

# DOING HEALTHY BUSINESS TOGETHER



- Fulfilling your legal obligations under the basic contract
- Information on absence and rehabilitation
- Practical tips for a safe and healthy company
- Advice from our experts

More information?

[www.arboned.nl/en](http://www.arboned.nl/en)

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# This is how we help you with your **legal obligations**

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Good working conditions contribute to job satisfaction, help reduce work-related risks and prevent sickness absence. The starting point for an optimal occupational health and safety policy is the Working Conditions Act. We are happy to help you meet your legal obligations. In this way, you keep your company healthy and avoid fines from the Netherlands Labour Authority.

As an employer, you are obliged to enter into an agreement with an occupational health and safety service provider or company doctor: the basic contract. Your absence management subscription with ArboNed satisfies this requirement (on the basis of the 'safety net scheme').

In concrete terms, this means that ArboNed will be pleased to help you perform the tasks below, exactly as required by law:

- Activities in the field of absence and rehabilitation.
- Offering employees free access to the company doctor (walk-in surgery).
- Risk Assessment and Evaluation (RAE).
- The Preventive Medical Examination (PME or POHE).
- In specific cases, a pre-employment physical examination.

This practical guide gives you a bird's eye view of how you can get started with this within your company and how you can make use of ArboNed's knowledge and expertise.

**MAKE IT HAPPEN**

# Absence and rehabilitation

If your employee reports sick, you and your employee have a number of obligations, which begin as early as the week of the sickness notification. These obligations are set out in the Eligibility for Permanent Incapacity Benefit (Restrictions) Act. The objective: your employee can return to work as soon as possible, in a responsible and sustainable manner.

It is in everyone's interest that an employee is ill for as short a time as possible. No one benefits from absence. And the costs can be high. You continue to pay (part of) the wages, have to replace your sick employee and you are likely to incur a loss

of turnover and/or production. Depending on your contract, you may also incur costs for absence management and rehabilitation. All in all, one day of absence costs an average of € 250.

## Reducing absence

The goal of the Eligibility for Permanent Incapacity Benefit (Restrictions) Act is also to minimise absence. According to this law, you and your employee are jointly responsible for getting the employee who has reported sick back to work as soon as possible.

The starting point of the Eligibility for Permanent Incapacity Benefit (Restrictions) Act is that you can limit absence if you intervene in time and your employee quickly receives the proper assistance. You can naturally rely on us for that. Your ArboNed absence management subscription assures you of our support in absence management.

## Absence Timeline

The actions that you and your employee must take in accordance with the Eligibility for Permanent Incapacity Benefit (Restrictions) Act can be seen in the [What to Do in Case of Absence Timeline](#). Exclusively for customers of ArboNed. You fill in the date of the sickness notification and then

see what you have to do as an employer, what responsibilities your employee has, the due date and how we support you in this – under the direction of your regular contact.

## Preventing absence

Ideally, you do not want your employees to fall ill at all, but you cannot always prevent that. However, as an employer, you do have influence, because **there are means of detecting risks early, so that absence can be prevented.**

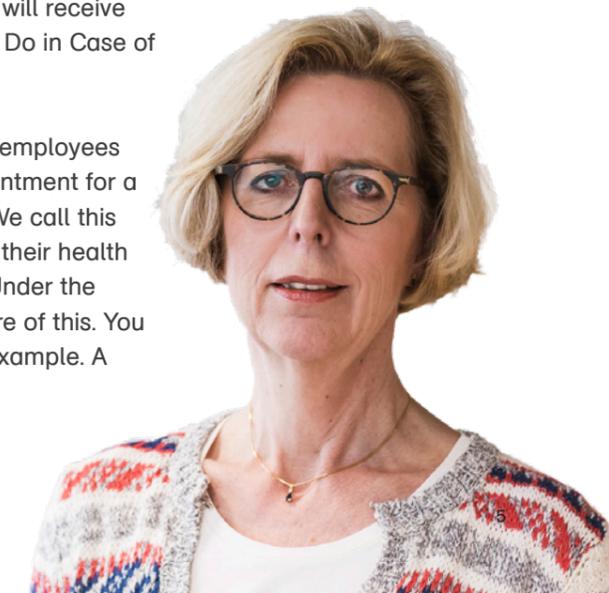
Every employer is obliged to have an up-to-date Risk Assessment and Evaluation (RAE) in place. This should include an Action Plan to resolve any identified pressure points. The Labour Authority enforces this. In addition, the Working Conditions Act prescribes that you must periodically offer your employees a Preventive Medical Examination (PME or POHE), again with a view to preventing absence. Read more about this in the following sections.

Your (company) doctor supports you as an employer in the guidance and rehabilitation of sick employees. The goal is to keep and/or get your employees healthy and vital.

For an employee who has reported sick, it may be relevant (and required by law) at some point to attend a surgery. If that is the case, they will receive an invitation from ArboNed. Read more about it in the What to Do in Case of Absence Timeline.

Less well known is the fact that the basic contract states that employees have access to the company doctor and can request an appointment for a preventive consultation; that is, even before someone is sick. We call this walk-in surgery. Employees can go there with questions about their health in relation to work. It can be a means of preventing absence. Under the provisions of the basic contract, your employees must be aware of this. You can mention the walk-in surgery in the absence protocol, for example. A format for this can be found at [arboNed.nl/en/welcome](http://arboNed.nl/en/welcome)

**Truus van Amerongen, company doctor and medical director at ArboNed**





# A safe workplace

As an employer, you are obliged to ensure the safety and health of your employees, both physically and mentally. The starting point for mapping out whether you offer a healthy and safe workplace is the Risk Assessment and Evaluation (RAE).

## Practical handle

An RAE maps out all work-related risks, including those associated with the coronavirus. Because only when you know the risks can you address them in a targeted manner. How you go about that is described in the Action Plan. This gives you a practical handle to ensure a safe, healthy and vital workplace.

## Strict supervision, stiff fines

Too few SMEs have an RAE. And that is alarming, according to the government. **The Netherlands Labour Authority therefore strictly monitors compliance with the RAE obligation. Also in the SME sector.** If your RAE and Action Plan are not in order, the Labour Authority is authorised to issue an immediate fine.

In concrete terms, the inspector checks that there is an approved industry RAE or reviewed RAE, including an Action Plan, and that the quality is satisfactory. The RAE must show exactly what happens in the company on a day-to-day basis, including in the area of work-related psychosocial stress (e.g. work pressure, bullying). In the Action Plan you describe how you eliminate or

minimise these risks, when you do that and who is responsible for it.

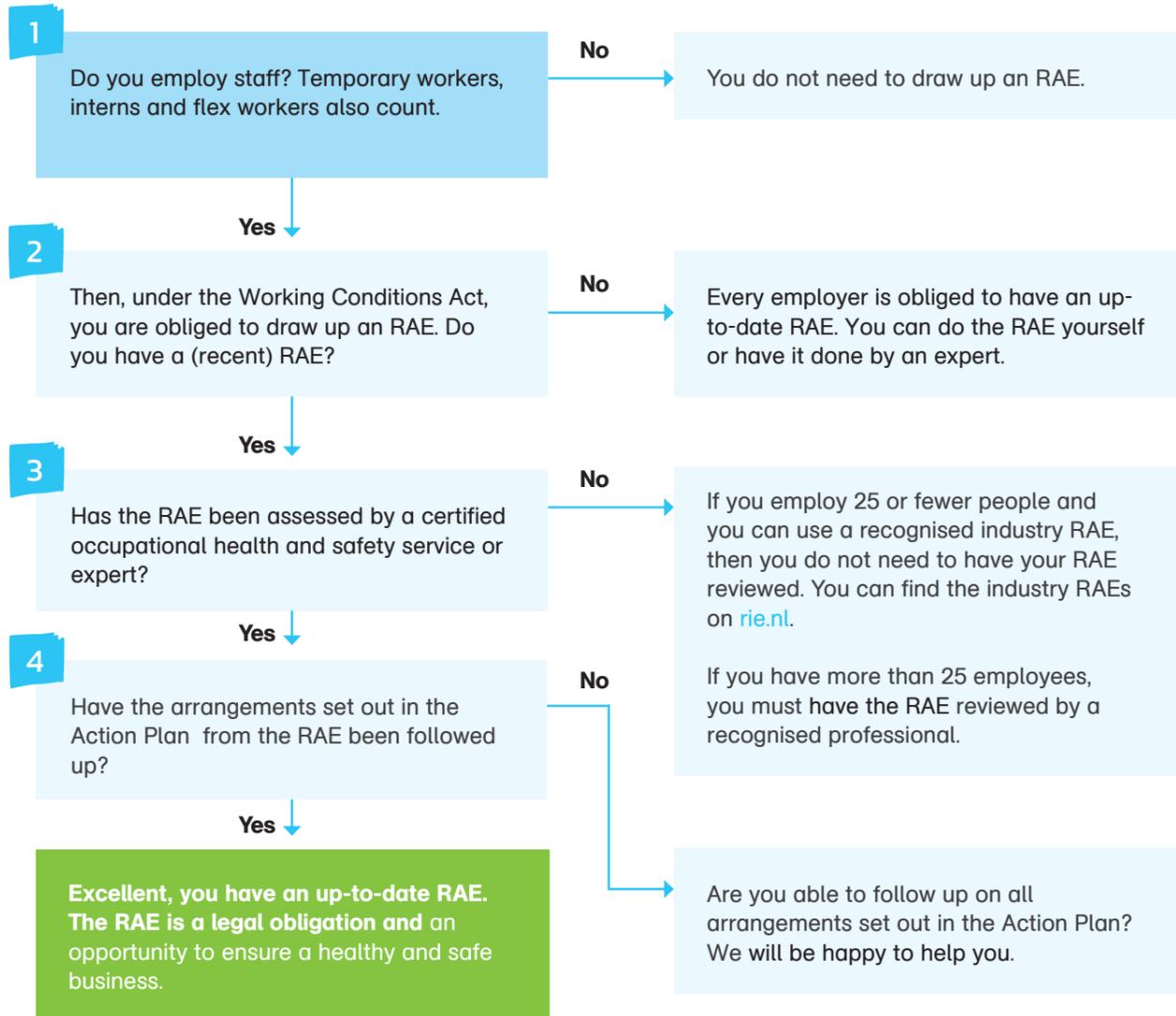
Could you use some help with your RAE? Please feel free to contact our SME OHS prevention line or call in [My prevention expert](#)

# ARE YOUR EMPLOYEES ASSURED OF SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT?

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## Do you need to perform a Risk Assessment and Evaluation (RAE)? Check it here.



### More information?

Please visit [our website](#) or contact us at [salessupport@arbo ned.nl](mailto:salessupport@arbo ned.nl) or 030 299 62 77.

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### The prevention officer

The prevention officer is the driving force behind formulating and improving the occupational health and safety policy. They are the linking pin between the employer, employees and occupational health and safety service. One of their statutory tasks is to (help) draw up and perform the (RAE).

Every company must have a prevention officer. Usually someone does this in addition to their

'regular' job. In smaller companies (with up to 25 employees), the director/owner may also perform the prevention tasks.

### Company emergency response service

An effective company emergency response officer can limit your loss. For example, by fighting an incipient fire or by taking life-saving action. An employee may experience severe bleeding, suffocation, or require CPR.

### Healthy home office

If employees work from home on a regular basis, you as an employer must also take into account their home offices. For example, you must take measures in the field of ergonomics. Esther Graaff-Visser, ergonomist at ArboNed: 'As an employer, share tips for setting up a good home office, take into account the mental challenges of working from home or offer your employees our online home office check.'

'Performing the RAE and the subsequent steps takes time, money and energy and I see employers putting this off. In fact, there are two pitfalls for SMEs with fewer than 25 employees:

- No RAE is performed because the costs are too high.
- An RAE is performed and an Action Plan is drawn up, but these are then shelved, so that another costly RAE is needed after a few years.

In this case, forbearance is no acquittance. What you definitely do not want as an entrepreneur is to have the Labour Authority visit your premises while your occupational health and safety policy is not in order. Then you will pay a fine and still have to do all the investigations and follow-up steps.

So my advice is always: make sure your occupational health and safety policy is in order. The annual "maintenance" is then generally not too bad. The RAE is an investment, but if nothing changes in working conditions and legislation for a few years, keeping your health & safety policy up to date will cost you a few hours a year at most.'

Ad van Zundert, ArboNed consultant



# Healthy, vital and motivated performance

Vital employees are generally more motivated, more productive and less often ill. For you as an employer, employees with a healthy lifestyle are therefore valuable. We include research into and attention to lifestyle in the [Preventive Medical Examination \(PME or POHE\)](#) – a good starting point for a healthy and vital company!

## Purpose of the PME

You determine the content of the PME together with the vitality and health expert, based on the risks identified in the RAE. The PME consists of an online questionnaire and any additional relevant physical examinations. Your employees gain insight into their mental and physical health. The objectives:

- To prevent work making your employees ill.
- To promote the health of your employees in relation to work.
- To monitor and improve the employability of your employees.

To be able to work on the latter objective, lifestyle is part of the PME.

## Making people aware of their own influence

Everyone knows that an unhealthy lifestyle leads to chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and lung problems. The good news is that small lifestyle improvements can make a significant difference.

Lifestyle is the employee's choice. But with the PME, you as an employer have an effective tool in your hands. This allows you to make your employees aware of the risks of an unhealthy lifestyle. They will realise that they themselves can influence their health and receive tips on what they can do to live a healthier life.

## Preventive medical examination or pre-employment physical examination

In certain sectors, a pre-employment physical examination is necessary to assess whether the employee is suitable for certain work. The examination assistant or medical examiner assesses whether your employee is healthy enough to do their job.

**'I recommend that employers offer their employees a Preventive Medical Examination. It gives you a measuring point and it is also pleasant for the person themselves to know where they stand in terms of their health. If the PME shows that their eyesight or hearing has deteriorated, we can find out why. That is important for business operations and for our people. And our guys enjoyed undergoing the PME.'**

(Jan Wijnker, director/owner of Wijnker Mechanisatie)

In addition, there are statutory periodic examinations laid down in legislation or a collective agreement. There are a few differences compared to the PME:

- All employers must offer their employees a periodic PME. An pre-employment physical examination is only allowed in the case of specific job requirements. A statutory periodic physical examination is only mandatory for certain occupations.
- Participation in the PME is voluntary for your employees, a physical is mandatory.
- A physical examines a person's capacity in relation to the job requirements, while a PME is designed for the early detection of health risks in relation to work and individual health. It gives the employee a good picture of their physical and mental health. If it is necessary to take action, the employee will receive a concrete recommendation.



# Tips for a more vital company

- 1 Start simple**  
For example, by offering free fruit or making arrangements with a local gym. You can combine the Friday afternoon drink or the work outing with something healthy.
- 2 Keep it positive**  
Do not ban smoking straight away and do not immediately skip unhealthy snacks and alcoholic drinks during get-togethers. Allow employees to think about the right approach and then implement the measures in consultation and step by step.
- 3 Set a good example**  
As an employer, you serve as an example to others. And a good example leads the way. Wear your personal protective equipment where it is required. Take a lunch walk and invite your employees to join you. And do not send any work-related emails or texts outside working hours.
- 4 Remain in dialogue**  
Discuss subjects related to vitality during work meetings and during the annual planning meeting, for example. These subjects may include: how are things at work/home, does your employee still enjoy their work, how do they wish to develop further, are there any issues and, if so, how can they be resolved?
- 5 Include the newcomers**  
Also introduce new employees to how you have organised occupational health and safety matters. Demonstrate the benefits of working in a healthy and safe manner. For example, pair a new employee up with a buddy who already has a lot of experience in the job and can be a good example.



# If you are stuck, we are here for you



If you apply the tips in this guide, you will have a healthy business and meet your legal obligations. Of course we are always there for you, so you can reap the benefits of a healthy and safe working environment.

Our consultants work all over the country, so there is always an expert near you. Someone who understands you. Someone who understands how

things work in your sector and who knows what is going on around you. Who speaks your language and whose knowledge and experience prove that they are there for you. Someone who takes care of things for you. Things that sometimes seem small, but can have a big impact. Things that keep your business healthy. One way is by keeping the people in your company healthy. So that you can continue to do what you do best: business.

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