

What are my organisation's responsibilities and obligations?

Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)*, employers are responsible for providing the highest level of protection against risks to employees' health and safety.

The definition of 'health' includes psychological health.

As vicarious trauma is a risk to employees' health and safety, prevention of vicarious trauma must be guided by the Act (and any associated regulations or guidelines).

As an employer, you are required to consult with employees when identifying, assessing, and controlling risks and hazards.

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

Employees will understand what aspects of work increase their risk of psychological harm—your prevention efforts should be guided by their insight.

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

If reasonably practicable, you must *eliminate risks* to employees' health and safety.

For some employees, the risk of vicarious trauma may be able to be eliminated.

If eliminating the risk of vicarious trauma is not reasonably practicable, you must *minimise risks* by changing work conditions.

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