FOREWORD

Schroeder Stribling, President & CEO, Mental Health America

U.S. workers spend an enormous amount of time on the job, commuting, and thinking about their employment when not at work. It is no wonder that the workplace has a significant impact on our mental health. In fact, 78% of workers in the **Mental Health America 2022 Mind the Workplace** report agreed that workplace stress affected their mental health, and 7 in 10 workers found it difficult to concentrate. This stress can negatively affect the personal well-being, productivity, job satisfaction, and retention of workers.

It is time for employers to take a hard look at prioritizing employee mental health.

MHA is the nation's leading community-based nonprofit dedicated to addressing the needs of those living with mental illness and promoting the overall mental health of all. With the support of Walgreens, MHA has created an easy-to-follow toolkit for all levels of the work environment.

From teaching managers about emotional intelligence to educating your workforce about available resources, to creating a discernably safe and supportive environment for mental well-being – there are ways to support and improve the mental health of your organization's people, no matter if you have 2, 2,000, or 20,000 employees.

In this toolkit, learn how employers and people in leadership can develop or improve upon existing workplace policies that uplift workers, ensure that they are valued and heard, and improve the overall culture of well-being within an organization. Whether this is your first foray into considering mental health in the workplace or it's been part of your playbook for years, you will find resources suited to your specific needs and interests. You will find in each section fact sheets, printable resources, checklists, drop-in articles, and more to help meet your needs. You will learn how to:

- Cultivate supportive people managers;
- Develop an employee-driven mental health strategy;
- Build an impactful mental health employee resource group;
- Provide and educate employees about benefits and resources; and
- Find creative ways to think beyond the norms of basic benefits.

Mental health is health, and all of us – including employees at every level – have mental health. There are many options for employers who intend to create a mentally healthy and positive workplace.

Individuals concerned about their mental health can take a free and anonymous screen at mhascreening.org to better understand what they are experiencing. These completely confidential screenings will provide individuals with various resources, including guidance on how to talk to someone you trust and how to seek any needed or desired professional support.

Once you've gone through this toolkit, we invite you to look at MHA's **Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health**, an annual, national certification program recognizing employers committed to creating mentally healthy workplaces. Please consider applying to be certified.

Together with our partners at Walgreens, we applaud your commitment to creating a mentally healthy and supportive workplace. You are already taking action to improve productivity, efficiency, and retention. More importantly, you are demonstrating to every employee that their well-being matters to you and that you are committed to supporting them.

FOREWORD

Holly May, EVP and Global CHRO,
Walgreens Boots Alliance

Walgreens is proud to work with MHA on this important initiative, furthering our longstanding partnership to help meet the growing need for mental health resources and access to care in the communities we serve nationwide.

The COVID-19 pandemic not only exacerbated the U.S. mental health crisis, but it has also forever changed the workplace. As employers, the role we play in supporting the physical and mental health and well-being of our employees has never been more critical.

For leaders, it starts with an unwavering commitment to creating and reinforcing a culture that's defined by authenticity and compassion.

Whether you're managing through your own mental health challenges, supporting someone with theirs – or both – managers need to lead with vulnerability and have access to resources to support themselves and those around them. In addition, employees need to have a trusted relationship with their leaders and know there is a "safe space" for an open dialogue, to ask questions, or to seek help.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution, and the needs of every organization's employee population are different. As part of this collaboration, we look forward to sharing our own journey and providing actionable steps as well as best practices to help more employers foster a healthy and productive workforce.