

MĀORI WORKERS

How we work together to improve health and safety outcomes for Māori workers

The Strategy's vision is that work is healthy and safe for everyone in New Zealand. Its goals and priorities focus everyone's effort on what makes the biggest impact to reduce harm and build capability. To reduce harm we need to prioritise workers at greater risk of harm. This includes Māori, Pasifika, migrant workers, older workers and youth.

How can I use the Strategy?

CHECK OUT THE PRIORITY AREAS IN THE STRATEGY BELOW FOR ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO REDUCE HARM AND BUILD CAPABILITY FOR MĀORI.



Workers at greater risk of harm: Sectors with higher harm rates have greater representation of Māori

Although levels of harm have been decreasing for all workers, they remain high for Māori workers. Māori workers are overrepresented in higher risk occupations such as forestry (Māori workers make up 34% of the forestry workforce), construction and manufacturing. The rate of serious non-fatal injury for Māori working in these industries demonstrates that Māori workers continue to face disproportionate risk.

Māori workers have high rates of temporary and precarious employment. Workers in these situations tend to do more hazardous work and are less likely to receive training or to take sick leave when they need it, resulting in poorer health outcomes.

Businesses need to be adaptive, confident and successful when engaging with Māori workers, whānau, iwi and Māori communities to co-develop and deliver effective approaches to health and safety. Workers also have a role. Māori workers can contribute an understanding of health and safety informed by whānau, iwi and Māori community approaches to health.



Businesses with greater need: sectors with highest harm and small businesses

Sectors can be attentive to businesses in their industry, find out how they are going and where they need help or advice to do better. Māori businesses can share their experience and knowledge. Te Puni Kōkiri has information on Māori businesses, and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has information on Māori business networks.

Businesses can find out what local iwi and iwi with commercial interests are doing in health and safety, whether their industry has a Māori focus group, and what businesses in their sector are doing to engage Māori workers. The Iwi Chairs Forum website has information about iwi commercial interests.

WorkSafe can also provide resources and advice to help industry and businesses to engage with Māori more effectively.



Work-related health, including physical and mental health

One of the challenges of improving Māori work-related health is how to increase awareness and understanding among New Zealand businesses of the health risks faced by Māori workers. The Strategy encourages the use of information to enable businesses using industry insights, WorkSafe data, ACC or Statistics NZ data to identify work-related health risks disproportionately affecting Māori and to manage these risks to encourage better outcomes for all.

Workers, their representatives, and unions can help businesses and sectors to think about their work-related health risks, identify gaps and create action plans to fill them. Iwi and Māori health providers can advise on incorporating Māori health models into these plans. The Ministry of Health has a Māori health provider database.

Building everyone's capability to manage health and safety risks

One of the Strategy's priorities is that workers have the skills, knowledge and capability they need to be healthy and safe at work. This includes workers, businesses and sectors being able to find and use appropriate tools to ensure the best learning outcomes for Māori workers. Te Puni Kōkiri also has resources on building Māori business capability.

The Maruiti Forestry Pilot by WorkSafe, ACC, and Ngāti Porou used a kaupapa Māori approach in forestry to build the capability of Māori forestry workers to lead in health and safety at work and in the wider community. Its success is based on bringing together industry, workers and Māori communities to work collectively in a marae setting to improve the capability and health and safety outcomes of Māori workers.



Encourage leaders at all levels to integrate health with safety

The Strategy encourages leaders to take an active role in improving health and safety. We're seeing results from building the health and safety leadership of Māori workers to work in partnership with business leaders to improve health and safety outcomes.

Leaders of iwi with commercial interests can be strong advocates for the health and safety of Māori workers and can influence sectors and large businesses. Business and sector leaders can engage with leaders of iwi, Māori trust boards and Māori businesses to create appropriate approaches to build capability and improve outcomes for Māori workers.



Enable workers to be represented, engaged and participate

Māori workers and a Māori perspective can be underrepresented in work health and safety decisions. WorkSafe's case studies show how Māori workers can be engaged in health and safety by using an approach based on tikanga values to engage whānau and Māori communities.

The Health and Safety Attitudes and Behaviours Survey shows that workers respond to tailored engagement. Businesses, sectors and the community can work together on their approaches to engage with Māori workers and to build inclusive and culturally competent workplaces.

Workers can have a say about how they are engaged, and can get together at work or in their sector, through representatives or unions, iwi or communities to talk about what needs to happen to reduce harm and improve capability. Unions often have representative groups for Māori, like CTU Rūnanga in the Council of Trade Unions.



Develop and share data and insights to improve decision making

Health and harm can be measured in many ways. Data and information from Statistics New Zealand, ACC, and WorkSafe can be useful. WorkSafe is continuing to gather data and intelligence to obtain a more robust picture of work-related harm and health among Māori.

Where to find out more:

WorkSafe: www.worksafe.govt.nz;

WorkSafe case study on a tikanga approach to engagement: <https://worksafe.govt.nz/the-toolshed/case-studies/wepr-case-studies/wellington-pipelines-tikanga/>;

WorkSafe Maruiti Strategy:

<https://worksafe.govt.nz/about-us/who-we-are/our-priorities/maruiti/>;

Te Puni Kōkiri: www.tpk.govt.nz/en;

Ministry of Health database of Māori health providers:

www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/maori-health-provider-directory;

MBIE Māori business networks page:

www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/infrastructure-growth/maori-economic-development/for-maori-business;

Statistics NZ: www.stats.govt.nz/tools/;

CTU Rūnanga: www.union.org.nz/runanga/;

Iwi chairs forum website: <http://iwichairs.maori.nz/>