



Fitness For Work Guideline

**STAY
LIVE**
Electrical Industry
Health & Safety Group

StayLive Electrical Industry Health and Safety Group



Controlled Document

This is a controlled document. Printed copies may not be up to date. Check the StayLive website for the current version.

Document Control

Document name	StayLive Fitness for Work Guideline	
Document location	StayLive	
Document status	Approved	
Version number	1.0	
Issue date	May 2019	
Validity period	2 Years	
Next review date	May 2021	
Assigned Responsibilities	Contributors	Angela Lumby, Jade McLaurin, Trustpower
		Camilla Sutton, Transpower
		André Holme, Meridian
		Paul Robinson, Gina Miles, Genesis
		Ursula van den Bosch, Mercury
		John Skudder, Contact
	Owner/Approver	StayLive

Record of Amendments

Version	Issue Date	Summary of Key Changes
1.0	May 2019	First issue.

Contents

1	Introduction.....	4
2	Definitions.....	5
3	Approach	5
4	Workplace Systems and Culture.....	6
4.1	Introduction	6
4.2	Workplace Systems.....	6
4.3	Workplace Culture	6
4.4	Questions to Ask.....	6
5	Fatigue.....	6
5.1	Introduction	6
5.2	Workplace Management	7
5.3	Planning Considerations	7
5.4	Leading Indicators for Management of Fatigue	7
5.5	Example Prestart or Toolbox Questions	7
6	Stress.....	8
6.1	Introduction.....	8
6.2	Workplace Management	8
6.3	Planning Considerations	8
6.4	Leading Indicators for Management of Workplace Stress	8
6.5	Questions to Ask.....	8
7	Physical Impairment.....	9
7.1	Introduction	9
7.2	Workplace Management.....	9
7.3	Planning Considerations	9
7.4	Leading Indicators.....	9
8	Use of Drugs or Alcohol.....	9
8.1	Introduction	9
8.2	Workplace Management	9
8.3	Planning Considerations	10
8.4	Leading Indicators for workplace drug and alcohol use.....	10
9	Ageing Workforce	10
9.1	Introduction	10
9.2	Workplace Management	10
9.3	Planning Considerations	11
9.4	Questions to Ask.....	11
10	More Information	11
10.1	Introduction	11
10.2	Resources.....	11
10.3	Recommended Books	12
10.4	Recommended TED Talks	12

2 Definitions

Key terms used in this document are defined below.

Fitness for Work means the ability of a worker to do his or her job safely and competently, taking into account not only relevant qualifications and experience, but also the effects of fatigue, drugs, alcohol, mental health, wellbeing, stress, etc.

Exposure is defined as the event associated with the Fitness for Work that has the potential to cause death, serious injury or serious illness (note, in some cases there are multiple exposures).

Our people are the individual electricity supply or transmission company's employees, contractors and subcontractors.

Wellbeing is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as *"The state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy"*. In a workplace context, the term is commonly extended to include other states such as having the ability to cope with the day-to-day stresses of life, work productively, interact positively with others, and contribute to community. Benefits to the workplace from prioritising wellbeing include staff who are better engaged, less likely to be absent, more productive, and who have higher morale and higher job satisfaction.

3 Approach

To produce this guideline, the StayLive Fitness for Work Working Group identified six key elements associated with Fitness for Work, then developed suggested practices and other guidelines to successfully manage these elements. Paying attention to these six elements will help maximise Fitness for Work within an organisation. There is often more than one factor influencing a person's Fitness for Work; it is important to look holistically to understand a Fitness for Work issue.

The six key elements are:

- workplace systems and culture
- fatigue
- stress
- physical impairment
- use of drugs and alcohol
- ageing workforce.

Each of these elements is covered in more detail in the sections below.

4 Workplace Systems and Culture

4.1 Introduction

Successfully managing Fitness for Work issues requires a combination of both systems and culture.

4.2 Workplace Systems

Systems must be in place to manage the aspects of Fitness for Work that are within our control.

Policies and procedures do not have to be complex; they should be easy to understand, set clear expectations and ensure consistency in approach within the organisation.

Workplaces must be proactive in educating and influencing their people so that they understand the aspects of Fitness for Work that are within their control and the kind of support that can be offered to help them manage these.

4.3 Workplace Culture

Of paramount importance is a workplace culture where it is okay for people to be open about their Fitness for Work, and which is flexible enough to help people manage external factors and influences.

Leaders must recognise the importance of workplace wellbeing and integrate it into their work management processes.

4.4 Questions to Ask

Suggested questions for organisations to ask include:

- Do our systems allow us to manage Fitness for Work issues in a practical and flexible way?
- Do we consider the wellbeing of our people to be as important as their safety?
- Do we plan work in a way that considers Fitness for Work and wellbeing alongside productivity and cost?
- Do our people leaders model successful work-life balance?
- Can we identify when people are at risk?

5 Fatigue

5.1 Introduction

Fatigue management is more than having a policy that establishes the maximum hours that can be worked. Guidance on work hours should consider the work activity that is being planned as well as the environmental and physical work conditions.

The potential consequences from being fatigued are high when driving, therefore the length of a working day should consider the total number of hours between leaving home and returning home, not just the hours at work.

Systems should acknowledge that people are most at risk of fatigue when the end of the job or journey is in sight.

5.2 Workplace Management

- Plan to have adequate rest breaks with good nutrition and hydration. Ensure there is plenty of cool drinking water available for those undertaking work tasks.
- Include fatigue management as part of the daily prestart or toolbox routines. Consider using a structured fatigue assessment.
- Promote a culture in which fatigue can be discussed openly and honestly.
- Encourage both self-monitoring and peer-to-peer monitoring.
- Consider using smart tools, eg, Fitbits, smartphone apps, etc, to monitor fatigue.

5.3 Planning Considerations

- Plan to work long hours only if the activity is short term.
- Structure the work programme so that rostered time off allows for family and social needs.
- Plan to observe statutory holidays where possible.
- If working away from home, provide an environment that is conducive to good rest, eg, comfortable beds, quiet location. Encourage physical activity after work.
- Involve workers in planning shift work schedules to accommodate personal needs.

5.4 Leading Indicators for Management of Fatigue

Useful leading indicators to monitor fatigue management are listed below:

- Monitor computer logon times after work hours.
- Monitor work hours for excessive overtime and/or sick leave.
- Conduct engagement and wellness surveys.
- Analyse EAP usage and reports by issue.
- Include a fatigue survey with annual occupational health checks.
- Monitor excessive annual leave balances and implement leave management plans.
- Monitor staff retention – percentage of permanent staff.
- Hold exit interviews.
- Gather feedback via safety observations.

5.5 Example Prestart or Toolbox Questions

Examples of questions to ask at a prestart or toolbox meeting are listed below:

- How is your head space/state?
- Have you had a good night's sleep?
- How many continuous days have you worked until today?
- Are there any outside factors affecting your ability to rest?
- How is the team performing?
- Is fatigue a factor?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you rate your fitness for work?

6 Stress

6.1 Introduction

Workplace stress can affect productivity as well as the physical and emotional health of staff. The effects can vary between individuals and can include illness, anxiety, low engagement, low productivity, antisocial behaviour, etc.

6.2 Workplace Management

- Promote an open culture in which wellbeing is prioritised.
- Consider high-stress work environments and activities in risk assessments, eg, work away from home, travel, disruption from routine, work under pressure, organisational changes, external factors that delay work, inadequate resourcing, interaction with the public.
- Promote education and tools on how to deal with stress, eg, mindfulness, breathing exercises.
- Implement structured programmes for debriefing in high-stress environments.
- Train managers to identify and deal with stress symptoms.
- Have regular catch ups with direct reports.
- Run proactive programmes to discourage bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Provide Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP).

6.3 Planning Considerations

- Allow flexible work options where possible.
- Plan activities to allow for family time.
- When working away plan for social activities after work that promote wellbeing.
- Ensure people are taking planned leave breaks.
- Manage long projects to ensure there are reasonable break periods.
- Distribute workloads evenly.

6.4 Leading Indicators for Management of Workplace Stress

Useful leading indicators to monitor management of workplace stress are listed below:

- Conduct surveys to assess the workplace climate, culture, engagement and wellbeing.
- Analyse EAP reports by topic.
- Examine trends in absenteeism.
- Examine presenteeism (not taking time off when not fit for work).

6.5 Questions to Ask

Suggested questions for organisations to ask include:

- Are our people leaders good role models?
 - Do they expect people to be connected to work outside of normal hours?
 - Do they support flexible work?
 - Do they stay at home when they are unwell?

- Does the workplace culture encourage an environment where people can bring issues to their manager's attention?
- Do we take the time to listen and seek to understand issues?

7 Physical Impairment

7.1 Introduction

Physical impairment can be caused by an accident (in the workplace or elsewhere), illness, congenital disorders or genes. It may be visible or hidden, permanent or temporary and may have a little or major impact on a person's life.

7.2 Workplace Management

- Understand the requirements of the work through task and workplace assessments.
- Conduct pre-employment medical assessments to ensure people can do the work or to determine what support they need to be successful.
- If impairment is the result of injury or illness, ensure return-to-work plans are in place and well supported.

7.3 Planning Considerations

- Ensure appropriate equipment is available to manage ergonomic risks.
- Standardise processes for rehabilitation plans and use of alternative duties.
- Ensure return-to-work plans are goal based.

7.4 Leading Indicators

Useful leading indicators to monitor management of physical impairment are listed below:

- Analyse completed job or task analysis.
- Analyse completed occupational health assessments.
- Measure rehabilitation plans achieved as per goal.

8 Use of Drugs or Alcohol

8.1 Introduction

Use of drugs or alcohol can lead to impairment in the workplace. Effects include poor concentration, carelessness, risk-taking behaviour, poor judgement, decreased performance and productivity, increased rates of injury and absenteeism, etc.

8.2 Workplace Management

- Implement a robust drug and alcohol policy and programme that covers pre-employment, random, post-incident, and reasonable-cause testing.
- Provide opportunities for rehabilitation.

- Ensure people leaders are trained well enough to implement the programme.
- Provide Employee Assistance Programmes.

8.3 Planning Considerations

- Ensure contracting companies have compatible drug and alcohol policies, and, if not, that they understand how your policy is implemented.
- Carry out random drug and alcohol testing early on in projects.
- Have a clear process for a reasonable-cause assessment.

8.4 Leading Indicators for workplace drug and alcohol use

Analyse drug and alcohol tests undertaken and the percentage of non-negative results.

9 Ageing Workforce

9.1 Introduction

The New Zealand population is becoming older and people are working longer, resulting in an ageing workforce. An ageing workforce brings benefits such as the retention of work-related skills, knowledge, experience and maturity, and also contributes to workforce diversity. It also brings challenges such as managing negative stereotypes about older workers and ensuring older workers remain positively engaged and productive.

9.2 Workplace Management

9.2.1 Initiatives Happening Today

- Arrange health checks for all worker age groups.
- Provide health insurance.
- Provide flexible working options that allow a gradual move to retirement.
- Assist with worker retirement planning.
- Ensure adequate succession planning occurs.
- Provide options for additional leave and leave bonuses.
- Arrange for physical fitness assessments.

9.2.2 Initiatives to Consider for Best Practice

- Create a culture where an ageing workforce is valued.
- Offer proactive programmes that allow graceful transition out of the workforce, eg, having good succession planning with knowledge transfer processes, moving people away from high risk roles, allowing job sharing, allowing early retirement flexible work processes.
- Provide worker education on retirement planning, eg, financial aspects, psychosocial aspects.
- Bring young people into the sector for older workers to mentor via programmes, eg, apprenticeships, cadetships.
- Offer a comprehensive wellbeing programme that is outward focused, ie, considers needs outside of work.

- Offer medical insurance benefits that are available post retirement.
- Offer occupational health programmes that incorporate managing cognitive ability.
- Offer enhanced superannuation schemes.

9.3 Planning Considerations

- Understand the critical skills that need to be retained in the workplace and develop succession plans to maintain them.
- Use older workers as mentors and trainers, which enhances their self-worth while passing on their expertise.

9.4 Questions to Ask

Suggested questions for organisations to ask include:

- Do we understand the age profile of our workforce?
- Do we have the skills in our workforce to let people go?
- Have we prepared our people for retirement?

10 More Information

10.1 Introduction

The lists below are compiled with the best intentions and are not all encompassing. Resources are listed for your information only; inclusion in the lists does not represent endorsement by StayLive or its member organisations.

10.2 Resources

Resource Type	Organisation	URL
Websites	Mental Health Foundation	https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz
	Lifeline	https://www.lifeline.org.nz
EAP Service Providers	Vitae	https://www.vitae.co.nz/
	EAP Services	https://www.eapservices.co.nz/
Building Resilience	Rural Support Trust	http://www.rural-support.org.nz/
	Umbrella	https://umbrella.org.nz/
	Resilience Institute	https://resiliencei.com/our-teams/new-zealand/
	Warn International:	https://www.warninternational.com/
	Key to Life Organisation (Mike King)	http://keytolife.org.nz/
Tool	NZTA Fatigue Calculator	https://www.nzta.govt.nz/safety/driving-safely/fatigue/fatigue-resources/fatigue-calculator

10.3 Recommended Books

Title	Author	Year	Notes
Lost Connections	Johann Hari	2018	Audio book also available, mental wellbeing, easy read
Inside Out	Sven Hansen	2015	
Emotional Life of Your Brain	Davidson Begley	2012	Very scientific, neuroscientist
Focus	David Goleman	2013	
The Power of Habit	Charles Duhigg	2016	
Smarter, Faster, Better	Charles Duhigg	2016	

10.4 Recommended TED Talks

- What makes a Good life? Lessons from the Longest Study on Happiness 2016
- Breathe to Heal (Max Strong)
- Your Body Language May Shape Who You Are (Amy Cuddy)



**STAY
LIVE**
Electrical Industry
Health & Safety Group