

Four Rs of Trauma-Informed Responses: Resist Re-Traumatization

By **realizing** the traumatic effects of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and harassment and how they show up in the workplace, **recognizing** the elements of trauma, **responding** in a survivor-centered way, and **resisting** policies and practices that lead to **re-traumatization**, workplaces can ensure safer, more productive, and resilient workplaces for all workers.

Resist re-traumatization by examining and modifying potentially harmful practices

Not being believed, a lack of appropriate support from supervisors and leadership, or being pushed to take a specific course of action can intensify a survivor's experience of trauma, impacting their job performance and creating an unsafe and harmful environment for that survivor and other employees. Over time survivors who do not receive appropriate support may ultimately leave their jobs, workplaces can experience high rates of turn-over, and morale is eroded when employees see other co-workers facing additional harms resulting from an employer's failure to respond in a trauma-informed, survivor-centered way.

To ensure that the efforts a workplace engages in to support survivors is effective, it is critical that workplaces routinely evaluate how policies and practices are impacting workers, particularly survivors who have sought help.

Employers should consider the following opportunities to assess policies and practices:

- Conducting annual climate surveys to determine progress and remaining areas of need.
- Evaluating supervision and staff training efforts with pre- and post-training surveys.

- Implementing an [Annual Review Checklist](#) to assess policies and procedures.
- Evaluating the usage of and satisfaction with services and support offered to employees.¹
- Evaluating safety and security measures to identify potential vulnerabilities.

Implementing such assessments and opportunities for feedback itself is a trauma-informed practice as it upholds voice and provides an opportunity to improvement through collaboration. Assessments and changes made in response to their findings will also help build trust in the employers' commitment to creating a safe and supportive workplace.

Workplaces Respond provides technical assistance to workplace stakeholders seeking to better prevent and respond to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and harassment impacting the workplace. Scan this QR code to access the Resource Center.



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¹ Note that an increase in reporting does not necessarily reflect an increase in need, it can reflect that there was an increase in trust in the employer's ability to support and respond to survivors' needs and is actually a positive sign as new policies and practices are implemented.