

Is my employer legally responsible for preventing vicarious trauma?

Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic), employers must provide the highest level of protection against risks to employees' health and safety that is reasonably practicable* in the circumstances (s. 4(1)).

As vicarious trauma is a risk to employees' health and safety, employers are responsible for eliminating or reducing those risks so far as is reasonably practicable (s. 4(2)).

Your employer must:

identify risks to employees' health and safety

eliminate risks to employees' health and safety if reasonably practicable

reduce risks so far as is reasonably practicable, if eliminating risks is not reasonably practicable

consult employees** when identifying and controlling risks and hazards

* See [How WorkSafe applies the law in relation to Reasonably Practicable](#) for further information.

** Consultation involves sharing relevant information with employees, giving employees a reasonably opportunity to express their views on the matter, and taking those views into account.

If employees have elected a Health and Safety Representative (HSR), your employer may consult with the HSR with or without the direct involvement of other employees.