NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH

THE PREMIER SIGNAL LONGSHORE MUTUAL

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Mental Health and Wellness in the Workplace

We are only halfway through 2020 and it has certainly been a year to remember. Some have compared 2020 to be like looking both ways before crossing the street and getting hit by an airplane. Regardless, during this stressful time many of us have been able to take uncertainties and unscripted changes in stride; unfortunately, others have not been able to adjust to the new norm and have found themselves stranded and feeling almost helpless. The reality around the COVID 19 pandemic is we are all facing this crisis in solidarity as we look for guidance and any glimpse of hope to return to normality.

Social media reminds us often of things done in years past when life seemed normal. That is not what we see happening now and it's ok to understand that although we aren't able to do the things we love, together, we will return to that one day. We must remain vigilant in our everyday lives now in order to get back to that way of life.

The National Safety Council, Centers for Disease Control, American Psychiatric Association and other affiliates have all released publications on mental health and wellbeing to keep you informed and educated on where to go for assistance. No matter how strong of an individual one attests to be, everyone has a tipping point. There are only so many conditions, events and changes you can deal with—it's ok to seek help. Your employer should have resources available through their benefits in the form of an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). In addition to your employer, support groups could also be available through your community resources department.

As an employer, you have a responsibility to provide for the health and wellbeing of your workforce. A duty to listen, a duty to understand and a duty to provide a workplace free of unsafe acts and conditions. Even an inspirational note that lets employees know we are still committed to the health and wellness of them and their families helps to continue to solidify a connection with them.

We encourage to also leverage the employee checklists, provided by the National Safety Council, to ensure you are doing all that you can for the mental well being of your employees. These checklists can be found here.

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Courtney has over 25 years of trade, safety, health, environmental and emergency preparedness experience in maritime, construction, utility and general industries. Since 2017, he has been providing safety and loss control services to Signal Mutual Members. Courtney's area of service includes the Northeast United States and Canada. He graduated from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy twice, with Bachelor of Science in Maritime Safety and Environmental Protection, his Master of Science in Emergency Management.