

Building the Business Case for Psychological Health and Safety – FAQ

1. What are some metrics I can use to pitch to my employer that investing in psychological health and safety is integral to our business?

Employers can draw from both external industry benchmarks and their own internal workplace data to show how psychological health and safety (PH&S) directly impacts safety, staffing stability, and overall performance.

External benchmarks (Industry-specific & Province-wide)

Using industry-specific and province-wide statistics helps normalize the conversation and shows employers that PH&S challenges are common, widespread risks, not issues unique to one workplace.

- 1) The [Mental Health in the Workplace Survey](#) results conducted by go2HR & the Canadian Mental Health Association in 2024 provides tourism and hospitality-specific data.

Some key statistics from this study:

- 92% of BC tourism & hospitality employers say mental health is a priority, yet 72% don't know where to start.
 - Commitment to PH&S is very strong in the industry. [WorkSafeBC's Psychological Health & Safety Framework for Success](#) will provide leaders with a clear framework to turn this commitment into meaningful action.
- 70% of businesses have at least some policies, practices, and training in place to support workplace mental health and PH&S. 30% of BC tourism & hospitality employers say that they have effective policies, practices, and training in place that support a strong, positive workplace culture.
 - Most BC tourism and hospitality employers have already begun to invest in mental health in the workplace and so fully committing to PH&S would then ensure those efforts guarantee the reduction of real psychological risk, instead of minimally satisfying requirements.
- Leadership training and support is the one area where the majority of businesses (56%) feel that they could use more support/resources in.
 - Leaders play a big role in reinforcing a psychologically healthy and safe culture. Investing in leadership capability will strengthen team morale, helps keep workers from leaving, and improve performance.
- Seasonality is the most common workplace stressor for businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry (59% of businesses).
 - Peak season pressure is unavoidable; peak season breakdowns are not. PH&S supports better planning around workload, recovery, and expectations so teams stay functional when demand is highest.

- Over half of the tourism and hospitality employers surveyed report challenges in dealing with difficult customers.
- Customer aggression is a psychological hazard, and PH&S provides a structured way to manage and reduce this workplace risk.
- Online resources are the most commonly used (42% of employers reporting they have used them)
- Getting started with PH&S doesn't require major investment. Leaders can build on what's already in place by using well-received, trusted tools like the free educational courses and resources offered on [go2HR and CMHA's People Working Well Hub](#).

How These Metrics Support the Business Case for PH&S

These statistics help make the case for PH&S by demonstrating:

- Most tourism and hospitality employers already recognize mental health as a priority.
- Many have taken steps, but those steps are not working as intended.
- The biggest stressors in the industry are seasonality, workload pressure, and customer aggression. These are all predictable and manageable, especially when using the WorkSafeBC Framework for Psychological Health & Safety.
- Investing in leadership capability is the clearest and most effective place to start.
- PH&S is not about adding new work, it's about maximizing the effectiveness of existing safety and procedures.

2) WorkSafeBC Mental Health Injury Claims data

- WorkSafeBC has reported a growth of 118% in accepted psychological injury claims between 2018 and 2022. A trend that continues to grow (WorkSafeBC, 2024). Although PH&S-related claims currently represent a smaller proportion of overall claims compared to physical injuries, their rapid growth rate is a growing concern. These claims often involve longer processing times, extended recovery periods, greater time loss, and more complex return-to-work processes than many physical injury claims
- [WorkSafeBC Psychological Injury \(mental disorder\) Claims](#) from 2020–2024 show a steady upward trend over this period.
- In 2024, there were 184 mental health-related injury claims submitted in the tourism and hospitality sector. Of those, 37 were accepted by WorkSafeBC, meaning about one-third of the claims met the criteria for compensation ([WorkSafeBC, 2024](#)).

The total number of claims suggest that psychosocial hazards like job design, workplace conditions, the interpersonal environment, exposure to traumatic events, and a lack of mental health resources are increasing the amount of mental health-related injury claims in the tourism and hospitality industry. Even when claims aren't accepted, they often

signal early warning signs like burnout, high stress, or conflict in the workplace. When these indicators are left unaddressed, they can lead to consequences that challenge business operations including absenteeism, presenteeism, losing workers, an increase in errors, and poor guest experiences. PH&S helps employers address these risks early, before they turn into costly claims, staffing disruptions, or safety incidents. Investing in prevention is often far less expensive than managing even one accepted mental health claim.

- While WorkSafeBC doesn't state a specific average dollar figure for a mental health injury in BC, mental health claims generally tend to be among the most expensive and complex types of workplace insurance claims due to:
 - Adjudication of claims is a lengthy process – lost time and recovery time, even if the claim is not accepted.
 - Shortage of psychologists and psychiatrists in British Columbia and it takes time for the worker's claim to be reviewed by the practitioner (time loss, recovery time – even if the claim is not accepted).
 - Costs of ongoing psychological and medical treatment.
 - Return-to-work planning and rehabilitation.
 - Indirect costs such as reduced productivity, replacement staffing, re-training, etc

3) [People Working Well Psychological Health & Safety for Young Workers](#)

- Young workers (aged 15-24) represent the largest group at 28% of the total of the tourism and hospitality workforce in British Columbia.
- Young workers report higher levels of psychological distress than any other age group and access to workplace psychological support is among the benefits they value most.

4) The Cost of PH&S (Canada-wide statistics)

- Mental health problems are estimated to cost the Canadian economy over \$50 billion annually, including lost productivity, absenteeism, and health care costs ([Mental Health Commission of Canada](#)).
- Approximately 30% of short- and long-term disability claims in Canada are related to mental health problems, with mental illness driving a significant portion of disability costs for employers ([Canadian Mental Health Association](#)).
- In a 2025 workplace survey, 39% of Canadian workers reported feeling burnt out (up from previous years) and burnout was estimated to cost employers \$5,500–\$28,500 per worker annually ([Mental Health Research Canada, 2025](#)).
- Over half (52%) of Canadians workers have experienced challenges that affected their work, but only 33% disclosed this to their employer ([Mental Health Research Canada, 2025](#)).

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- Co-worker (65%) and manager (59%) support have the strongest impact on worker mental health ([Mental Health Research Canada, 2025](#)).

Internal benchmarks (business-specific measures)

These metrics help businesses identify the impact of not having a psychologically healthy and safe workplace.

- Review absenteeism (sick time), overtime, scheduling, EAP usage patterns, and incident trends: near misses, WorkSafeBC psychological injury (mental disorder) claims.
- Review and note trends from Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee (JHSC) Meetings or Worker Representative meetings to identify recurring themes related to PH&S topics including workplace incidents, near-misses, claims that have a PH&S impact, workload, job design, exposure to traumatic events, safety communication challenges, violence prevention, working alone, bullying and harassment, new and young worker training, first aid procedures, and the availability of employer supports such as mental health resources.
- Review feedback from direct conversations or check-ins with workers or your team and note themes or concerns that can be addressed through PH&S.

Our team at go2HR can help you access this information. To get started, [book a consultation](#) with a health & safety specialist.

2. What are the key business case strategies and statistics for Psychological Health and Safety in tourism and hospitality for medium and large businesses and small businesses?

Key talking points to build your PH&S business pitch proposal:

- Tourism and hospitality work is fast-paced, customer-facing, seasonal, and high in emotional labour, all of which increase psychosocial risk, especially during peak season.
- In the absence of PH&S, the risk of costly turnover (how often workers leave a workplace and need to be replaced) increases. Replacing an hourly worker can cost a business up to six months' salary; replacing a leader can cost up to 18 months' salary, compounding costly, ongoing labour challenges in the tourism and hospitality sector.
- Poor PH&S contributes to absenteeism (sick calls, no-shows, WorkSafeBC claims) and presenteeism (workers showing up to work while unwell), both of which damage workplace culture, the guest experience, the employer's reputation, and the financial bottom line.
- WorkSafeBC psychological injury (mental disorder) claims are increasing across BC, often involving longer claim processing times, recovery, and higher costs than many physical injuries.
- WorkSafeBC has reported a growth of 118% in accepted psychological injury (mental disorder) claims between 2018 and 2022. A trend that continues to grow

(WorkSafeBC, 2024). Although PH&S-related claims currently represent a smaller proportion of overall claims compared to physical injuries, their rapid growth rate is a growing concern. These claims often involve longer processing times, extended recovery periods, greater time loss, and more complex return-to-work processes than many physical injury claims

- WorkSafeBC is actively reinforcing PH&S through conducting workplace inspections under its [Psychological Health & Safety Inspectional Initiative](#), tied to key areas such as violence prevention, bullying and harassment, working alone, new worker training, JHSC/Worker Representatives, and first aid procedures.

→Note: employers should have policies and procedures in place for all six focus areas.

Benefits of Implementing a PH&S Strategy

- PH&S supports cost control by reducing turnover, sick days, and rework.
- PH&S improves retention, which stabilizes teams in an industry already struggling with staffing shortages
- PH&S creates operational consistency, because fewer crises mean leaders can focus on running the business instead of putting out fires (reacting).
- PH&S improves guest experience, because workers who feel supported deliver better service.
- PH&S is a preventive safety strategy that helps identify psychosocial hazards before they cause psychological harm (proactive approach).
- PH&S is a leadership competency because how leaders communicate, prioritize, and respond to their teams directly affects workplace psychological risk.
- PH&S is a business continuity tool because fewer psychosocial hazards lead to more stable day-to-day operations.
- PH&S is a competitive advantage because workers stay where they feel respected and supported (minimize turnover).