

Meet an unexpected productivity boost: mental health care



You pay close attention to your employees' mental, emotional and behavioral health — that's why more than half of all employees are confident their employers care about them.¹

But while compassion might be your main concern, you can't ignore the effect poor mental health can have on your business. As you develop ways to foster mental health in the workplace, remember that your efforts aren't just about supporting them. It's about supporting your business, too. Here's the connection between mental health and staying in the black.

- **Mental health affects how people think.** You might think of conditions such as depression and anxiety as being about emotions. And while some people with depression feel persistently sad, for example, that's not the only way depression plays out. It may also be described as feelings of loss or anger that interfere with everyday activities, including work.² Even mild depression can have these same effects.² That's not to say that people with mental health conditions can't be valuable employees, but rather that it can keep them from functioning at their best.
- **Poor mental health makes people miss work.** You might have heard the term "mental health day" as a synonym for blowing off work without much notice. But that's not what most mental health days actually are; taking a "mental health day" means taking a day off to focus on relieving stress, relaxing, having fun and most importantly, preventing burnout.³ Depending on the state you're in and your company policy, you might already include mental health in your leave policy. But regardless of what your policy is, a mental health day amounts to time that your employees aren't at work — an absence that can be prevented for some, with the proper care.
- **Even when people who are experiencing mental health issues show up, they may be less productive.** There is clear evidence that poor mental health is associated with lost productivity, like absenteeism and presenteeism, according to the American Psychiatric Association.⁴ That productivity loss adds up: The World Health Organization estimates that \$1 trillion is lost annually due to the toll of depression and anxiety alone.⁵

- **Some businesses try to support their employees — but employees might not feel the impact.**

You're probably not shocked to hear that Americans' mental health has been suffering, and neither are your peers. But business leaders on the whole seem to overestimate the impact that their mental health support has on their employees. About 43% of employees don't think their employers care about them.¹

- **The good news: When employers do invest wisely in mental health, it pays off.** If you're able to close the gap between what you're offering and what employees value in mental health support, you're helping your bottom line as much as you're helping your employees. While measuring dollar-for-dollar ROI on health and wellness can be difficult, the benefit of having lower turnover, higher productivity and healthy employees can make the investment worthwhile. Those who felt supported by their employers had better mental health outcomes and had higher levels of engagement at work.⁵

You've had to make difficult choices for your business — including some that might pit the financial security of your workforce against the financial security of your business. But mental health care doesn't need to be one of those choices. Investing in your employees' mental and emotional well-being is a true win-win.

Learn more about protecting your employees' well-being — and your financial health.
Contact your Aflac benefits advisor or visit [Aflac.com/business](https://aflac.com/business).

¹ Aflac. "Aflac Workforces Report: Workplace benefits trends. Executive Summary." Published 2024. [Accessed 3.31.25.](#)

² Healthline. "Everything You Need to Know About Depression (Major Depressive Disorder)." Published 10.27.23. [Accessed 3.31.25.](#)

³ VeryWellMind. "It's OK to Take a Mental Health Day - When and How to Ask for One." Updated 2.26.25. [Accessed 3.31.25.](#)

⁴ Planadvisor. "Stress and Burnout Causing Lost Workplace Productivity." Published 3.27.25. [Accessed 3.31.25.](#)

⁵ World Health Organization. "Mental health at work." Published 9.2.24. [Accessed 3.31.25.](#)

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