

# Benefits Insights

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## Supporting Employee Mental Health During a Recession

A recession is a significant and widespread downturn in economic activity. Recessions can cause job layoffs and increases in unemployment overall. The uncertainty that a recession brings with it can have adverse effects on employees and, consequently, organizations. Thus, it's critical that employers prepare to help support their employee's mental health during this time.

### Impacts of Employee Mental Health

Employee mental health not only impacts the individual but can also have significant impacts on the workplace. It's not common for employees to share about their mental health, especially if they're struggling. Poor mental health in employees can result in the following workplace consequences:

- Increased absence
- Reduced productivity
- Regular workplace tension and conflict

These consequences coinciding with a potential reduction in the workforce due to a recession could be catastrophic for an organization. Therefore, it's vital for employers to provide support to employees during a recession.

### Providing Support

There are many ways to support employee mental health during a recession. Consider the following tips:

- **Provide mental health support through employee assistance programs.** Mental health assistance can include mental health screenings, employee flexibility and allowing mental health leave in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act.
- **Talk openly about mental health support in the workplace.** Educating employees about mental

health can go a long way to help destigmatize this sensitive subject.

- **Provide stress management resources to employees.** Stress contributes significantly to the employees' mental health. Strategies to incorporate stress management techniques include encouraging work-life balance, teaching employees breathing techniques and having regular one-on-one meetings to see how individual employees are doing.
- **Survey the needs of employees.** Surveying employees can help evaluate employee mental well-being to know how to best provide help by targeting their needs.

### Summary

A recession not only affects people financially but can also impact someone's overall well-being. Employers should know how to help employees with their mental health, especially during a recession. For further information on how to support employee mental health during a recession, contact us today.

