



**Mental Health Action Day**

MAY 18, 2023

# Planning Guide for Employers

**Mental Health  
Action Day**

**HAA**  
HEALTH ACTION  
ALLIANCE

IN COLLABORATION WITH



AMERICAN  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION



WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM

# Mental Health Action Day is Thursday, May 18, 2023

Take the opportunity to turn awareness into action inside your organization! Join thousands of other employers and partners in this year's call to action by empowering your employees to take one hour for their mental health this Mental Health Action Day.

## 2023 CALL TO ACTION

Take one hour on mental health for you,  
your loved ones or your community.



HEALTH ACTION ALLIANCE ORGANIZING PARTNERS

POWERED BY



## A Message from Mental Health Action Day

In 2021, MTV launched the first Mental Health Action Day to shift the culture of mental health from awareness to action. With 1,800+ Partners and millions of individual participants from across 32 countries, this year we are focused on deepening our impact. For the third annual Mental Health Action Day on May 18, 2023, we are asking our Partner Network: What if everyone took one hour to take action for their mental health?

Together as Partners, we will work to reach people around the globe and empower them to take a mental health action for one hour for themselves, their loved ones, or their community. An unprecedented challenge requires an out-of-the-box approach. We seek to empower you, so that you, in turn, can empower your communities.

We are calling for coordinated action among businesses, organizations, advocacy groups, schools, individuals, and leaders from around the world to join us on Mental Health Action Day this May 18, 2023.

Now is the time to invest in mental health actions.

## Why One Hour?

Asking for one hour is simple, measurable, and flexible.

Some Partners may encourage actions that are more than one hour, while other actions may be less. Our goal is to provide you with a collaborative framework and network to drive mental health actions within your reach.

Every Partner has their own ability to drive change and support Mental Health Action Day in the way that works best for them. There is no one size fits all approach. This is an open source effort for all those who want to use their megaphones to drive our culture from awareness to action.

We invite you, in whatever capacity you have, to activate your personal or organizational resources to drive mental health actions now.

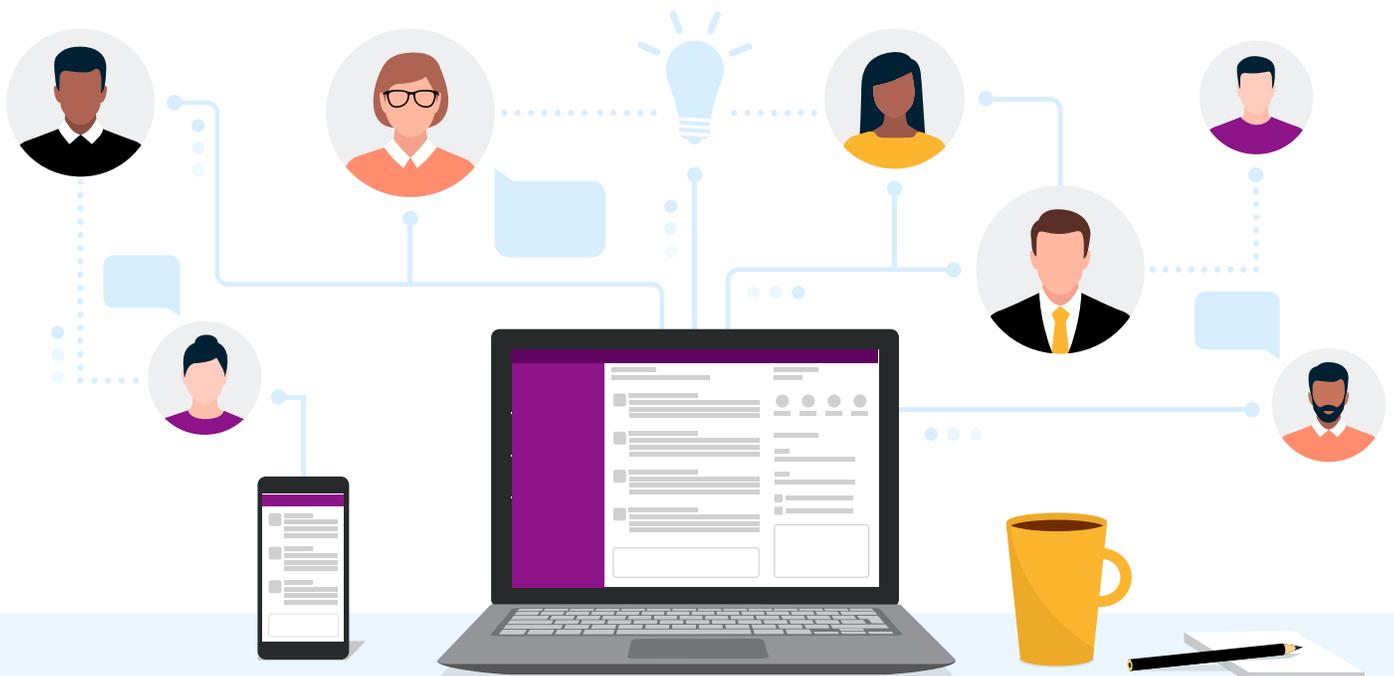
# How can your company take #MentalHealthAction?

## STEP ONE: Become an official partner.

Sign up to become an official Mental Health Action Day Partner by completing the sign up form at [mentalhealthaction.network](https://mentalhealthaction.network).

As an official Mental Health Action Day Partner, you can:

- Join the [Mental Health Action Day Slack channel](#) to share ideas and inspiration with over 1,800 participating partners.
- Participate in Mental Health Action Day's virtual [Open Office Hours](#) every Friday at 1pm Eastern.
- Use tools from Mental Health Action Day's [Partner Toolkit](#) to build your company campaign.
- Align your brand with [hundreds of employers](#) who have committed to taking mental health action in support of their workforce.



## STEP TWO:

# Create a company action plan.

In advance of MHAD, plan how you will empower your employees to take one hour of action for their own mental health. You can designate a single company-wide event for all employees to participate in, or provide a wide range of alternatives for employees to choose how to spend their hour.

## #MentalHealthAction Ideas for Employers:



### Get into nature.

Invite your workforce to participate in a company-wide walking hour. Spending time in nature can sharpen cognitive skills and boost emotional well-being.

**Beyond the hour:** Redesign your company workspaces to incorporate more natural light, greenery or outdoor meeting spaces.



### Promote mindfulness

Have an instructor lead an hour of yoga or mindful meditation. Employees who practice mindfulness at work are more focused and productive, more open to innovation and report healthier work relationships.

**Beyond the hour:** Help your employees incorporate scheduled breaks throughout the day to sharpen focus and productivity.



### Foster connection.

Combat loneliness at work by hosting a social event such as a company-wide coffee hour. Friendship at work improves customer and client engagement, worker efficiency, safety, innovation and shared ideas, and fun at work!

**Beyond the hour:** Create, promote or expand Employee Resource Groups to foster sustained belonging within your company.



### Promote shared values.

Organize a corporate volunteer event. Volunteering has been shown to foster a sense of purpose, improve team collaboration and boost personal well-being.

**Beyond the hour:** Consider offering an annual PTO allowance for employees to use for community volunteer hours.



### Support access to mental health services.

Host a company benefits fair, inviting vendors from your company EAP and in-network mental health providers. Employers gain a \$4 return on each dollar invested in mental health treatment through improved health and productivity.

**Beyond the hour:** Talk with your insurance broker or EAP provider to explore options to expand your company's mental health benefits.

# #MentalHealthAction Ideas for Employers: CONTINUED



## Assess your workplace.

Designate an hour of the workday for employees to assess psychological safety at your workplace. Use the results from this assessment to build a strategic company mental health action plan for the year ahead.

**Beyond the hour:** Use the results from this assessment to build a strategic company mental health action plan for the year ahead.



## Educate your workforce.

Overcome mental health stigma by inviting a mental health educator to speak at a company lunch and learn on a mental health topic relevant to your workforce.

**Beyond the hour:** Enlist employee feedback and host quarterly lunch and learns on relevant mental health topics to support the specific mental health needs of your workforce in a collaborative way.



## Give the hour back.

Consider giving employees paid time off to come in late, take an extended lunch or leave early for the day to spend time with their loved ones or spend an hour on self-care.

**Beyond the hour:** Consider offering PTO for mental health days or scheduling company-wide days of rest. Some companies, like Kickstarter, have even adopted a four-day work week for employees “to live brighter, fuller lives and allow us to return to work refreshed.”

**Helpful Hint:** Is one consecutive hour a barrier to participation? You can get creative with how you help employees achieve one hour of action throughout the day. For example, help employees schedule four 15 minute breaks to take a walk or participate in a mindfulness exercise. Even if your company can't commit to one full hour, allocate an amount of time that works for your company to participate!

**Remember:** The objective is to provide an opportunity for your employees to learn, connect and reset. Embrace flexibility and make sure that company action (whether five, 15, or 60 minutes) doesn't create an undue burden on your workforce.



## STEP THREE:

# Spread the word.

Use our [Sample CEO Letter](#) in collaboration with leadership at your organization to announce your company plan for Mental Health Action Day. Look for opportunities to promote your event through company bulletin boards, team meetings, text messages and other internal communication channels.

You can also use these communications as an opportunity to:

- Provide information on how employees can participate in Mental Health Action Day with instructions on how to report on their hour of action.
- Share why prioritizing mental health is important to your leadership and organizational values.
- Remind employees of your existing mental health benefits.
- Announce new company benefits or initiatives on workplace mental health.

## A Message From One Mind At Work



**The global workforce is struggling.**

Employees are expecting more, and leaders want to take action. Where do they start?

**The Mental Health at Work Index gives business leaders a practical framework with clear priorities to build a sustainable workplace mental health strategy.**

The Index provides:

- A self-assessment that measures the maturity of workplace mental health programs and services
- Organizational benchmarking powered by strategic data collection
- An Algorithm-driven advice library that provides targeted resources to guide improvements and enhancements, enabling real-time feedback at scale

Learn more at [www.mentalhealthindex.org](http://www.mentalhealthindex.org)

Developed by



## STEP FOUR: Take action!

Take a mindful hour with your employees by participating in your company's mental health action plan. Use our [Social Media Toolkit](#) to access customizable social media graphics and recommended posts to announce how your company is taking action. Make sure to use [#MentalHealthAction](#) in your posts.

### Inspiration from Employer Action in 2022:

#### Chipotle Mexican Grill

The fast-casual restaurant chain engaged employees in dialogue emphasizing the importance of mental health. These conversations highlighted mental health resources available to employees and their family members, including mental health care through in-person, phone or virtual visits with a licensed counselor.

#### Feeding America

The nationwide nonprofit organization hosted a mental health webinar to support its member food banks in effectively maintaining and caring for their mental health.

#### Represent Justice

The criminal justice advocacy organization held a staff session to discuss trauma-informed approaches that effectively protect mental health and wellbeing while working on justice issues.

#### Adobe

The software company encouraged its employees to find mental wellness through helping others by featuring the Mental Health Is Health initiative on their quarterly 'Tune In, Take Care' session series for global employees. Adobe also encouraged employees to donate to mental health causes like JED Foundation and volunteer as mentors to young people through Adobe's non-profit partners worldwide.

## STEP FIVE:

# Share your success.

Help MHAD track the number of actions taken on mental health in 2023. Share how you activated your employee network and the number of employees who participated in mental health action on Thursday, May 18th by completing their [Impact Survey](#). You can also share your company's activation story during the Mental Health Action Day Office Hours Debrief on Friday, May 19th or Friday, May 26th.

## Tracking Tips



**Encourage** employees to share pictures and stories of actions they are taking through internal communication channels such as Microsoft Teams, Slack or WhatsApp. Track the number of submissions posted to the channels.



**Provide** a company-specific hashtag for employees to use on social media alongside the official #MentalHealthAction. Count the number of times your company-specific hashtag is used. Consider incentivizing participation with raffles or awards.



**Use a QR code** at your event for employees to check-in through a virtual form.



**Use Zoom meeting reports** to track the number of people who show up for virtual events. You can also use virtual polls or exit surveys in virtual meetings or town halls to ask participants what they are doing to take #MentalHealthAction.



**Create** a #MentalHealthAction check in page on your company website centralizing your company's mental health resources and information about your Mental Health Action Day Initiatives. Embed a submission form for employees to share their one hour of action.