

The Critical Need for **Post-Deployment** Psychological Assessments



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INTRODUCTION

Private security contractors (PSCs), military police, and other personnel deployed to high-stress, war-torn environments experience significant psychological challenges. Implementing post-deployment psychological assessments for private security contractors and military police returning from high-stress environments is crucial for both individual well-being and organizational liability management. While pre-deployment assessments are standard, the post-deployment phase presents unique challenges that necessitate thorough psychological evaluations.

This white paper explores the necessity of post-deployment psychological evaluations to enhance personnel well-being, mitigate risks, and protect companies from legal liability.



THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TOLL OF DEPLOYMENT

Research consistently shows that deployment to high-stress environments increases the **risk of mental health disorders such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and Substance Use Disorder (SUD).**



Research studies indicate that **up to 53.5% of service members** report elevated psychiatric symptoms post-deployment, with symptoms often emerging months after returning home.

Signs and symptoms of these and other mental health diagnoses may not manifest immediately upon return from deployment. A study involving National Guard service members found that 41.2% reported clinically elevated psychiatric symptoms immediately post-deployment, increasing to 53.5% six months later. Notably, only 27.8% of those with elevated symptoms sought mental health treatment during this period.¹

Without structured post-deployment psychological evaluations, these individuals may go undiagnosed and untreated, leading to personal and organizational risks. This underscores the importance of structured post-deployment assessments to identify and address emerging mental health concerns.²

Benefits of Post-Deployment Assessments

Implementing structured post-deployment psychological assessments offers numerous benefits that extend beyond immediate mental health support. First, these assessments enable the early identification of and timely intervention for mental health issues such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety, ensuring that personnel receive the necessary care before conditions worsen. Second, by addressing psychological issues promptly, organizations can significantly reduce long-term healthcare costs associated with advanced treatments and prolonged medical care. Finally, ensuring that personnel are mentally fit and healthy enhances overall operational readiness, contributing to the effectiveness and preparedness of the organization for future assignments.



¹ PMC+2PMC+2<https://centerhealthyminds.org>+2<https://centerhealthyminds.org>

² Taylor & Francis Online+3NCBI+3Bureau of Justice Assistance+3Bureau of Justice Assistance

Early Identification and Intervention



Structured assessments facilitate the early detection of mental health issues, enabling timely intervention and support. By identifying psychological concerns before they escalate, personnel are better equipped to manage their symptoms and seek appropriate treatment options. This proactive approach not only aids in the recovery process but also fosters a supportive environment that encourages open dialogue about mental health. Additionally, early intervention can significantly reduce the stigma associated with seeking mental health care, promoting a culture of mind and body wellness within the organization.

Reduction in Long-Term Healthcare Costs



Addressing psychological issues promptly can mitigate the progression of disorders, potentially reducing the need for extensive future medical care. Proactive mental health care reduces the severity of conditions, decreasing the necessity for prolonged treatments and specialized interventions. This early approach to mental health management can result in significant cost savings for organizations, allowing resources to be allocated more efficiently. Additionally, reducing the long-term healthcare burden contributes to a healthier, more productive workforce, enhancing overall organizational effectiveness.

Enhanced Operational Readiness

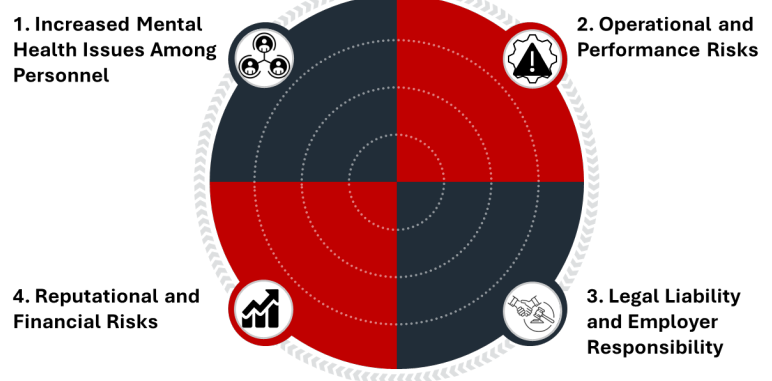


Ensuring personnel are mentally fit contributes to overall organizational effectiveness and readiness for future assignments. Mentally fit personnel are more resilient and adaptable, able to perform under pressure and in diverse environments. This resilience ensures that teams can efficiently execute their missions and better adapt to the unexpected challenges of high stress roles. Moreover, a mentally healthy workforce fosters a positive work culture, enhancing team cohesion and morale, which are crucial for successful operations.

Key Risks of Omitting Post-Deployment Assessments

Omitting post-deployment psychological assessments poses significant risks to both individuals and organizations. Neglecting these evaluations can lead to increased mental health issues among personnel, such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety, which may result in self-harm, violence, and substance use. Additionally, the absence of timely interventions can compromise operational effectiveness and performance, causing disruptions and conflicts within the team. Organizations also face heightened legal liability and employer responsibility, as untreated mental health disorders may lead to incidents that attract legal scrutiny. Furthermore, the

Key Risks of Omitting Post-Deployment Assessments



failure to address these issues may imply a failure to protect and/or negligence on the part of the employer, resulting in damage to the company's reputation and, potentially, in substantial financial losses, highlighting the critical need for structured post-deployment assessments.

1. Increased Mental Health Issues Among Personnel

Timely Intervention

Many psychological disorders develop or worsen post-deployment, **requiring timely intervention**. The nature of the deployment environment - characterized by exposure to violence, traumatic events, and prolonged stress - creates a **fertile ground for psychological disorders to either surface for the first time or escalate significantly**. Conditions such as PTSD often lie dormant until triggered by specific stressors, which may only become evident after personnel return to a non-combat setting. The manifestation of these disorders can be particularly insidious, with symptoms including hypervigilance, flashbacks, severe anxiety, and emotional numbing.



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Timely intervention is crucial in these cases to **prevent a cascade of negative outcomes**. Early detection through post-deployment psychological assessments enables prompt access to therapeutic resources, such as counseling and medication, which can significantly mitigate the severity of these conditions. Moreover, timely intervention helps **create a supportive reintegration process**, allowing personnel to better manage the transition back to civilian life. The importance of structured psychological evaluations cannot be overstated as they serve as a proactive measure, addressing mental health issues before they spiral into more severe, long-term problems.



Failure to Assess and Treat

Failure to assess and treat these conditions can lead to **self-harm, violence, or substance abuse**. Unaddressed psychological disorders can have severe repercussions not only for the individual but also for those around them.

Self-Harm

Violence

Substance Abuse



Self-harm, a tragic manifestation of untreated mental health issues, often stems from feelings of hopelessness, guilt, or overwhelming stress. This behavior can escalate into more dangerous forms, such as suicide, which is alarmingly prevalent among veterans and other personnel exposed to combat.



Moreover, untreated psychological conditions can lead to **aggressive behavior and violence**, potentially resulting in violence towards others. This can manifest in domestic settings, leading to strained or broken relationships, or in professional environments, causing conflicts with colleagues and superiors. Such violence may also pose a direct threat to public safety, exacerbating legal and reputational risks for employers.



Substance use is another critical issue linked to untreated mental health disorders. Individuals may turn to alcohol or drugs as coping mechanisms to numb emotional pain or to manage symptoms of anxiety and depression. This can result in a downward spiral of addiction, further impairing their ability to function both personally and professionally. Substance use can also heighten the risk of criminal behavior, accidents, and health complications, adding to the cumulative cost and complexity of addressing these issues post-deployment.



2. Operational and Performance Risks

Undiagnosed Disorders



Undiagnosed psychological disorders can **impair judgment, decision-making, and overall job performance**. These disorders often go unnoticed due to their subtle and insidious nature, manifesting in ways that might be overlooked or misattributed to other stressors or personality traits. For instance, individuals suffering from PTSD may exhibit heightened levels of irritability, impulsivity, or difficulty in concentrating - factors that can severely **undermine their ability to make sound decisions, particularly in high-stress environments**.

Anxiety disorders can lead to excessive worry and fear, which might impair an individual's capacity to evaluate situations objectively and respond appropriately. This may result in a tendency to avoid critical tasks or overreact to minor issues, hampering operational efficiency. **Depression**, another common post-deployment disorder, can drain energy and motivation, causing a decline in productivity and engagement. When left untreated, these conditions can culminate in **severe performance deficits**, jeopardizing both individual and team outcomes.



In addition to affecting performance, undiagnosed psychological disorders can **disrupt interpersonal relationships within the workplace**. Colleagues and supervisors might find it challenging to interact with affected individuals, leading to miscommunication, conflicts, and a breakdown in teamwork. This can **create a hostile work environment**, further exacerbating the individual's mental health issues and overall organizational morale.



Judgement

Decision-Making

Job Performance



Effectiveness and Absenteeism



Personnel may struggle with reintegration, leading to reduced effectiveness and increased absenteeism. The challenge of reintegration into civilian life and the workplace after deployment can be immense. Personnel may face difficulties in adapting to a less structured environment, where the clear hierarchies and routine tasks of military life are replaced with varied responsibilities and more ambiguities. The stark contrast between the high-stress, high-stakes situations faced during deployment and the comparatively mundane challenges of daily work can lead to feelings of alienation and frustration. This discordance can **manifest in reduced effectiveness**, as individuals struggle to focus and remain engaged in their roles.



Moreover, the mental and emotional toll of deployment can lead to increased absenteeism. For example, Veterans, private security contractors, border patrol agents, and workers in other like occupations may require time off to attend therapy sessions or might need personal days to cope with the overwhelming stress and anxiety that arise from their experiences. The struggle to reintegrate can also result in a lack of motivation or energy, prompting individuals to take more frequent sick days or simply avoid the workplace altogether. This absenteeism not only affects their professional growth but also disrupts team dynamics and project timelines, creating a ripple effect that can **impact overall organizational productivity**.



Compounding these issues is the potential stigma associated with mental health struggles. Individuals might resist seeking help or discussing their difficulties for fear of being judged or misunderstood by colleagues. This reluctance can exacerbate their struggles, leading to a further decline in effectiveness and **increasing the likelihood of absenteeism**. Organizations must address these challenges proactively, fostering a supportive environment that encourages open dialogue and provides robust mental health resources to aid in the reintegration process.

3. Legal Liability and Employer Responsibility

Duty of Care



Employers have a **duty of care** to ensure personnel receive adequate mental health screening. This duty of care extends to providing comprehensive mental health screenings to identify potential psychological issues that may have resulted from deployment. **Mental health screening should be a fundamental component of the reintegration process**, ensuring that personnel are evaluated for conditions such as PTSD, anxiety, depression, and other stress-related disorders. It is not simply a legal obligation but an ethical one, emphasizing the employer's commitment to the well-being of their employees.



Employers must establish **protocols for regular mental health evaluations** and create an **environment where individuals feel safe and supported** in discussing their mental health concerns. This includes training managers and supervisors to recognize signs of mental health struggles and to respond appropriately, ensuring that employees are directed to the necessary resources.



Employers should **collaborate with mental health professionals** to develop tailored interventions and support systems that address the unique needs of each individual. In doing so, they can help **mitigate the adverse effects of psychological disorders on job performance, foster a more inclusive and supportive workplace, and ultimately enhance organizational productivity.**

Mental Health Screening



Evaluation Protocols



Collaboration with Mental Health Professionals



Lawsuits



Lawsuits have been filed against government contractors when employees harm themselves or others post-deployment due to untreated PTSD and related conditions. The issue of untreated PTSD and related conditions among post-deployment personnel has not only **raised ethical concerns** but also **significant legal challenges** for government contractors. In numerous instances, employees who have returned from deployment have experienced severe psychological distress, sometimes resulting in tragic outcomes, including self-harm or harm to others. These unfortunate events have led to a **wave of lawsuits aimed at holding employers accountable** for their failure to provide adequate mental health support.



Legal actions in these cases often center on the **argument that employers neglected their duty of care** by not implementing sufficient mental health screening and support mechanisms for returning personnel. Plaintiffs claim that the contractors should have **foreseen the risks** associated with untreated PTSD and other stress-related disorders and taken proactive measures to mitigate these dangers. The absence of such assessments and interventions is thus presented as a **direct cause of the harm** suffered by the employees, making the contractors liable for the resulting damages.

These lawsuits can have **profound repercussions** for the accused companies. **Financially**, they may face substantial settlements or judgments, which can strain resources and impact profitability. Additionally, the legal battles often attract **media attention**, potentially tarnishing the contractors' reputations and leading to a **loss of trust among their clients and stakeholders**. This **public scrutiny** can also deter potential clients from engaging with these firms, further exacerbating their financial woes.

Liability – Foreseeability

Neglecting post-deployment psychological assessments can expose organizations to significant liability risks. There are documented incidents where private military contractors, suffering from untreated PTSD, engaged in harmful behaviors, leading to legal and financial repercussions for their employers. For

instance, a contractor with known PTSD shot two colleagues after a drinking session in Baghdad's Green Zone, highlighting the severe consequences of unaddressed mental health issues.³

Foreseeability of mental health risks post-deployment could be argued in legal cases, making the absence of assessments a potential liability. Employers have a significant responsibility in ensuring the mental well-being of their personnel, especially those returning from deployment. **Foreseeability**, in legal terms, refers to the capacity to anticipate potential issues based on existing knowledge and precedent. Given the well-documented effects of deployment on mental health, it is reasonable to argue that employers should **foresee the risk of conditions** such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression among their returning employees.



Failure to provide adequate mental health assessments and support can therefore be seen as **a breach of duty**. The absence of these assessments, despite the foreseeability of mental health risks, places employers in a precarious position of liability. Legal cases often hinge on whether an employer could reasonably anticipate the psychological challenges faced by their personnel and whether they responded appropriately to address these issues. By neglecting this duty, employers may face substantial legal repercussions, including liability for the harm suffered by employees because of untreated mental health conditions.



4. Reputational and Financial Risks

Public Scrutiny



Incidents involving post-deployment psychological distress can result in **public scrutiny, damaging the reputation** of contracting firms. Public scrutiny can amplify the **negative perception** of contracting firms, leading to a cascade of reputational damages. Once media coverage highlights the failure to address post-deployment psychological distress, these firms may be **viewed as neglectful or insensitive** to the mental health needs of their employees. This perception can be particularly damaging in an era where **corporate social responsibility and employee welfare** are highly valued.



Negative publicity can lead to a **loss of trust among clients, stakeholders, and the public**. Clients may become wary of associating with firms that are under intense scrutiny, fearing that their own reputation might be tarnished by association. Stakeholders may question the ethical practices and long-term viability of the firm, leading to **potential divestments or reduced support**. Additionally, the broader public, including potential employees, may be deterred from engaging with these companies, impacting recruitment and retention efforts.

Financial Risk

Companies may face financial burdens from legal settlements, insurance claims, and lost contracts.

³ Mental Health and Private Military Contractors | Cato Institute

Legal settlements can be significant, often running into millions of dollars, especially if the courts find the companies liable for failing to provide adequate mental health support for their employees. These settlements can include **compensatory damages** for pain and suffering, medical expenses, and lost wages due to the employees' inability to work. Settlements might also include substantial **punitive damages**. The financial strain of these settlements can be severe, impacting the overall fiscal health of the company.

Insurance claims can also burden companies financially. When employees file claims related to psychological distress and mental health issues, insurance premiums may rise dramatically. In some cases, insurers may deny coverage for these claims if they determine that the company was negligent in providing proper support, leaving the company to bear the full cost of the claims.

Lost contracts compound the financial challenges for these companies. As the firm's reputation suffers due to negative publicity and public scrutiny, existing clients may choose to terminate their contracts, and potential clients may opt to partner with competitors. This loss of business can lead to a decline in revenue, further exacerbating the financial difficulties faced by the company. In a competitive market, rebuilding trust and securing new contracts can be a long and arduous process, leaving the company vulnerable to prolonged financial instability.

Legal Risks, Case Examples and Legal Precedents

Government contractors, particularly those employing private military contractors and security personnel, have faced lawsuits and legal scrutiny when employees returned from deployment and harmed themselves or others. Some key areas of liability include:



1. Negligent Hiring and Retention

- If a contractor knowingly employs or retains a worker with a history of severe mental health issues and that worker later commits harm, the company can be sued for failing to act responsibly.
- Example: Some lawsuits have alleged that PSCs failed to conduct adequate psychological screenings, allowing individuals with PTSD or other disorders to continue working in high-stress environments.

2. Failure to Provide Adequate Medical and Psychological Care

- Some contractors have been accused of not offering sufficient post-deployment psychological care, leading to tragic outcomes.
- Example: Former employees and other personnel at a prominent PSC organization have alleged that their employers neglected mental health treatment, contributing to self-harm or violent incidents.

3. Wrongful Death and Workplace Safety Violations

- Families of contractors who have died by suicide post-deployment have, in some cases, sued companies for failing to provide proper post-deployment psychological support.
- Some cases have argued that PTSD-related violence (e.g., a contractor harming others) could have been prevented with appropriate screenings and interventions.

4. Government Accountability Office (GAO) and Congressional Scrutiny

- The GAO and lawmakers have investigated the mental health policies of organizations and government agencies to assess whether they provide sufficient psychological care.
- Some reports highlight gaps in post-deployment care, increasing legal exposure for employers who fail to address these concerns.

Potential Legal Precedents

While specific cases involving contractors may not always be public, **wrongful death suits and employer negligence cases** have been filed in similar contexts, such as:

- Veterans suing the U.S. government or VA for inadequate mental health care leading to suicide.
- Law enforcement agencies being sued when officers with PTSD are involved in shootings or suicides.
- Corporate employers being held liable when workplace violence was linked to untreated mental health conditions.

Several cases highlight the consequences of neglecting post-deployment mental health care:

Private Security Contractor #1 Lawsuits



Government contractors have faced legal action due to claims of inadequate mental health support, demonstrating employer liability concerns.

One prominent government contractor has been embroiled in multiple lawsuits over the years due to allegations of failing to provide adequate mental health support to its employees. These legal actions underscore the growing concern about employer liability in the context of mental health care, particularly for personnel deployed in high-stress environments.

1. One notable case involved **former employees who claimed that their employer neglected to offer sufficient mental health assessments and follow-up care after their deployment in conflict zones**. The plaintiffs argued that this lack of support contributed to severe psychological distress, manifesting in conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression. They contended that the company's failure to address these issues adequately led to long-term suffering and impaired their ability to work, demanding compensation for their pain and suffering, as well as medical expenses and lost wages.
2. In another high-profile lawsuit, the families of several employees who died by suicide after returning from deployment **alleged that this company was negligent in providing necessary mental health services**. They asserted that the company did not conduct proper mental health screenings or offer sufficient counseling and support, ultimately leading to the tragic loss of their loved ones. The courts examined whether the company had a duty of care to ensure the mental well-being of its employees and whether it breached that duty by not implementing appropriate measures to mitigate psychological risks.

Private Security Contractor #2 Controversies



The company faced scrutiny for incidents involving personnel experiencing psychological distress post deployment. The company, which has rebranded twice, has faced significant scrutiny over its handling of personnel experiencing psychological distress post-deployment.

Incidents have surfaced involving former employees who reported severe mental health issues after serving in high-conflict zones. These allegations point to a systemic failure by the company to provide adequate mental health assessments and support mechanisms for their staff.

1. One prominent controversy involved accusations that **the company neglected to implement comprehensive mental health screenings before, during, and after deployment, leaving employees vulnerable to the psychological toll of their missions**. Reports of PTSD, anxiety, and depression among personnel raised serious concerns about the company's duty of care and its responsibilities towards its workforce.
2. In several high-profile cases, **families of company employees who took their own lives after returning from deployment have filed wrongful death lawsuits**. They argued that the company's insufficient mental health provisions directly contributed to their loved ones' tragic decisions. These legal battles have brought to light the critical need for robust mental health policies within organizations that operate in dangerous environments, emphasizing the importance of proactive support and intervention.

Suicide-Related Lawsuits

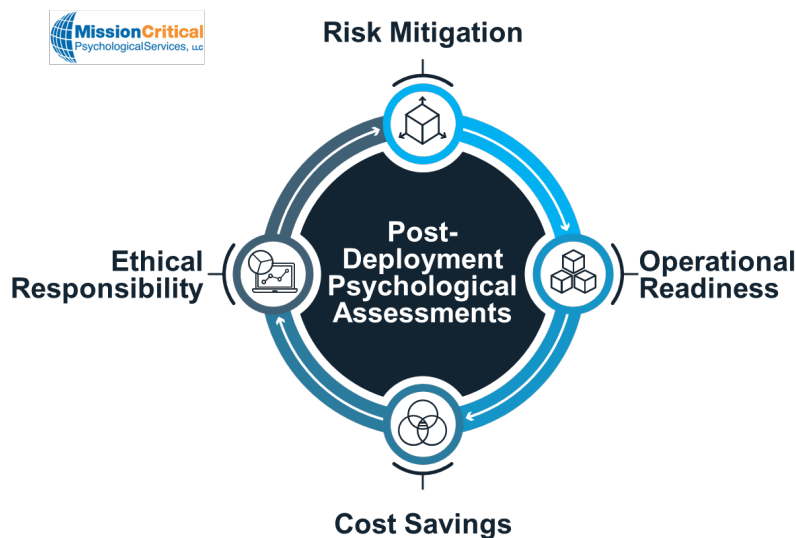
Several companies have been sued for wrongful death claims when deployed employees died by suicide after return, allegedly due to lack of mental health assessments and support. These cases highlight employer liability concerns in the context of mental health care, particularly for personnel deployed in high-stress environments.

1. **Private Security Contractor #3**, for example, has been sued by families of employees who died by suicide after returning from deployment. The plaintiffs argued that the company did not provide adequate mental health screenings or follow-up care, which contributed to the severe psychological distress and tragic loss of their loved ones. These lawsuits emphasized the company's alleged failure to fulfill its duty of care towards its workforce.
2. **Private Security Contractor #4** has faced legal action for wrongful death claims. Families of former employees accused the company of neglecting to implement comprehensive mental health support before, during, and after deployment. Reports of PTSD, anxiety, and depression among personnel raised serious concerns about the company's duty of care and responsibilities towards its employees.
3. **Private Security Contractor #5** Another notable case involved a PSC where families of employees who took their own lives after returning from deployment alleged that the company did not provide sufficient mental health provisions, which directly contributed to devastating outcomes. These legal battles have brought to light the critical need for robust mental health policies within organizations operating in dangerous environments, emphasizing the importance of proactive support and intervention.

SOCIAL HISTORY		LEGAL ISSUES: NONE		PROTECTIVE FACTORS	
EDUCATION: ☐ HIGH SCHOOL GRAD ☐ COLLEGE GRAD ☐ POSTGRADUATE					
EMPLOYMENT: ☐ EMPLOYED ☐ SELF-EMPLOYED ☐ UNEMPLOYED ☐ MEDICAL LEAVE					
CHILDHOOD					
LIVING SITUATION					
TRAUMA/ABUSE: ☐ NONE ☐ MENTAL/VERBAL ☐ PHYSICAL ☐ SEXUAL ☐ OTHER					
FAMILY HISTORY					
FAMILY HISTORY OF SUICIDE: ☐ NO ☐ YES (if yes, explain)					
VITAL SIGNS					
HEIGHT: _____ WEIGHT (lbs): _____ BLOOD PRESSURE: _____ HEART RATE: _____ RESPIRATORY RATE: _____ TEMP (F): _____ %					
MENTAL STATUS EXAMINATION					
APPEARANCE & BEHAVIOR: ☐ Appears stated age ☐ Good hygiene ☐ Poor hygiene ☐ Appears younger than stated age ☐ Scars ☐ Tattoos ☐ Physical deformities ☐ Appears older than stated age ☐ Poor eye contact ☐ Good eye contact ☐ Wearing appropriate attire ☐ Calm ☐ Cooperative ☐ Irritable ☐ Guarded ☐ Wearing inappropriate attire ☐ Uncooperative ☐ Manipulative ☐ Agitated					
PSYCHOMOTOR: ☐ Normal ☐ Hyperactive ☐ Slowed ☐ Tics ☐ Tremors ☐ Dyskinesias ☐ Rigidity ☐ Chorea ☐ GAIT: ☐ Normal ☐ Abnormal					
SPEECH					
QUALITY: ☐ Fluent ☐ Spontaneous ☐ Stuttering ☐ Para phasic errors ☐ Cloud ☐ Quiet ☐ AMOUNT: ☐ Normal ☐ Decreased ☐ Increased ☐ RATE: ☐ Normal ☐ Slowed ☐ Rapid ☐ Pressured ☐ TONE: ☐ Pleasant ☐ Anxious ☐ Dysphoric ☐ Trivial ☐ Angry ☐ Child-like ☐ ...do you feel overwhelmed or stressed?		Answer Options: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always			
MOOD AND AFFECT					
MOOD: ☐ Depressed ☐ Sad ☐ Angry ☐ Excited ☐ Happy ☐ AFFECT: ☐ Euthymic ☐ Dysphoric ☐ Euphoric ☐ Irritable ☐ Fearful ☐ Restricted ☐ Labile ☐ Appropriate ☐ Inappropriate ☐ Congruent with mood ☐ Incongruent with mood ☐ Linear ☐ Logical ☐ Goal-directed ☐ Circumstantial ☐ Tangent ☐ Thought blocking ☐ Derailment ☐ Clang association ☐ Flight ☐ Loose associations					
THOUGHT PROCESS					
THOUGHT CONTENT: ☐ No suicidal thoughts ☐ No homicidal thoughts ☐ Suicide if ☐ Suicide plan ☐ Delusions ☐ Obsessions ☐ Ruminations ☐ No hallucinations ☐ No illusions ☐ Visual hallucinations ☐ Depersonalization ☐ Realization					
PERCEPTIONS					
COGNITION: ☐ ALERTNESS: ☐ Alert ☐ Awake ☐ Drowsy ☐ Sedated ☐ ORIENTATION: Oriented ☐ to person ☐ to place ☐ to time ☐ MEMORY: Immediate recall ☐ Intact ☐ Impaired ☐ Short term Remote memory ☐ Intact ☐ Impaired					
GLOBAL JUDGMENT					
INSIGHT: ☐ Intact ☐ Partially intact ☐ Impaired ☐ JUDGMENT: ☐ Intact ☐ Impaired ☐ Catatonic					
Perceptions					
☐ Appropriate OR ☐ Inappropriate					
Thought Content					
☐ Appropriate OR ☐ Inappropriate					
Thought Processes					
☐ Intact ☐ Perseveration ☐ Flight of Ideas ☐ Tangentiality ☐ Circums ☐ Loose Associations					
Consciousness					
☐ Alert ☐ Confused ☐ Sedated ☐ Stuporous ☐ Intoxicated					
		DIAGNOSTIC IMPRESSIONS			
		TREATMENT PLAN			
		ATTENTIONS			
		Age: _____			
		Disheveled ☐ Inappropriate ☐ Bizarre ☐ Tangential ☐ Pressured ☐ Impoverished ☐ Other ☐			
		Normal ☐ Intense ☐ Avoidant ☐ Other ☐			
		Normal ☐ Restless ☐ Tics ☐ Slowed ☐ Other ☐			
		Full ☐ Constricted ☐ Flat ☐ Labile ☐ Other ☐			
		Anxious ☐ Angry ☐ Depressed ☐ Euphoric ☐ Irritable ☐ Other ☐			
		None ☐ Place ☐ Object ☐ Person ☐ Time ☐			
		None ☐ Short-Term ☐ Long-Term ☐ Other ☐			
		Normal ☐ Distracted ☐ Other ☐			
		FUNCTION			
		None ☐ Auditory ☐ Visual ☐ Other ☐			
		None ☐ Derealization ☐ Depersonalization ☐			
		THOUGHTS			
		Suicidality ☐ None ☐ Ideation ☐ Plan ☐ Intent ☐ Self-Harm ☐			
		Homicidality ☐ None ☐ Aggressive ☐ Intent ☐ Plan ☐			
		Delusions ☐ None ☐ Grandiose ☐ Paranoid ☐ Religious ☐ Other ☐			
		BEHAVIOR			
		Cooperative ☐ Guarded ☐ Hyperactive ☐ Agitated ☐ Paranoid ☐			
		Stereotyped ☐ Aggressive ☐ Bizarre ☐ Withdrawn ☐ Other ☐			
		Comments:			

The Business Case for Post-Deployment Psychological Assessments

Investing in structured post-deployment assessments provides multiple benefits: The importance of addressing mental health concerns for employees returning from high-stress deployments cannot be overstated. **Companies operating in hazardous environments have a duty of care** to provide adequate mental health support, both to protect their workers and to mitigate potential legal and operational risks. The business case for post-deployment psychological assessments is clear: investing in structured post-deployment assessments provides multiple benefits, including risk mitigation, operational readiness, cost savings, and ethical responsibility.



Risk Mitigation



Early identification of mental health issues reduces the likelihood of workplace incidents and legal claims. By identifying potential mental health concerns early, companies can implement timely interventions, reducing the risk of employees developing severe conditions. This proactive approach can help foster a safer and more supportive work environment, ultimately protecting both the employees and the organization. Furthermore, addressing mental health issues promptly can enhance overall employee morale and productivity, contributing to a healthier and more cohesive workforce.

Operational Readiness



Employees with adequate mental health support perform better and reintegrate more smoothly. These employees are more likely to adapt quickly to their roles, maintain greater engagement, and contribute positively to team dynamics. They are also better equipped to manage the stresses and demands of their positions, which enhances overall operational efficiency. Creating a supportive environment ensures that employees feel valued and motivated, leading to sustained performance and organizational success.

Cost Savings



Proactive assessments reduce long-term healthcare costs, absenteeism, and turnover rates. By addressing mental health concerns early, companies can prevent costly medical treatments and hospitalizations associated with untreated mental health conditions. Additionally, maintaining a healthy workforce decreases the frequency of sick leaves and enhances overall productivity. Effective mental health support also minimizes employee turnover, reducing the costs related to recruitment and training of new hires.

Ethical Responsibility



Companies demonstrate a commitment to the well-being of their workforce, fostering trust and retention. This commitment shows employees that their mental health and overall well-being are a priority, leading to increased loyalty and a stronger sense of belonging within the company. By prioritizing ethical responsibility, businesses can set an example within their industry, encouraging other organizations to adopt similar practices. Ultimately, this approach can contribute to a more humane and socially responsible corporate landscape, reflecting positively on the company's reputation and values.

Recommendations for Implementation

Recommendations for implementing structured post-deployment assessments include establishing mandatory post-deployment psychological evaluations as part of company policy to ensure early identification and intervention of mental health issues. Providing access to mental health resources such as counseling, therapy, and peer-support programs is crucial for ongoing support. Training leaders and supervisors to recognize post-deployment mental health issues will enhance their ability to offer timely assistance. Additionally, data-driven monitoring of mental health trends post-deployment will help refine and enhance support systems, ensuring continuous improvement in employee well-being. Fostering a supportive organizational culture ensures a safe reintegration process for returning personnel by creating an environment where employees feel comfortable seeking help and discussing their mental health concerns, and by documenting compliance with duty of care regulations, companies can demonstrate their commitment to employee well-being and safety.

Post-Deployment Psychological Assessments



1 Mandatory Post-Deployment Psychological Evaluations

Establish structured assessments as part of company policy for all returning personnel to identify and address mental health issues promptly. These evaluations should be conducted by qualified mental health professionals who can identify early signs of stress, anxiety, or other psychological issues. Regular check-ins and follow-up assessments can ensure that employees receive continuous support throughout their reintegration process. By making these evaluations a routine part of post-deployment procedures, companies can create a culture of openness and proactive care towards mental health.



2. Access to Mental Health Resources

Provide counseling, therapy, and peer-support programs to assist personnel in their reintegration process. Implementing these resources ensures that employees have the necessary support to manage and overcome any mental health challenges they face. Offering these services in a confidential and non-judgmental environment encourages employees to seek help without fear of stigma. By integrating mental health resources into the workplace, companies can foster a culture of care and support, ultimately enhancing employee well-being and productivity.



3. Leader and Supervisor Training

Educate leadership on recognizing post-deployment mental health issues to recognize signs of mental health distress and facilitate appropriate interventions. This training should include workshops and courses that provide knowledge on common post-deployment mental health challenges and effective intervention strategies. Leaders and supervisors should be equipped with practical tools to support employees, such as active listening techniques and stress management strategies. By empowering leadership with these skills, companies can ensure a supportive environment that promotes mental health and well-being for all employees.



4. Data-Driven Monitoring

Track trends in mental health issues post-deployment to refine and enhance support systems. Utilizing advanced analytics and machine learning algorithms can provide deeper insights into mental health patterns. This data can be used to tailor interventions and support programs to meet the specific needs of employees. Regularly updating and reviewing this data ensures that the support systems remain relevant and effective.



5. Foster a Supportive Organization Culture

Encourage open discussions about mental health to reduce stigma and promote a culture of support and resilience. Encourage employees to share their experiences and coping strategies, creating a sense of community and mutual understanding. Celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month and other related events to keep the conversation active and relevant. Promote the use of mental health days, allowing employees to take time off to focus on their well-being without guilt or repercussions.



6. Ensure a Safe Reintegration Process

 A **structured reintegration process** is vital for personnel transitioning from deployment back to civilian work life. Transitional roles can provide employees with a gradual re-entry into their regular duties, allowing them to adapt to the workplace environment at a manageable pace. These roles should be designed to balance responsibilities with opportunities for recuperation and reorientation.

 **Decompression programs** are equally important in this process. These programs can include physical activities, relaxation techniques, and group therapy sessions meant to alleviate the stress accumulated during deployment. Providing spaces where employees can engage in decompression activities helps them to release tension and restore their mental and physical health. Integrating such programs into the reintegration strategy can significantly reduce the risk of post-deployment stress disorders and improve overall job satisfaction.

7. Document Compliance with Duty of Care

 It is essential to establish clear mental health protocols to ensure compliance with the Duty of Care. This involves creating **comprehensive guidelines that outline the procedures for identifying, addressing, and monitoring mental health issues among personnel**. Protocols should include mandatory training for all staff on mental health awareness, signs of distress, and intervention techniques. Regular mental health evaluations should be conducted to detect any emerging issues early and provide timely support.

 Moreover, companies must ensure the **availability of mental health resources**, such as access to qualified professionals, counseling services, and support groups. Establishing an **anonymous reporting system** can encourage employees to seek help without fear of stigma or repercussions. Clear documentation of these efforts is crucial to demonstrate the organization's commitment to mental well-being and compliance with legal and ethical standards.

 Integrating mental health protocols into the company's policies and procedures not only safeguards employees but also supports the overall mission and objectives of the organization. By fostering a culture of care and attention to mental health, companies can enhance productivity, reduce absenteeism, and maintain a positive work environment. Adopting these measures reflects a proactive approach to health management, ensuring that employees feel valued and supported in their roles.

Incorporating post-deployment psychological assessments is a proactive measure that safeguards the well-being of personnel and protects organizations from potential liabilities. By addressing mental health comprehensively, companies demonstrate a commitment to their employees' health and operational excellence.

Conclusion

Post-deployment psychological assessments are a critical yet often neglected component of personnel well-being and risk management. Implementing these assessments not only enhances individual mental health outcomes but also protects companies from potential liability and operational risks. It is time for government contractors and private security firms to recognize the importance of post-deployment evaluations and integrate them into standard operating procedures.

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