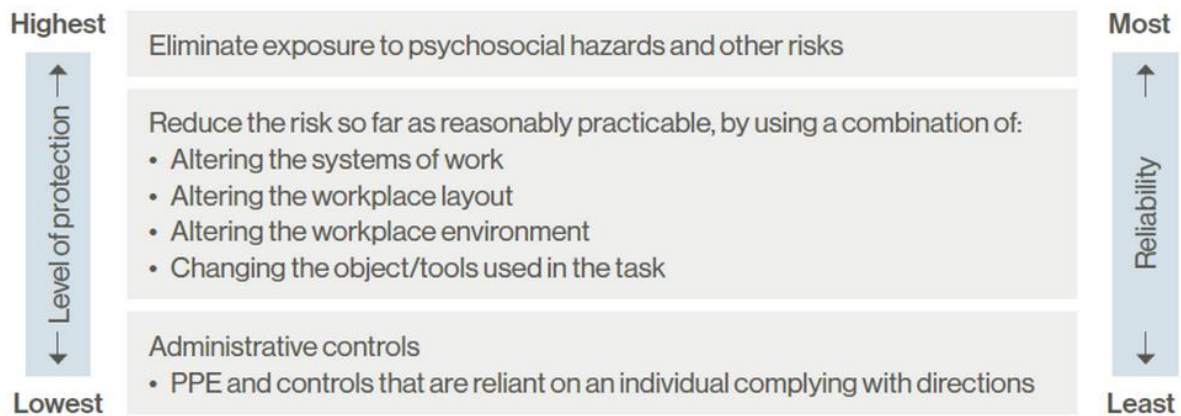


Preventing vicarious trauma in line with Victorian OHS

The Victorian *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* requires that employers provide the “highest level of protection” against risks to employees’ health and safety that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances (s. 4(1)). As illustrated below, the highest level of protection against mental injuries (including vicarious trauma) is to eliminate exposure to psychosocial hazards and other risks. Where that is impossible or not reasonably practicable, the next highest level of protection is to reduce the risk of vicarious trauma as far as reasonably practicable by changing aspects of the work itself.



WorkSafe Victoria. (2021). *Preventing and managing work-related stress: A guide for employers*. <https://content.api.worksafe.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-02/ISBN-Preventing-and-managing-work-related-stress-guide-2021-02.pdf>

The primary psychosocial hazard contributing to the risk of vicarious trauma is exposure to traumatic content; however, other psychosocial hazards also contribute.



In order to control the risk of vicarious trauma, employers must therefore control all relevant psychosocial hazards—that is, they must provide the highest level of protection against exposure to traumatic content, *and* provide the highest level of protection for all other psychosocial hazards that they identify as being present.