



This sample audit tool is an annex of the National Standard of Canada on Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. It is reprinted here with permission of CSA Group, Bureau de normalisation du Québec and the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

The Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace has made this version available at no cost on their website www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com for all organizations who wish to do a review of psychological health and safety in their workplace.

The Standard Audit Tool is not as extensive as a formal health and safety audit. It is basically intended as a gap analysis tool that will provide the organization with a baseline measurement of current status. In that respect, it is more of a survey/screening instrument. In any case, it is preferable to have at least one team member who is familiar with the auditing process. Annex E (informative)

Sample audit tool

Note: This Annex is not a mandatory part of this Standard.

E.1

Table E.1 is a sample audit tool that may be used by organizations to conduct internal audits. This audit tool may be modified to suit the size, nature, and complexity of the organization. The audit tool may also function as a “gap analysis” tool to highlight those areas that require further work to meet the requirements of this Standard.

Most organizations that implement this Standard will do so over a period of time. This Standard addresses different aspects of the subject at three levels of commitment, from more demanding to less demanding, that will ultimately reflect the maturity of an organization with respect to its ability to implement this Standard:

- a) requirements (expressed with “shall” throughout the body of this Standard), which are mandatory aspects that are required in order to implement this Standard;
- b) recommendations (expressed with “should” throughout the body of this Standard), which suggest aspects that are deemed valuable for full implementation of this Standard but not at the same level as requirements; and
- c) options, which reflect best practices and are considered as “nice to have” parts of the PHSMS. The column labelled “Level” in Table E.1 indicates those audit questions that relate to the Item categories “a”, “b”, and “c”.

Table E.1 - Sample audit tool
(See Clause E.1.)

1. Psychological health and safety management system (PHSMS) policy; leadership; participation					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
1.1 Responsibilities and authorities related to the PHSMS must be defined and communicated throughout the organization.	a				
1.2 A policy statement (alone or incorporated as part of another relevant policy) endorsed by senior management should refer to psychological health and safety as it applies to the organization.	a				
1.3 The policy statement must reflect the organization commitment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish, promote, and maintain a PHSMS. • align with stated organizational values and ethics. • establish and implement a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the system and implement changes. • delegate the necessary authority to implement the system. • ensure involvement of workers/worker representatives in the development, implementation, and continual improvement of the system. • provide ongoing resources. • ensure regular evaluation and review. • respect the principles of mutual respect and cooperation. 	a				
1.4 Organizational leadership must demonstrate the following qualities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reinforce the development and sustainability of a psychologically healthy and safe workplace environment; • support line management; • establish key objectives for continual improvement; • “Walk the talk”; • ensure psychological health and safety is part of decision-making processes; • engage workers/worker representatives. 	a				

Table E.1 - Sample Audit Tool

1. Psychological health and safety management system (PHSMS) policy; leadership; participation (continued)					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
1.5 The organization must ensure participation through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engaging stakeholders in regular dialogue; • engaging workers/worker representatives in policy development, data generation, and planning; • encouraging worker/worker representative participation in programs; • encouraging worker/worker representative in the evaluation process; and • ensuring results of the evaluation process are communicated and follow-up action plans are available. 	a				
1.6 The organization must engage the OHS committee/worker representatives in defining their involvement in the PHSMS.	a				
1.7 Confidentiality of persons must be respected, including removal of identifying material on relevant documents.	a				
1.8 The organization has considered development of a specific PHSMS Committee.	c				
1.9 The organization must encourage worker/worker representative participation by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing time and resources to participate in the PHSMS program; • identifying and removing barriers to participation; and • involving and training in relevant aspects of the PHSMS. 	a				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

2. Planning					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
2.1 The organization’s planning process must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plans to manage workplace psychological health and safety, including assessment of worker health impact, financial impact and organizational policy/processes promoting good psychological health; • a collective vision of a psychologically healthy workplace with specific goals for reaching the vision and a plan for ongoing process monitoring for continual improvement; • assessment of the strengths of the existing psychological health and safety strategy; and • recognition and identification of current practices that are already protecting and promoting psychological health and safety. 	a				
2.2 The organization must review its approach to managing and promoting psychological health and safety in the workplace and to assess conformance with the requirements and recommendations in this Standard.	a				
2.3 The organization must have a defined data collection process that respects privacy requirements.	a				
2.4 The organization must maintain a record of all data collected and information on its sources and share results as required with the OHS committee.	a				
2.5 The organization makes use of multiple sources of data in their planning process.	c				
2.6 The data collection process must ensure that privacy is protected by removal of personal identifiers and aggregation of data.	a				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

2. Planning (continued)					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
2.7 The organization must develop, implement, and maintain a risk management process that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hazard identification and processes to eliminate hazards where possible; • risk assessment for each identified hazard; • preventive and protective measures to control risks; and • a priority process reflecting the size, nature, and complexity of the hazard and risk and also, where possible, respecting the traditional hierarchy of risk control. 	a				
2.8 The organization must assess their occupational health management system for compatibility with the requirements of this Standard.	a				
2.9 The following factors have been assessed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • psychological support; • organizational culture; • clear leadership and expectations; • civility and respect; • psychological job demands; • growth and development; • recognition and reward; • involvement and influence; • workload management; • engagement; • work/life balance; • psychological protection from violence, bullying and harassment; • protection of physical safety; and • other chronic stressors as identified by workers. 	c				
2.10 The organization should identify and assess opportunities for promoting psychological health.	b				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

2. Planning (continued)					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
2.11 The organization must consider the unique needs of a diverse population and solicit input when these needs are relevant to achieving the goals of this Standard.	a				
2.12 The organization must consider workplace factors that can impact the ability of diverse populations to stay at work or return to work.	a				
2.13 The organization should encourage individual workers to seek assistance internally or externally when needed.	b				
2.14 The organization must take steps to link workers in need to internal resources and should also take steps to link workers to community or other resources.	a,b				
2.15 The organization must document the PHSMS objectives and targets for relevant functions and levels within the organization.	a				
2.16 Objectives and targets should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measurable; • consistent with the PHSMS policy and commitment to PHSMS, compliance with legal requirements and other requirements, and commitment to continual improvement; • based on past reviews, including past performance measures and any work-related psychological health and safety hazards, risks, the result of the data collection, and identification and assessment of psychological workplace factors, management system deficiencies, and opportunities for improvement that have been identified; • determined after consultation with workers, consideration of technological options, the organization's operational and business requirements; and • reviewed and modified according to changing information and conditions, as appropriate. 	b				
2.17 The organization's objectives and targets should reinforce existing strengths and promote new opportunities for improving psychological health and safety.	b				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

2. Planning (continued)					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
2.18 The organization must establish and maintain a plan for achieving its objectives and targets, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • designation of responsibility for achieving objectives and targets; and • identification of the means and time frame within which the objectives and targets are to be achieved. 	a				
2.19 The organization must establish, implement, and maintain a system to manage changes that can affect psychological health and safety.	a				
2.20 The system in Item 2.19 should include aspects on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication between stakeholders about the changes; • information sessions and training for workers and worker representatives; and • support as necessary to assist workers in adapting to changes. 	b				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

3. Implementation and operation					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
3.1 The organization must provide and sustain the infrastructure and resources needed to achieve conformity with this Standard.	a				
3.2 The organization should recognize that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workplace parties possess sufficient authority and resources to fulfill their duties related to this Standard; • workplace parties possess the knowledge, authority, and abilities to integrate psychological health and safety into management systems, operations, processes, procedures, and practices; and • persons with roles as specified in this Standard possess knowledge, skills, and abilities to carry out their roles (e.g., auditing, training, assessment, analysis, etc.). 	b				
3.3 The organization establishes and sustains processes to implement preventive and protective measures to address the identified hazards and risks.	a				
3.4 The organization has implemented preventive and protective measures that reflect the following priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminating the hazard; • implementing controls to reduce the risks related to hazards that cannot be eliminated; • implementing use of personal protective equipment in applicable circumstances; and • implementing processes to respond to and provide support for issues that can impact psychological health and safety, whether they relate to organizational factors, or to other factors, such as personal factors. 	a				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

3. Implementation and operation (continued)					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
<p>3.5 The organization must establish and sustain processes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide information about factors in the workplace that contribute to psychological health and safety, and how to reduce hazards and risks that potentially cause psychological harm, and how to enhance factors that promote psychological health. • ensure stakeholder education, awareness, and understanding of the nature and dynamics of stigma, psychological illness, safety, and health. • communicate to stakeholders existing policies and available supports. • communicate to stakeholders processes available when issues can impact psychological health and safety. • communicate to stakeholders information about the psychological health and safety system and related plans and processes. • include stakeholder ideas, concerns, and input for consideration. Ensure communication throughout the monitoring and review process (see Clause 4.5) to all workplace parties. 	a				
<p>3.6 The organization has established processes to support effective and sustained implementation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sponsorship by senior leadership and leadership at all levels of the organization; • engagement on the part of stakeholders; and • assessment and application of change management principles throughout planning and implementation. 	a				
<p>3.7 The organization must establish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear responsibilities and accountabilities for effective implementation; • governance processes that support effective implementation and communication plans; and • documentation requirements. 	a				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

3. Implementation and operation (continued)					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
3.8 The organization must establish and sustain processes that ensure confidentiality and privacy rights are respected and protected.	a				
3.9 The organization must establish and sustain ongoing resources to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine expectations and minimum requirements of workers and in particular those in leadership roles (e.g., supervisors, managers, workers representatives, union leadership) to prevent psychological harm, promote psychological health of workers, and address problems related to psychological health and safety; and • provide orientation and training to meet requirements for Clause 4.4.6. 	a				
3.10 The organization should establish and sustain processes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide accessible coaching and supports as required, recognizing the potential complexities of psychological health and safety situations, the unique needs of the individuals affected, and the skills needed; and • assess and address competence of those in leadership roles specific to Item 3.9. 	b				
3.11 The organization must establish and sustain processes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify potential critical events where psychological suffering, illness, or injury is involved, or likely to occur, while respecting confidentiality and privacy of all parties; • provide response and support, including consideration of specialized external supports; • provide related training for key personnel involved in critical event response; and • ensure there are opportunities for debriefing and for revising guidelines for critical events as applicable. 	a				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

3. Implementation and operation (continued)					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
<p>3.12 The organization must establish and sustain processes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the psychological health and safety risks and impacts of critical events are assessed; • manage critical events in a manner that reduces psychological risks to the extent possible and that supports ongoing psychological safety; • incorporate learnings from critical events into established plans related to the psychological health and safety system; and • ensure there are opportunities for reviewing and for revising guidelines for critical events as applicable. 	a				
<p>3.13 The organization must establish and maintain procedures for reporting and investigating work-related psychological health and safety incidents. These procedures must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing roles and responsibilities of all parties participating in the investigation process; • practices that foster a psychologically safe environment that allows workers to report errors, hazards, adverse events, and close calls; • a commitment to appropriate accountability, looking first at system factors that contributed to the error or adverse event; • actions to mitigate any consequences of work-related psychological injuries, illnesses, acute traumatic events, chronic stressors, fatalities (including suicides), attempted suicides, and psychological health and safety incidents; • the identification of the immediate and underlying cause(s) of such incidents and the implementation of recommended corrective and preventive actions; and • an assessment of effectiveness of any preventive and corrective actions taken. 	a				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

3. Implementation and operation (continued)					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
3.14 Work-related psychological health and safety incident investigations should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be carried out by persons who are experienced in psychological injury and incident investigation; • be carried out by persons impartial and who are perceived to be impartial by all parties; • be carried out with the participation of the appropriate workplace parties; and • respect the privacy and confidentiality of involved parties, and other relevant legislation. 	b				
3.15 Investigations of cause(s) of work-related psychological health and safety incidents must identify any failures in the PHSMS and must be documented.	a				
3.16 Recommendations must be developed and, along with the investigation’s results, must be communicated to the workplace parties.	a				
3.17 Recommendations must form the basis of corrective action and must be included in the management review process and contribute to the continual improvement of the PHSMS.	a				
3.18 The organization must establish and sustain processes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make external parties and their personnel aware of the organization’s policies and expectations related to protecting the psychological health and safety of the organization’s workers; and • address any issues or concerns identified. 	a				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

4. Evaluation and corrective action						
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments	
4.1	The organization must establish and maintain procedures to monitor, measure, and record psychological health and safety and the effectiveness of the PHSMS, respecting the confidentiality and privacy of all individuals.	a				
4.2	The organization must assess organizational conformance to this Standard, including an evaluation of the processes associated with the implementation of this Standard.	a				
4.3	The organization's performance monitoring and measurement approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determines the extent to which the PHSMS policy, objectives, and targets are being met; • provides data on PHSMS performance and results; • determines whether the day-to-day arrangements for hazard and risk identification, assessment, minimization, and elimination or control are in place and operating effectively; and • provides the basis for decisions about improvements to psychological health and safety of the workplace and the PHSMS. 	a				
4.4	Qualitative and quantitative measures (appropriate to the needs, size, and nature of the organization) must be developed in consultation with workers (and where applicable, their representatives) and must be carried out by competent persons.	a				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

4. Evaluation and corrective action (continued)					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
4.5 Monitoring and measuring results must be recorded and include the following, as applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leadership engagement with the PHSMS; • baseline assessment of psychosocial risk factors; • baseline assessment of other workplace determinants of psychological health (e.g., environmental, physical, job requirement, staffing levels); • psychological injury and illness statistics; • return-to-work programs; • aggregated data from health risk assessments; and • aggregated analysis of the results of investigations or events. 	a				
4.6 The organization must establish and maintain an internal audit program to conduct audits at planned intervals to determine whether the PHSMS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conforms to the requirements of this Standard and to the psychological health and safety system requirements established by the organization; and • is effectively implemented and maintained. 	a				
4.7 The internal audit program must include criteria for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • auditor competency; • the audit scope; • the frequency of audits; • the audit methodology; and • reporting requirements. 	a				
4.8 The audit results, audit conclusions, and any corrective action plan must be documented and communicated to affected workplace parties, including workers and worker representatives, and those responsible for corrective action.	a				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

4. Evaluation and corrective action (continued)					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
4.9 The organization must consult with workers and, where applicable, their representatives on auditor selection, the audit process, and the analysis of results.	a				
4.10 Management responsible for the activity being audited must ensure that corrective actions are taken to address any non-conformance with the organization’s PHSMS or this Standard identified during the audit.	a				
4.11 The organization must establish and maintain preventive and corrective action procedures to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address PHSMS non-conformances and inadequately controlled hazards and their related risks; • identify any newly created hazards resulting from preventive and corrective actions; • expedite action on new or inadequately controlled hazards and risks; • track actions taken to ensure their effective implementation; and • implement initiatives to prevent recurrence of hazards. 	a				

Table E.1 – Sample Audit Tool

5. Management review					
	Level	Yes	No	Findings	Comments
5.1	The organization must establish and maintain a process to conduct scheduled management reviews of the PHSMS, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review and analysis of key outcome data (e.g., audit results, evaluation/outcomes data); • assessment of the level of conformance of the PHSMS to this Standard; • a detailed review of findings that are considered significant; and • organizational and other reporting requirements. 	a			
5.2	The review process should address the degree to which the goals of a psychologically healthy and safe workplace are being achieved.	b			
5.3	The outcome of the review process must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities for improvement and, where deficiencies/variances are identified, corrective actions to be implemented; • review and update of the organizational policies and procedures specific to or related to the PHSMS; • review and update of objectives, targets, and action plans; and • communication opportunities to enhance understanding and application of results. 	a			