

## Day of Mourning: Psychological health and safety critical to workers' wellbeing

Psychological health and safety is occupational health and safety. Workplace injuries – both physical and psychological – are serious and must be treated as such. Yet work-related stress, burnout, harassment, violence, and psychological harm are too often dismissed or ignored. These injuries are real, they are preventable, and they're not “just part of the job.”

“Every worker in Canada has the right to safe work. It's understood that employers are required to control physical, ergonomic, and chemical hazards, but psychosocial hazards must also be treated with the same seriousness,” said Labour Leader (first & last name), (title & organization). “Psychological injuries should be prevented just like injuries caused by working with heavy machinery or exposure to chemicals.”

On April 28, workers across Canada come together to mourn the dead and fight for the living. This year, we are highlighting workers facing burnout, chronic stress, and mental health crises caused by work, and honouring those we have lost to work-related psychological harm. Every workplace injury or death is preventable, whether the harm is physical or psychological.

The reality facing workers is stark. Nearly half of working Canadians say their job is the most stressful part of their daily lives. 70% of workers are concerned about the psychological health and safety of their workplace. In 2023 alone, more than 8,500 workplace mental health injury claims were accepted by compensation boards, with health care, education, public services, and the trades among the hardest-hit sectors. The actual number of workers is likely far higher. *Further, we need to recognize that workplace physical injuries can trigger workplace psychological injuries, which need to be addressed together.*

(If you have local statistics or stories you want to include in 2-3 lines, do that here)

Psychological health and safety are already recognized in federal and provincial laws, and Canada has ratified ILO Convention 190 on preventing violence and harassment at work. But recognition is not enough. Workers need enforceable protections and real prevention, along with provinces, territories, and the federal government working together to ensure workers are protected across Canada.

We are calling on all levels of government to treat psychological health with the same seriousness as physical health under occupational health and safety and workers' compensation legislation in every jurisdiction; implement a national system to address

psychosocial hazards based on CSA Z1003; require proactive risk assessments and prevention plans; and ensure strong enforcement through inspections.

“It feels like there are new crises every week, and workers are already carrying a heavy mental load. Work should not exacerbate the stress that workers experience. No worker should have to sacrifice their mental health to earn a living, and employers have a duty to keep work safe, for both body and mind,” said Labour Leader (last name only).

(If you have a campaign or action you want to link to, you can also do that here. For example, “Learn more at (link)” or “get involved (link)”)