

## How to manage overall mental health and well-being in a workplace during a pandemic



The Covid 19 global pandemic has turned the world on its head for everyone, whether you are still employed, retrenched during the pandemic or have been unemployed before Covid 19, we all had to change the way we do things. Until 2020 we never had to wear a face mask walking around in public, never had to wash hands so regularly let alone physical distancing. This is all so overwhelming; fear and anxiety has escalated as nothing is certain anymore. The employer's process of looking after their workforce during this time has a domino effect for both the employer and the employee. Covid 19 has accelerated the implementation of the 4IR. Before the pandemic the impact of 4IR was more speculation than a reality. Employers have been forced to upskill their workforce to prepare them for the changes faced individually and by the entire global economy.

### **Employers have a duty to:**

Ensure that the employees continue working safely during this time;

It is important for employers to do a risk assessment to manage the risk of covid 19 contamination in the work place;

Hygiene has to be a critical part of making and keeping the workplace safer;

Good ventilation reduces the risk of spreading coronavirus;

Employers should consult and talk to workers and explain changes planned to manage the risk of health and safety ;

If employees are working from home employers must provide them with the necessary resources of working to alleviate stress;

Employers need to check up regularly with staff working from home and discuss their well-being.

### **Employees need to:**

Take time to care for themselves and let the employer and colleagues know that their needs are also important;

Unplug for a few minutes, according to Anne Lamott “almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you”;

Priorities and make time for themselves every day;

Get moving, one does not have to run a marathon, but a small exercise everyday will make one productive;

Help others, making someone’s day can be fulfilling, making space for others can fill up one’s own cup

Fill up your own cups first, so that you can be productive.