

ASSA Recognition Award

- 1.1 The ASSA Recognition was first introduced by the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) of Malaysia in 2015. The purpose of the Award is to recognise ASSA member organisations' achievements.
- 1.2 The criteria and categories for the ASSA Recognition Award are as follows.

No.	Categories of Recognition	Description of the Categories
1.	Innovation Recognition Award	Creation of an innovative technology, product or service which has led to improvements in services or products.
2.	Transformation Recognition Award	A practice that has resulted in improvement in the overall effectiveness, efficiency, and success of the organisation.
3.	Customer Service Recognition Award	Organisations that have implemented successful customer service strategies which are able to meet customers' expectations in terms of delivery and quality of service.
4.	Continuous Improvement Recognition Award	Organisations that are in a never-ending effort to expose and eliminate root causes of problems. It usually involves many incremental steps towards improvements rather than one overwhelming innovation.
5.	Strategic Communication Recognition Award	Organisations that have pushed the boundaries when it comes to their communications strategy in order to ensure they truly engage with their members using various communication channels.
6.	Information Technology Recognition Award	Organisations that run their business using effective and reliable technologies that are essential to drive efficiency and productivity, and improve organisational outcomes and performance.
7.	Insurance Coverage Recognition Award	Insurance and social security schemes that have developed their proposition with a clear focus on retirement, health and meeting members' needs.
8.	Financial Literacy Recognition Award	Organisations that have introduced and provide advisory services on financial literacy and retirement planning to address issues on adequacy of members' savings for retirement.
9.	Investment Governance Recognition Award	Organisations that have reflected specific issues relating to the management of funds of social security institutions' objectives, ranging from the investment of benefits provided and also addressing issues on the adequacy of the fund.

1.3 The write-up should include the following:

WRITE UP TEMPLATE

ASSA 2023 RECOGNITION AWARD	
CATEGORY	: Continuous Improvement Recognition Award; and Customer Service Recognition Award
ORGANISATION	: Government Service Insurance System
CONTACT PERSON	: Glenn Vladimir C. Valmores, M.D. Officer IV, Medical and Wellness Services Department Human Resources Office
NAME OF PROJECT	: GSIS <i>Diwa</i>
OBJECTIVE AND NATURE OF PROJECT	: <p>The integration of mental health benefits for employees has a huge impact on the wellness and psychological safety of employees, and redounds in engagement and ultimately, better services offered to external clients.</p> <p>The <i>Diwa</i> is the mental health program of the GSIS established in alignment with the Mental Health Act of the Philippines and Civil Service Commission Memorandum Circular 04, s. 2020, mandating all government offices in the Philippines to establish their mental health programs.</p> <p>Albeit mandated to come up with a program, the GSIS is among the pioneering and benchmarked government agencies and institutions when it comes to mental health programs for employees.</p> <p>It aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Promote mental health awareness; b. Strengthen leadership and governance for mental health through the formulation and implementation of policies, strategies and programs relating to mental health; c. Provide appropriate services for employees at risk; d. Protect the rights of employees with psychiatric, neurologic, and psychosocial health needs, and e. Integrate mental health care in the basic health services for employees and in the human resources systems and processes.
WHY IT SHOULD BE RECOGNISED	: <i>“Well and healthy employees makes a business successful.”</i> <p>The GSIS <i>Diwa</i> prioritizes the mental and emotional well-being of the employees because they are the ones that help run the business. Better overall health results in improved productivity as healthier employees are less</p>

likely to call in sick. The following strategies are conducted to help support employees' mental health.

1. Identifies problems and concerns of employees through surveys

- Last December 2020, the GSIS conducted an online wellbeing survey to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of employees. The results were used to determine the list of high risk employees who were offered counseling services and further interventions. It also led to the hiring of the in-house registered guidance counselor and the services of a psychologist consultant for the following year.
- In 2021, the GSIS then conducted the Mental Health Assessment Survey for all employees. This time, more specific mental health problems, and sources of maladjustments were determined. Interventions such as psychological first aid (PFA) and financial literacy programs were offered, giving priority to high risk individuals.
- In 2022, Employee Well-being and Satisfaction Survey was conducted to all employees. Results of the survey were distributed to each office/department. This will be the basis of the programs and activities that will be conducted by the GSIS this year.

2. Assists employees with mental health concerns through counselling, psychological first aid, and appropriate referral system

- One unique feature of the *Diwa* is the Counseling Service. Counseling is the method of supporting and assisting the client in addressing his/her mental, emotional, and social concerns. This service is offered to all GSIS employees in the Central and Branch Offices. It may be conducted onsite in the *Bahay Ginhawa* or online via Zoom. Such service can be availed of through self-referrals, referrals of supervisors and invitations for those assessed as "high risk" employees. For employees who are not yet ready to disclose their concerns to their supervisors, counseling is done even during lunch breaks.

Since the service was offered, there has been an upward trend in the number of counselees. It could mean success, at least for our objective to spread awareness on mental health. Collaboration with the client's immediate supervisor was also arranged to address their needs. Clients were asked to give their feedback and rate the quality of the sessions.

- Assistance to employees who experienced crisis is offered through the Psychological First Aid (PFA). After the earthquake on July 27, 2022, online PFA were given to several distressed employees in the La Union and Tarlac Branches of the GSIS.
- *Bahay Ginhawa* in the Central Office is a safe space for those who are distressed and would be in much need of a quiet and relaxing surrounding. Its features include an area for reflection and relaxation, a room for employees in need of privacy in times of emotional pain, prayer areas and counseling room. The Bahay concept was approved

	<p>in 2020. Construction was done in 2021 and the facility was opened in March 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To facilitate better referral system, psychotherapy and psychiatric consultations are offered through an external provider this 2023 to assist employees with more chronic mental health concerns. Employees diagnosed with a condition is integrated back into the workplace. <p>3. Breaks stigma on mental health and increases knowledge of employees through webinars and Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GSIS conducts Quarterly Wellness Webinars facilitated by SMEs on topics about the most pressing needs of employees based on the assessment results. ▪ GSIS created Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials such as Demystifying Counseling, a digital guidebook distributed to all employees for them to understand the concept of counseling and be informed of its availability. ▪ Physical fitness programs were also conducted recognizing that a healthy body leads to a healthy mind. Pre-pandemic, GSIS would conduct fitness activities for all its employees such as Zumba. When the pandemic struck, these were migrated online. As early as March 18, 2020, a closed Facebook group was created (GSIS Work from Home, Wellness for Home) wherein dance challenges and online Zumba were held. It created an online community or support system for GSIS employees nationwide. <p>4. Provides capacity-building activities for leaders, HR personnel, and administrators of <i>Diwa</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An online PFA webinar was conducted in December 2021, prioritizing the supervisors of “high risk” employees. ▪ The team in charge of the <i>Diwa</i> attends trainings to update their technical knowledge, such as establishing mental health programs in the workplace, PFA trainings, counseling, and the like. <p>5. Integration of mental health in human resources policies and programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mental health was considered in crafting the Office Order on Hybrid Workplace during the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2021. Specifically, it laid down the rules to protect the life and work boundaries of employees while on a WFH set-up.
<p>SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT</p>	<p>:</p> <p>The GSIS <i>Diwa</i>, which was approved in 2020, embodies the organization’s intention and conscious effort to promote the mental health of employees throughout their lifecycle - from recruitment, onboarding, development, retention and separation – guided by the principles of non-discrimination, reasonability of working arrangements, confidentiality, basis on rights,</p>

	<p>disclosure and sustainability. It aims to establish a comprehensive and integrated mental health program that addresses the mental health needs of employees.</p> <p>It institutionalizes the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Assessment of employee mental well-being;b. Conduct of and participation in promotion, information, and education campaign;c. Capacity building for leaders, HR personnel, and administrators of Diwa;d. Conduct of psychosocial support programs;e. Integration of mental health in human resources policies and programs; andf. Establishment of treatment, rehabilitation, and referral system. <p>Among the highlights of the <i>Diwa</i> that are currently being practiced in GSIS are the conduct of mental health assessment and regular check-ins or surveys on the wellbeing of employees, conduct of information dissemination on mental health, monitoring and referral of “high-risk” employees, the conduct of capacity building for leaders in terms of providing mental health support for employees, the provision of a safe space within GSIS through the <i>Bahay Ginhawa</i>, integration of mental health in HR policies, and the onsite and online counseling and Psychological First Aid services for employees.</p>
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