

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL
AUSTRALIA

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2022-2025



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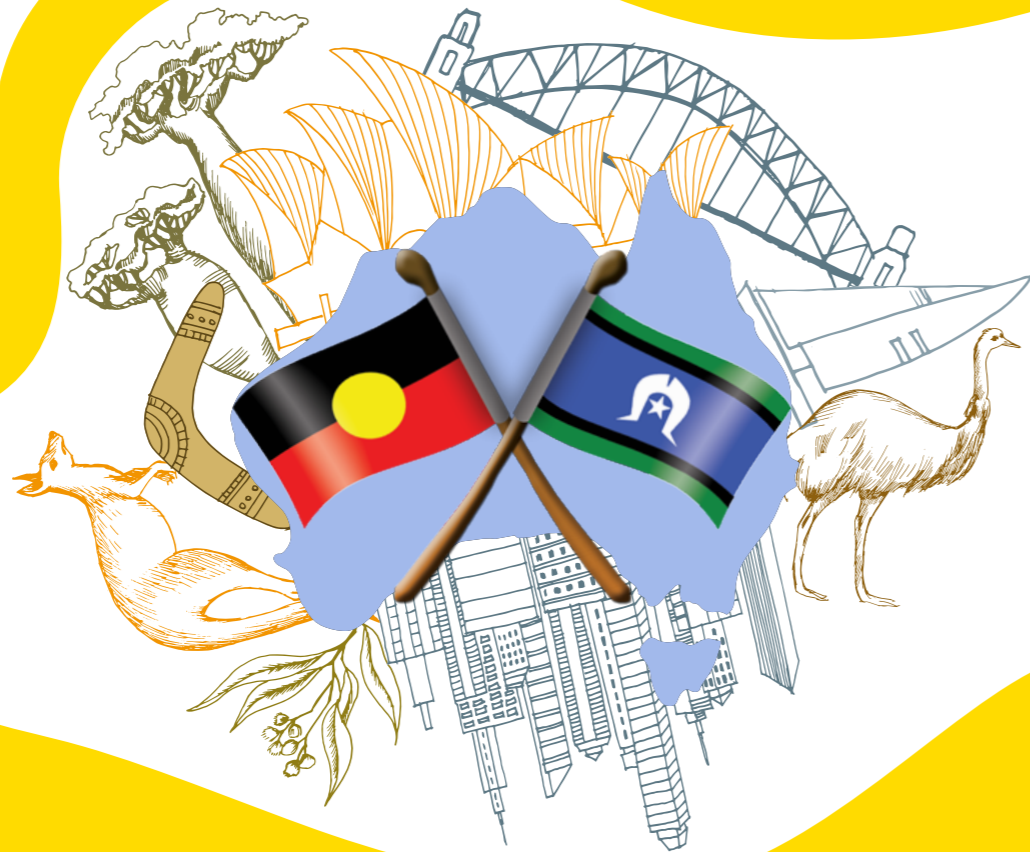
DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Amnesty International Australia proudly acknowledges all the Traditional Owners of the lands, waterways and skies throughout what is now called Australia. We acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their ongoing strength in upholding some of the world's oldest living cultures. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge that their sovereignty has never been ceded. The strength, resilience and pride of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their cultures, communities and identities continue to grow and thrive today despite the impact of colonisation and ongoing experiences of marginalisation, discrimination and dispossession. We also acknowledge and celebrate the important contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in progressing human rights both within our movement and across the social justice sector.



MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

INTRODUCTION

Amnesty International is an independent, global movement of individuals who campaign courageously for human rights. In more than 150 countries worldwide, over 10 million of us stand together for justice, freedom, human dignity and equality.

We are committed to creating an inclusive, representative and culturally competent movement. We aspire to be a truly diverse, inclusive, safe and healthy movement so that we can be more effective in defending human rights.

We recognise that sustaining the mental health and wellbeing of our movement in the fight for human rights is crucial for the sustainability of our movement and our ability to have an impact on injustice. This mental health and wellbeing plan sets out the initiatives that we will have in place to support the mental health and wellbeing of all the individuals in our movement.



OUR STORY

In 1961 London lawyer Peter Benenson had an inspired idea: to mobilise public opinion worldwide and free prisoners of conscience.

Since then, Amnesty International has become a global movement of more than 10 million individuals defending freedom, with a presence in 150 countries. Amnesty International is independent of any political ideology, economic interest or religion. We are a diverse and democratic movement of individuals who demand dignity, freedom, justice and equality for all.

Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that belong to every single one of

us – but are violated every single day. Amnesty International sends experts on missions into countries where human rights abuses are occurring to investigate and produce accurate and reliable research. We lobby governments and other powerful groups, to hold them to account and call on them to respect international law. Through communications, including publishing reports and working with international media, Amnesty International exposes human rights abuses and calls the guilty to justice. By organising and mobilising our supporters worldwide we demand action from individuals and institutions which can make change happen.

DEFINITION: MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY MENTAL HEALTH?

At Amnesty International Australia (Amnesty), mental health is an integral and essential component of overall health. It is a state of wellbeing in which every individual in our movement

- realises their own abilities,
- can cope with the normal stresses of life,
- can work productively and fruitfully, and
- is able to make a contribution to their community.¹

A mentally healthy movement is essential for individual health, collective wellbeing and productivity. The wellbeing of Amnesty staff, volunteers and activists is a key factor in determining the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of our movement. By implementing wellbeing measures to complement other health and safety measures, we can ensure that we are all safe, healthy and engaged.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY WELLBEING?

Wellbeing relates to all aspects of life and work within Amnesty. It includes:

- the quality and safety of the physical environment,
- the mental health of individuals in our movement,
- how individuals feel, perceive and experience their work, their working environment and the organisation's culture, and
- the organisation of our work, teams, campaigns and activities.

A MENTALLY HEALTHY MOVEMENT



¹ World Health Organisation (WHO): Health and Wellbeing, accessed 17 March 2022: <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/major-themes/health-and-well-being>

The wellbeing of Amnesty staff, volunteers and activists is a key factor in determining our long-term effectiveness. A mentally healthy movement is one where:

- everyone (including managers, staffs, activists and volunteers) understands mental health and wellbeing and openly talk about it,
- individuals in our movement watch out for each other and ask each other if they're okay,
- leaders in our movement take ownership of collective resilience by supporting the ability of the movement to adapt, respond and recover from challenges, setbacks and unforeseen circumstances,
- individuals in our movement are equipped with the knowledge about the things they can do to build resilience for challenging times,
- individuals in our movement are encouraged to open up and seek help during difficult times, and a culture is built in which individuals feel comfortable to do that,

- individuals in our movement with mental health concerns seek help early, and
- individuals in our movement with mental health concerns are supported.

We recognise that sustaining hope, optimism and the mental health and wellbeing of our movement in the fight for human rights is crucial for the sustainability of our movement and our ability to have an impact on injustice. It can be incredibly difficult to maintain this hope and optimism in the face of continued structural and systemic injustice. This is also particularly challenging for our activists and volunteers who generously commit their time and energy for free while balancing multiple other personal and professional commitments. We acknowledge the unique experiences and contributions of our activists, volunteers and individuals with lived experience who are part of our movement and challenge injustice everyday.



OUR VALUES

Empowerment: We build individual power.

Persistence: We are resolute in pursuit of our goals.

Integrity: We hold ourselves to the highest standards.

Courage: We are fearless in upholding human rights.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Mental Health and Wellbeing Plan is to help strengthen the mental health and wellbeing of our movement. The Plan relates to all aspects of Amnesty, including:

- the quality and safety of the physical environment,
- the mental health of individuals in our movement,
- how individuals feel, perceive and experience their work, their working environment and the organisation's culture, and
- the organisation of our work, teams, campaigns and activities.



THEMES

The themes in this Mental Health and Wellbeing Plan include:

- Accessible support tools and resources
- Processes, policies and systems
- Resilience Building
- Training and Capability building



OBJECTIVES

Accessible support tools and resources:

To provide accessible tools and resources to support the mental health and wellbeing of all our staff, leadership and movement.

Processes, policies and systems:

To implement and communicate processes, policies and systems that support the mental health and wellbeing of our staff and movement.

Resilience Building:

To implement a regular plan of resilience building and of celebrating, rewarding and recognising our staff and movement.

Training and Capability building:

To deliver tailored, regular and accessible training across the movement including to managers and people leaders, staff, the Activist Leadership Committees, the board and volunteers and activists.

Theme 1

ACCESSIBLE SUPPORT TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Objective:

To provide accessible tools and resources to support the mental health and wellbeing of all our staff, leadership and movement.

Actions:

1. Develop an intranet page for mental health and wellbeing resources and actively remind the movement to engage with these resources. These resources can include, but will not be limited to,
 - o Sustainable activism and work life balance (including compassion fatigue, burnout and self care),
 - o Mental health awareness (including managing depression and anxiety, mental health awareness and first aid and vicarious trauma), and
 - o Stress management (including organisational and time management skills).
2. Regularly promote and communicate the Mental Health and Wellbeing Plan, the EAP, the Lifeworks app and other regional and local specific support and community services to the movement, including through physical resources available at all Action Centres.

3. Have a standing section on mental health and wellbeing in the People Powered Bulletin, Grassroot Reports, Quarterly Movement webinars, bimonthly huddle, campaign toolkits and other appropriate movement communications.
4. Develop and implement a Mental Health and Wellbeing component to be included in all inductions and exit interviews.
5. Host bi-annually Mental Health and Wellbeing sessions for the movement to reflect on, and share mental health and wellbeing resources and tips.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA

Theme 2

PROCESSES, POLICIES AND SYSTEMS

Objective:

To implement and communicate processes, policies and systems that support the mental health and wellbeing of our staff and movement.

Actions:

1. Regularly communicate to the movement policies and procedures relating to sexual harassment, discrimination and bullying, diversity and inclusion, flexible work and mental health and wellbeing to the movement, whilst ensuring that managers and team leaders are appropriately trained to support these policies.
2. Review the existing complaints and feedback process to ensure that it is clear, simplified,

accessible and culturally appropriate and regularly communicate it to the movement.

3. Provide anonymous feedback mechanisms for the movement to provide feedback on their experiences at Amnesty.
4. Implement a system where every complaint from the movement regarding bullying, discrimination and harassment is resolved and deidentified information on the number of complaints received, types of complaints and outcomes are shared quarterly to the Board and annually to the International Secretariat (where reporting does not contravene any privacy or confidentiality obligations).
5. Campaign and project leads to implement campaign/project debriefs into their processes aimed at supporting the mental health and wellbeing of individuals involved in a campaign/project.



6. Update project and campaign planning templates to include a mental health and wellbeing risk assessment and mitigation plan to determine what the mental health risks for the movement prior to, during and after the campaign/project (e.g. burnout, overload, trauma) and to address these risks.
7. Review current staff and engagement survey questions and integrate a component focused on mental health and wellbeing.
8. Update Performance Review Process to require staff to include a mental health and wellbeing goal into their performance plan.
9. Incorporate request for gender affirmation leave for transgender staff in future Enterprise Bargaining Agreement negotiations.
10. Each team and regional office to review and design current and future work practices, teams and roles (e.g. tasks, duties, responsibilities, location, timing) to ensure they are designed flexibly to support our movement and organisation.²
11. Activist Leadership Committees and staff to actively and regularly encourage activists and volunteers to take breaks, from activism from induction and on an ongoing basis.
12. Activist Leadership Committees to encourage and assist activists and volunteers to engage with groups that campaign on areas of their interest, from induction and on an ongoing basis.
13. Appoint, train and provide support and resources to at least two contact officers per region (one volunteer who works closely with the regional Activism Leadership Committee and one staff member) who will share Amnesty policies with individuals and explain the complaint and feedback process to individuals.³

² For more information, refer to Diversity Council of Australia's publication, Future Flex: Mainstreaming Flexibility by Team Design: <https://www.dca.org.au/research/project/future-flex-mainstreaming-flexibility-team-design>

³ Please note that there is no expectation that the contact officers will assist in any complaint or feedback process. Their role is solely to explain the process and provide information regarding the process.

Theme 3

RESILIENCE BUILDING

Objective:

To implement a regular plan of resilience building and of celebrating, rewarding and recognising our staff and movement.

Actions:

1. Implement a process to regularly celebrate, reward and recognise all wins from the movement, including small wins in major campaigns.
2. Managers, people leaders and Regional Activism Leadership Committees lead by example by looking after their own mental health, setting reasonable work expectations for themselves and others, and helping normalise conversations about the mental health and wellbeing of the movement.
3. Amnesty Management Team to regularly review their use of short term contracts in accordance with the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement and to reduce mental health implications of uncertainty for staff under fixed term contracts.
4. Recruit for regionally representative Social Club Leaders whose role is to organise regular regional and movement wide events and activities aimed at connecting and socialising with others in the Amnesty community.
5. Develop an optional workplace 'buddy program' aimed at connecting new staff members with existing staff members.
6. Amnesty Management Team and a representative from the Movement Team to develop and implement a process for checking in on, and supporting, the movement when traumatic news occurs.



Theme 4

TRAINING AND CAPABILITY BUILDING

Objective:

To deliver tailored, regular and accessible training across the movement including to managers and people leaders, staff, the Activist Leadership Committees, the board and volunteers and activists.

Actions:

1. Develop and deliver accessible training on a range of mental health and wellbeing topics to the movement including, but not limited to,
 - o diversity and inclusion training (including bystander/upstander training),
 - o sustainable activism and work life balance (including compassion fatigue, burnout, self care),
 - o mental health awareness (including managing depression and anxiety, mental health awareness and first aid, vicarious trauma), and
 - o stress management (including organisational and time management skills).

2. Deliver mental health first aid training to all staff and at least one volunteer per region who will work closely with the Regional Activism Leadership Committees.
3. Identify teams where knowledge on how to complete critical work and tasks is limited to just one team member, and provide multi-skilling for other members to ensure continuity during periods of leave and for succession planning.



ACTION TABLE

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
THEME 1: Accessible support tools and resources		
OBJECTIVE: To provide accessible tools and resources to support the mental health and wellbeing of all our staff, leadership and movement.		
Develop an intranet page for mental health and wellbeing resources and actively remind the movement to engage with these resources. These resources can include, but will not be limited to, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable activism and work life balance (including compassion fatigue, burnout and self care), Mental health awareness (including managing depression and anxiety, mental health awareness and first aid and vicarious trauma), and Stress management (including organisational and time management skills). 	People and Culture Team Movement Team Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Specialist	Q3, 2023
Regularly promote and communicate the Mental Health and Wellbeing Plan, the EAP, the Lifeworks app and other regional and local specific support and community services to the movement, including through physical resources available at all Action Centres.	People and Culture Team Movement Team	Ongoing
Have a standing section on mental health and wellbeing in the People Powered Bulletin, Grassroot Reports, Quarterly Movement webinars, bimonthly huddle, campaign toolkits and other appropriate movement communications.	Movement Team Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Specialist	Ongoing

Develop and implement a Mental Health and Wellbeing component to be included in all inductions and exit interviews.	Movement Team People and Culture Team	Q2, 2023, and ongoing
Host bi-annually Mental Health and Wellbeing sessions for the movement to reflect and share mental health and wellbeing resources and tips.	Movement Team Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Specialist	Q2, 2023, and ongoing

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
THEME 2: Processes, policies and systems		
OBJECTIVE: To implement and communicate processes, policies and systems that support the mental health and wellbeing of our staff and movement.		
Regularly communicate to the movement policies and procedures relating to sexual harassment, discrimination and bullying, diversity and inclusion, flexible work and mental health and wellbeing to the movement, whilst ensuring that managers and team leaders are appropriately trained to support these policies.	People and Culture Team Amnesty Management Team Activist Leadership Committee	Q4, 2022, then ongoing
Review the existing complaints and feedback process to ensure that it is clear, simplified, accessible and culturally appropriate and regularly communicate it to the movement.	People and Culture Team Movement Team Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Specialist	Q3, 2023

ACTION TABLE

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
THEME 2: Processes, policies and systems		
Provide anonymous feedback mechanisms for the movement to provide feedback on their experiences at Amnesty.	Movement Team Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Specialist	Q3, 2023
Implement a system where every complaint from the movement regarding bullying, discrimination and harassment is resolved and deidentified information on the number of complaints received, types of complaints and outcomes are shared quarterly to the Board and annually to the International Secretariat, where reporting does not contravene any privacy or confidentiality obligations.	People and Culture Team Movement Team	Q4, 2023
Campaign and project leads to implement campaign/project debriefs into their processes aimed at supporting the mental health and wellbeing of individuals involved in a campaign/project.	Amnesty Management Team	Q3, 2023
Update project and campaign planning templates to include a mental health and wellbeing risk assessment and mitigation plan to determine what the mental health risks for the movement prior to, during and after the campaign/project (e.g. burnout, overload, trauma) and to address these risks.	Amnesty Management Team	Q3, 2023
Review current staff and engagement survey questions and integrate a component focused on mental health and wellbeing.	People and Culture Team	Q1, 2023

Update Performance Review Process to require staff to include a mental health and wellbeing goal into their performance plan.	People and Culture Team	Q1, 2023
Incorporate request for gender affirmation leave for transgender staff in future Enterprise Bargaining Agreement negotiations.	People and Culture Team Union delegates	Q4, 2023
Each team and regional office to review and design current and future work practices, teams and roles (e.g. tasks, duties, responsibilities, location, timing) to ensure they are designed flexibly to support our movement and organisation.	Amnesty Management Team Activism Leadership Committees	Q2, 2024
Activist Leadership Committees and staff to actively and regularly encourage activists and volunteers to take breaks from activism from induction and on an ongoing basis.	Movement Team Activism Leadership Committees	Ongoing
Activist Leadership Committees to encourage and assist activists and volunteers to engage with groups that campaign on areas of their interest from induction and on an ongoing basis.	Movement Team Activism Leadership Committees	Ongoing
Appoint, train and provide support and resources to at least two contact officers per region (one volunteer who works closely with the regional Activism Leadership Committee and one staff member) who will share Amnesty policies with individuals and explain the complaint and feedback process to individuals.	Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Specialist People and Culture Team Movement Team Activism Leadership Committees	Q4, 2023

ACTION TABLE

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
THEME 3: Resilience Building		
OBJECTIVE: To implement a regular plan of resilience building and of celebrating, rewarding and recognising our staff and movement.		
Implement a process to regularly celebrate, reward and recognise all wins from the movement, including small wins in major campaigns.	Amnesty Management Team Movement Team Activism Leadership Committee	Q2, 2023, then ongoing
Managers, people leaders and Regional Activism Leadership Committees lead by example by looking after their own mental health, setting reasonable work expectations for themselves and others, and helping normalise conversations about the mental health and wellbeing of the movement.	Amnesty Management Team Amnesty Team Leads Activism Leadership Committee	Ongoing
Amnesty Management Team to regularly review their use of short term contracts in accordance with the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement and to reduce mental health implications of uncertainty for staff under fixed term contracts.	People and Culture Team Union delegates	Q4, 2023
Recruit for regionally representative Social Club Leaders whose role is to organise regular regional and movement wide events and activities aimed at connecting and socialising with others in the Amnesty community.	Movement Team Activism Leadership Committees	Q4, 2023
Develop an optional workplace 'buddy program' aimed at connecting new staff members with existing staff members.	People and Culture Team Amnesty Management Team	Q4, 2023
Amnesty Management Team and a representative from the Movement Team to develop and implement a process for checking in on, and supporting, the movement when traumatic news occurs.	Amnesty Management Team Movement Team	Q1, 2023, then ongoing

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
THEME 4: Training and Capability building		
OBJECTIVE: To deliver tailored, regular and accessible training across the movement including to managers and people leaders, staff, the Activist Leadership Committees, the board and volunteers and activists.		
Develop and deliver accessible training on a range of mental health and wellbeing topics to the movement including, but not limited to, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> diversity and inclusion training (including bystander/upstander training), sustainable activism and work life balance (including compassion fatigue, burnout, self care), mental health awareness (including managing depression and anxiety, mental health awareness and first aid, vicarious trauma), and stress management (including organisational and time management skills). 	Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Specialist People and Culture Team Movement Team	Q4, 2024
Deliver mental health first aid training to all staff and at least one volunteer per region who will work closely with the Regional Activism Leadership Committees.	Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Specialist People and Culture Team Movement Team Activism Leadership Committees	Q2, 2023
Identify teams where knowledge on how to complete critical work and tasks is limited to just one team member, and provide multi-skilling for other members to ensure continuity during periods of leave and for succession planning.	Amnesty Management Team	Q4, 2023

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**CHALLENGE
INJUSTICE.**

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