

1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

- 1.1 Lignacite Ltd is committed to safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of its staff. The business fully recognises that it has a duty of care to protect the mental health and wellbeing of its staff, while they are at work.
- 1.2 The business is also committed to tackling disability discrimination, including discrimination related to people who experience mental health problems.
- 1.3 The company also wishes to go beyond its legal obligations and promote good mental health and well-being by providing safe, healthy working environments, ensuring all of its staff are fully supported in their designated roles and by promoting a healthy work-life balance.
- 1.4 This policy is applicable to all employees, and to both the Brandon and Nazeing sites.

2.0 THE LEGAL POSITION:

- 2.1 The **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** places a clear duty on to employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees, and others who may be affected by their activities. This duty does not just include the physical health and well-being of its staff but also extends their mental health and well-being.
- 2.2 The **Equal Opportunities Act 2010** requires employers to ensure that employees suffering from a mental health condition are not discriminated against and are treated fairly and equally.

3.0 DEFINITIONS:

- 3.1 There are three key terms used by Lignacite and included in this policy:

- **Mental Health:** Mental health is used as an umbrella term to both the concepts of mental health problems and mental well-being.
- **Mental Health Problems/Conditions:** This refers to symptoms that meet the criteria for diagnosis of mental illness, or symptoms which interfere with emotional, cognitive or social function.

Examples include depression and anxiety and more severe mental health problems, such as schizophrenia.

- **Mental Well-Being:** Mental well-being includes aspects of subjective well-being (e.g., positivity and life satisfaction) and psychological well-being (e.g., mastery and self-control), having a purpose in life, a sense of belonging and positive relationships with others.

4.0 THE POLICY:

- 4.1 The business will support its employees by providing a safe and healthy work environment, by promoting good mental health and wellbeing at work and by ensuring those who suffer from mental health conditions are not discriminated against.
- 4.2 The policy aims to ensure that all employees, irrespective of the position and level they hold and with consideration of any legally protected characteristics (e.g., race, faith, gender, etc.) are:
 - Provided with a basic understanding of mental health and wellbeing issues.
 - Protected from harm to their mental health whilst at work.
 - Supported if they experience mental health problems.
 - Protected from discrimination.

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4.3 The business will achieve this by:

- Informing new employees of policies which relate to mental health at inductions.
- Promoting a culture based on trust, confidentiality, support, and mutual respect, which allows employees with mental health problems to be able to report difficulties without fear of discrimination or reprisal.
- Carrying ethical audits at each of its manufacturing sites, at least every 2 years
- Developing all managers, directors, and senior staff to deal positively with mental health and wellbeing issues and to show leadership for this policy.
- Appointing the SHEQ Manager as mental health lead, to develop and manage the strategies and systems for protecting the mental health of its employees.
- Appointing trained mental health first aiders, to support those suffering from mental health problems.
- Monitoring data and legislation relating to mental health and protected characteristics.

4.4 The business will assess and control, where reasonably practicable, workplace factors which may have a negative effect on an employee's mental health. This will be carried out in accordance with the HSE Management Standards and ISO 45003 (psychological risks to health and safety).

4.5 The business will support employees to raise issues in the workplace that may be impacting their mental health. It will provide confidential assistance to employees who experience mental health problems through its appointed mental health first aiders and through external occupational health services.

4.6 The business is committed to not discriminating against job applicants who have suffered from mental health conditions and by actively seeking to remove any barriers for employment such individuals may experience.

4.7 The business will carry out regular workplace stress assessments to identify where workplace stress exists and any improvements that may be required to eliminate or reduce that stress. These will be completed in accordance with the HSE Management Standards and in accordance with ISO 45003 (psychological risks to health and safety).

4.8 The company will ensure all staff have clearly defined job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities and will provide them with good management support, appropriate training and adequate resources to do their job.

4.9 Lignacite Ltd is committed to ensuring that conflict is managed effectively and to ensuring the workplace is free from bullying and harassment.

4.10 Mental health awareness training will be provided to all staff, as part of the essential training plan, which should be completed within the first 12 weeks of employment. Additional training will be provided to staff according to their role and responsibilities.

4.11 The business will keep its employees informed on any organisational changes and other corporate issues which may cause anxiety to staff. This will be achieved through team meetings, toolbox talks, notice boards or one-to-one conversations.

4.12 Lignacite Ltd is committed to fully complying with ISO 45003 and ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of all its employees. As part of this commitment, the business will ensure that those suffering from mental health problems are treated fairly. It will ensure that such employees are given non-judgmental and pro-active support.

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Those returning to work after a long period of absence, due to a mental health problem, will receive full support, their return to work will be managed and where necessary changes to their normal duties will be implemented, and where appropriate, a phased return to work.

- 4.13** The company will make every effort to identify suitable alternative employment, in consultation with the employee, where a return to the same job is not possible, due to identified psychosocial risks.
- 4.14** The business is committed to ensuring that all matters relating to individual employees and their mental health is treated in the strictest of confidence. Information will be shared on a “need to know” basis only. All documented records and information will be stored in conjunction with the data protection acts and GDPR regulations.
- 4.15** The business will identify and assess psychosocial risks through its risk assessment programs, and where such risks are identified, will ensure those measures required to control those risks are identified and implemented.
- 4.16** As part of its commitment to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees, the business has implemented an integrated management system (IMS) that is certified to meet the requirements of ISO 45001 (Framework for Occupational Health and Safety). The business will seek to go beyond the requirements of ISO 45001 and adapt the system to also meet the requirements of ISO 45003 (psychological risks to health and safety).
- 4.17** This policy will be communicated to employees by displaying on work notice boards, by uploading to the integrated management system (IMS) and through direct training.
- 4.18** This policy will be reviewed annually.

5.0 ASSOCIATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

5.1 The following policies have applicability to this document:

- Health and Safety Policy (1.01)
- Business Ethics Policy (1.08)
- Dignity at Work Policy (1.10)
- Equal Opportunities Policy (1.12)
- Data Protection Policy (1.21)
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy (1.23)
- Menopause Policy (1.24)
- Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Policy (1.26)
- Recruitment Policy (1.27)

5.2 The following procedures have applicability to this document:

- Occupational Health (2.12)
- Risk Management (2.14)
- Whistle Blowing (2.16)
- Alcohol, Drug and Substance Use (3.05)
- Disabled Workers, Permanent and Temporary Impairments (3.11)
- New and Expectant Mothers (3.25)
- Young Workers (3.40)

Signed:.....  Date: 28/4/25
GAJ de Lotbiniere, Chairman

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