



JLD Resilience and Wellbeing Survey 2019

This is the third year that the Junior Lawyers Division (JLD) has undertaken research into the levels of negative stress and mental ill-health experienced by junior lawyers (for the purposes of the survey being paralegals (who are studying for or who have obtained their LPC), trainee solicitors and solicitors with up to 5 years' PQE).

The largest survey conducted on the topic of the resilience and wellbeing of junior lawyers

Some key highlights are captured in the infographics below.



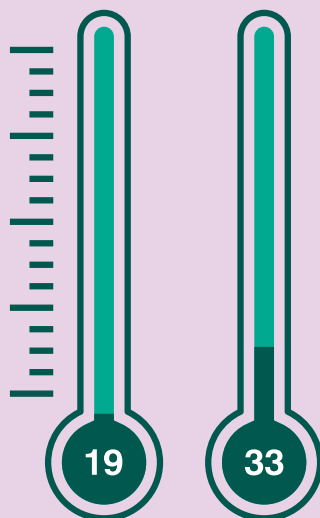
A total of

1,803

responses to the survey were collected between January and March 2019.

Ability to cope

One-fifth (19%) of respondents in 2019 reported 'regularly' feeling unable to cope and 33% reported 'occasionally' feeling unable to cope in the month prior to responding.



A higher proportion of women 21% compared to men 13% reported 'regularly' feeling unable to cope as a result of stress.

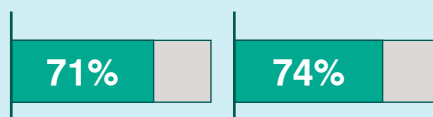


25% of respondents to the survey were male.

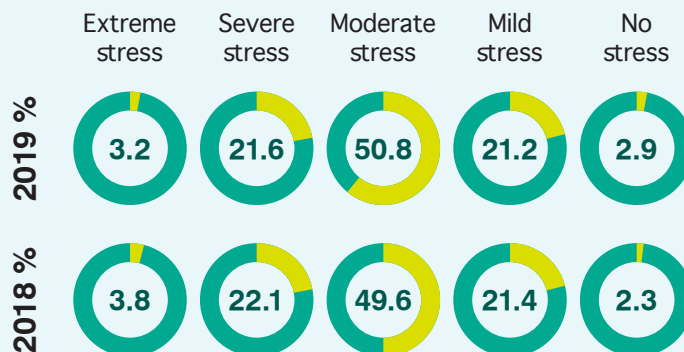
Stress

Feelings of stress (in the prior month)

The proportion of respondents reporting either 'regularly' or 'occasionally' feeling stressed as a result of work over the last month had increased from 71% in 2018 to 74% in the 2019 survey.



A comparative view



Causes of stress

- **High workload and client demands/expectations** remained the most frequently cited causes of work related stress, although the proportion of respondents giving these responses were down on 2018 figures.

Impact of stress

- Most commonly cited experiences of work-related stress were **disrupted sleep (66%)** and **'negative impact on mental health (anxiety, emotional upset and fatigue, negative and depressed thoughts, self-harm)'**.

Employers

- **Over three-quarters (77%)** of respondents thought their employer could be doing more to provide help/guidance/support to employees in relation to stress at work.

Mental ill-health in the workplace

Experience of a mental health problem.

- **48% of respondents** reported experiencing mental ill-health (whether formally diagnosed or not) within the last month. This is an **increase on the 38%** reported in 2018.
- **19% of respondents** reported their employer was aware that they were experiencing mental ill-health (18% in 2018).

Impact of mental ill-health

- **58% of respondents considering taking time off**, but not doing so.
- **14% of those experiencing mental ill-health** reported experiencing suicidal thoughts, with a higher proportion of **men (20%)** than **women (12%)** giving this response.
- A higher proportion of **women (63%)** than **men (50%)** reported mental ill-health had a negative impact on their physical health (feeling physically sick/chest pains).

Employers

- **49% of respondents** reported their organisation provided help/guidance/support to employees in relation to mental ill-health at work.
- **78% of respondents** thought their organisation could be doing more to provide help/guidance/support to employees.
- **38% of respondents** did not know of any organisations that were there to help if they wanted to discuss stress or mental ill-health at work.

What should your employer be doing?

We have a collective responsibility to safeguard and promote the resilience and wellbeing of employees in the workplace. To support employers with these responsibilities, the JLD proposes that employers look at three key areas: Support, Culture and Education and Training.

Support - providing employees with the tools they need to help them effectively manage and raise any issues directly affecting them.

Culture - Tackling the stigma surrounding mental ill-health within the legal profession by ensuring and promoting a positive working culture.

Education and Training - Empowering employees to thrive in the workplace by investing in training for employees, HR teams and managers.

We are grateful to everyone who took the time to respond to this survey. The JLD will be using the information provided by respondents as part of its review of the best practice guidance for employers on supporting resilience and wellbeing in the workplace. A revised version of the guidance will be released over the summer.