

***Prevent
and cure***



Centrale des syndicats
du Québec



**Heavy workloads and
time constraints**



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What do we mean by “workload”?

The definition of “workload” changes depending on how it is analyzed.

- A prescribed workload corresponds to the procedural and performance requirements set by the employer.
- An experienced workload corresponds to how the worker feels with regards to the obligations, resources and tools at their disposal, time allotted, and unforeseen events.
- In terms of psychosocial risks, a workload refers to the amount of work to be done, the intellectual requirements and the time constraints that must be met.

What should a normal workload look like?

The employer is responsible for implementing organizational practices that promote a normal workload, notably:

- ✓ Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities within the organization and reviewing them periodically;
- ✓ Ensuring the tasks required can be completed during normal work hours;
- ✓ Planning time to discuss issues and finding shared solutions;
- ✓ Replacing employees who leave the organization and adding personnel during peak hours;
- ✓ Prioritizing tasks and identifying non-essential ones;
- ✓ When implementing changes, promote collaboration between employers and workers to stimulate transparency and engagement, and allow time to adjust;
- ✓ Providing training to learn new methods of work and assimilate changes;
- ✓ Taking into consideration the time to learn new tasks and the distribution of work;
- ✓ Planning the deployment of human resources for coaching, mentoring, co-development, and training;
- ✓ Adopting workforce planning practices that are based on the realistic needs of the organization.

What does a heavy workload together with time constraints look like?

- You are exhausted at the end of every workday.
- Your work requires long periods of intense concentration.
- Your tasks are often interrupted.
- You often receive conflicting requests.
- You don't have enough time to complete your work.
- Your work is so hectic that you don't know if you're coming or going.
- You have no idea if you will be able to complete the work within normal work hours.

What are the risks?

Mounting workloads are the result of increasing goals of competitiveness, productivity, and profitability.

Workers are faced with heavier workloads and growing demands on their physical, intellectual, and psychological capacities.

Several studies have shown that greater workloads, together with time constraints, can lead to cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, and psychological problems, as well as increased absenteeism. This situation generates negative impacts, for both the employer and the worker.

How can the situation be improved?

Acting alone to ask for a more balanced workload and adequate time is not an easy task.

TALK TO YOUR UNION.

By raising the subject with your union, you alert them to your situation. They may already be aware of other workers experiencing the same problem and be able to put you in touch with them. Together with you and other affected workers, your union can analyze the situation and devise a strategy to remedy the issues arising from the organization of work.

The problem is not in your head. The organization of work is at fault and it can make you sick.

Together, we have the power to act.