Workers' Comp

Managing Crisis Events at the Workplace

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2 MIN READ

Following a crisis event, it’s normal for employees to need time to recover emotionally.

Providing employees with the support they need following a crisis can reduce the likelihood of prolonged stress, anxiety and even post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that can disrupt the workplace and affect employee morale and productivity, absence and overall quality of life.

Key Strategies

1. **Establish a Comprehensive Crisis Management Plan** —This should include training for employees and management on recognizing and responding to a crisis. It should also involve support structures, like a crisis response team and access to mental health resources.
2. **Education and Awareness**—Educate your workforce on the signs and symptoms of PTSD: re-experiencing the traumatic event, avoidance, negative changes in beliefs and feelings, and hyperarousal. Promote a supportive culture where employees feel comfortable sharing their feelings and experiences.
3. **Immediate Response**—Ensure immediate and supportive responses to a crisis event. This includes emergency medical care, making certain the environment is safe, and informing appropriate personnel.
4. **Debriefing**—Provide a safe space for individuals to share and process their experiences following a crisis. Trained professionals can facilitate these sessions, providing constructive ways for employees to manage their feelings.
5. **Mental Health Support**—Provide access to counseling services and mental health resources and promote use of these services without stigma.
6. **Return to Work**—When an affected employee returns to work, have a clear plan in place. This can include flexible hours, modified duties, regular check-ins with a trusted manager and continued access to mental health resources.
7. **Follow-up and Continuous Improvement**—Regularly review and improve the company’s response to crisis situations. This could involve analyzing the effectiveness of actions taken, gathering employee feedback, and implementing necessary changes.

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Prevention is Key

While it may not be possible to prevent all workplace crises, an initiative-taking approach can significantly reduce their impact. Encourage open communication, provide mental health support, and foster a workplace culture that values the well-being of all employees.

Benefits of Genex's Crisis Response Program

- Communicates concern and goodwill for employees and family members experiencing normal reactions to abnormal events
- Enables the organization and its employees to recover from a crisis and return to work
- Offers the greatest opportunity for resolving psychological distress
- Significantly reduces workers' compensation stress claims, unnecessary healthcare costs, indemnity payments and litigation
- Reduces unnecessary absence and loss of productivity

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