

EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SURVEY

Tourism Cook Islands - Overview
Report

PRESENTED TO

Tourism Cook Islands

PRESENTED BY

Office of the Public Service
Commissioner

Te Puna Vai Mārama

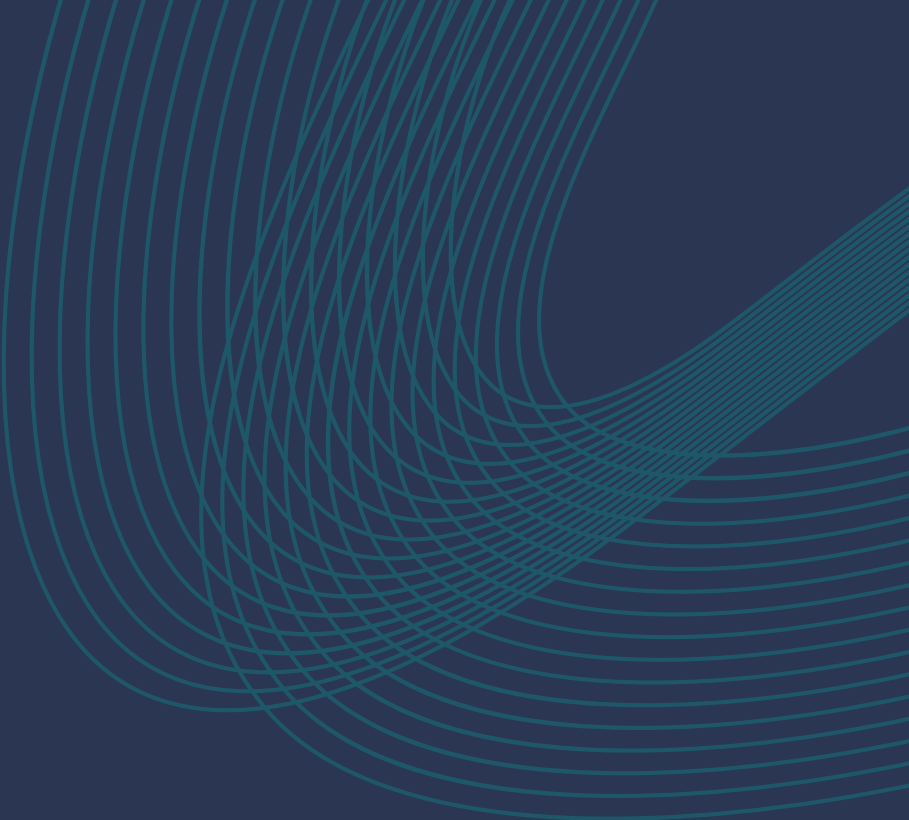


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SUMMARY

The Health & Wellbeing Employee Engagement Survey is designed to support Public Sector agencies to build positive workplace cultures that reflect the Public Sector values of Honesty, Impartiality, Service, Transparency, Accountability, Respect, Effectiveness and Efficiency.

The first survey was launched on 7 June 2022 and this year it was launched on 14 May 2025. The survey results provide Agencies with a snapshot on employee satisfaction and workplace culture. In total, including the Pa Enua, 835 employees participated.

Only agencies that have a response rate of 25% or higher receive individual reports. In survey reporting particularly for workplace health and wellbeing a minimum of 5-10 respondents are typically considered necessary to preserve confidentiality and avoid deductive disclosure (i.e., being able to guess who said what). In line with internationally recognized confidentiality standards (e.g. U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Australian Bureau of Statistics, NZ Ministry of Education), individual agency reports are also only provided for agencies that have both a response rate greater than or equal to 25% and have at least 10 respondents per agency to avoid any risk of identifying individuals.

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Total staff: 27

Respondents: 28 (104%) response rate

Strengthening support, and wellbeing in the workplace:

To protect the confidentiality of respondents, quotes have been paraphrased to remove any potentially identifying details. Additionally, only sentiments expressed by 10 or more staff have been included to ensure no individual can be singled out.

"We take pride in the meaningful work we do, but to truly thrive, we need clearer direction, fairer support, and stronger communication between management and staff along with flexible work options and mental health support that properly reflect the realities of our day-to-day experiences."

WORKPLACE VALUES AND CULTURE

Values and Culture	Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely
Reflection of Public Sector Values ¹	44%	48%	4%	2%
Work-life balance ²	40%	36%	20%	4%
Idea Acceptance ³	50%	35%	13%	2%

¹Reflection of Public Sector Values: How well do your agency's actions reflect the core Public Sector values of honesty, accountability, impartiality, respect, service, transparency, effectiveness and efficiency?

²Work-life balance: To what extent are you able to carry out your role while maintaining a healthy work/life balance.

³Idea Acceptance: How often do you feel that your ideas are accepted in the workplace?

WHAT SUPPORTS WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

Top strategies used by staff:

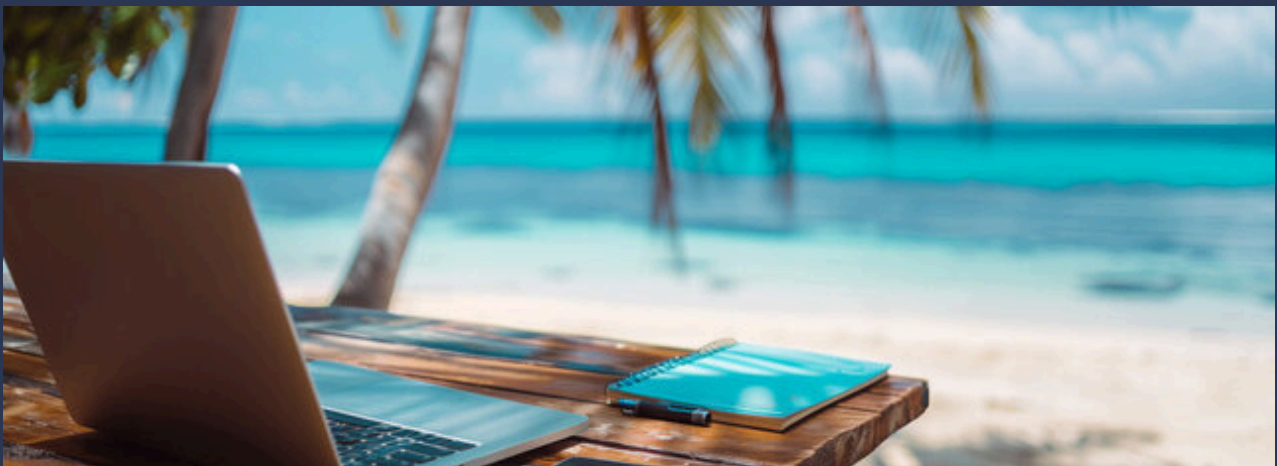
- Time management, exercise, family time, clear work hours, communication, and spiritual practices.

Agency initiatives mentioned:

- Flexible work arrangements (e.g., rostering, remote work)
- Team bondings
- Wellness activities (e.g., sports, retreats)
- Empathetic towards personal circumstances
- Support for leave and cultural obligations
- Health resources (e.g., gym, counselling, healthy food)

Gaps identified:

- Inconsistent access to wellness programs
- Tight timelines
- Some staff unaware of available support
- Heavy workload. Often have to take work home to meet deadlines.
- The lack of human resources
- Micromanaging, poor communication, passion fatigue



BARRIERS TO WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Top Challenges

- 01 Heavy Workload
- 02 High job demands/stress
- 03 Family or personal responsibilities
- 04 Lack of flexibility
- 05 Long hours

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

The most commonly desired supports
for improving work-life balance are:

01

**Better
workload
management**

Having other staff members to share/delegate responsibilities to; working jointly on projects. Staff to have clear roles and not dual responsibilities

02

**More support
from
management**

Clear policies for after hour expectations, allowance for overtime to be paid instead of time in lieu

03

**Flexible
working
hours**

Work from home policy, flexible leave arrangements on an individual basis

04

**Mental health
and well-
being
initiatives**

Access to wellness support, mental health days off, check-ins focused on wellbeing

Additionally staff brought up the need for a more holistic and supportive work environment, with key suggestions centered around family-friendly practices, professional development, and workplace culture. There were suggestions for “crèche facilities” and more understanding toward parenting responsibilities, such as allowing parents to collect children without it being counted as a break. In terms of growth and performance, staff wanted more tailored HR support, upskilling opportunities, and roles that align with individual strengths. And lastly, strengthening team spirit and boosting morale through more bonding activities and visible appreciation from leadership particularly from directors and the CEO.

WORKPLACE SENTIMENT

	How often would you recommend your workplace to others	How often have you thought about leaving your workplace
Always	84%	12%
Occasionally	12%	21%
Rarely	4%	75%

Disputes

12%

Of the employees that took part in the survey have experienced an Employment dispute in the past 12 months.

Grievances

13%

Of the employees that took part in the survey have experienced a Grievance in the past 12 months.

"Tourism is a rewarding sector to work in. However, strategies to maintain staff engagement and effectiveness could be enhanced to prevent boredom, ineffectiveness, and underutilization."

FINAL COMMENTS

Teamwork and management appreciation

“Team work is always the key in every work place. Directors need to appreciate their staff more and realise they wouldn't be where they were if it wasn't for their staff, not favoring certain staff and be fair across the board.”

Mental health support

“Mental health support Gov Wide - i.e. leave for mental health issues. For the most part, we're encouraged to manage our health and wellbeing ourselves. I believe at a government level, there needs to be policies around mental health and well being. Some of our life stresses come from the work we do. Maintaining balance is impacted by stress.”

Communication and management

“Clearer upfront direction, greater consistency in maintaining project goals, and a more equitable and transparent application of support measures across all teams would strengthen the already great work we are doing. Strengthening communication channels between management and the team would also help ensure that solutions remain aligned and that all teams feel equally valued and supported.”

Policies

“It might be worth considering whether PSC could look into developing a flexible work policy that includes the option to work from home in certain situations. I believe having this in place could support staff wellbeing and productivity, especially when balancing work and personal responsibilities.”