem.

The focus must always be on risk assessment and hazard reduction.

Under Health and Safety Law all workplaces must have a current operational Safety Statement which outlines the hazards and risks in the workplace and the control measure put in place to eliminate or reduce them.

Stress – What is it?

Stress can be defined broadly as the negative reaction people have to aspects of their environment as they perceive it. Stress is therefore a response to a stimulus involves a sense of inability to cope. We each perceive, interoperate, cope with and react to the word differently, but a stress reaction is an unpleasant state of anxiety.

Normally stress is not permanent but in extreme cases it can be. Further, when we are stressed or under the influence of stress then we are less likely to behave in a rational way we do when we are calm. For any employer stress has two potential negative impacts. The first is that an employee will get ill, will be absent from work and may in fact issue proceedings against you. The second is that a worker who is stressed may make poor decisions which can cost you.

The causes of short-term stress include tough deadlines. Having to carry out tasks that individuals find difficult, having to do too many things at once, having to act in difficult circumstances or under pressure, working too many hours, not getting sufficient or proper rest and break periods.

***Before acting or refraining from acting on anything in this guide, legal advice should be sought from a solicitor.**

***In contentious cases a solicitor may not charge fees or expenses as a proportion or percentage of any award or settlement.**