HOW TO IMPLEMENT NR-1 IN PRACTICE



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To begin, let's provide some context on what NRs are – in other words, Brazil's Regulatory Standards.

What are NRs?

NRs, or Regulatory Standards (Normas Regulamentadoras), are a set of rules established by Brazil's Ministry of Labor and Employment to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of workers across all sectors of the economy.

Official definition:

"Regulatory Standards (NRs) must be observed by private and public companies and government agencies that have employees governed by the Consolidation of Labor Laws (CLT)."

They were established by Ordinance No. 3,214 of June 8, 1978, and have been updated over time as the needs of the world of work have evolved.

Portal gov.br – Normas Regulamentadoras

How many NRs are there?

Currently, there are 37 Regulatory Standards in force, numbered from NR-1 to NR-38, with some having been revoked or consolidated over time.

How long has NR-1 been in effect?

NR-1 has existed since 1978, although it has undergone several changes over time.

Year	Event
1978	Creation of NR-1 and 27 other Regulatory Standards through Ordinance **nº 3.214/78**
2020	Significant update to NR-1, including the concept of Occupational Risk Management (GRO) and the requirement for the Risk Management Program (PGR)
2024	New updates focusing on psychosocial risks, with the requirement taking effect on May 26, 2025

*Source: **gov.br – Normas Regulamentadoras Portaria SEPRT n° 6.730** of March 9, 2020 - Ordinance **MTE n° 1.419/2024***

WHAT IS NR-1?

NR-1 is the Regulatory Standard that establishes general provisions on occupational health and safety, serving as the foundation for all other NRs. It sets out the principles of:

- Accident prevention;
- Risk identification and management;
- Worker training;

Shared responsibility between employers and workers.
Since 2020, with the inclusion of Occupational Risk Management (GRO), the standard has evolved toward a more strategic and comprehensive model.

What is GRO?

GRO (Gerenciamento de Riscos Ocupacionais – Occupational Risk Management) is a systematic and continuous approach aimed at identifying, assessing, and controlling risks in the workplace.

It is a comprehensive framework that encompasses all the actions, policies, processes, and documents required to ensure workers' health and safety.

GRO is established under NR-1 and must be implemented by all organizations, regardless of their size or risk level.

***Fundacentro Manual*: "Programa de Gerenciamento de Riscos - PGR e o Gerenciamento de Riscos Ocupacionais - GRO" (2021)**

What is the PGR?

The PGR (Programa de Gerenciamento de Riscos – Risk Management Program) is the core documentation of the GRO. It formalizes the actions for managing occupational risks identified within the organization and must include, at a minimum:

1. Risk Inventory – a list and analysis of the hazards identified in the workplace.
2. Action Plan – preventive and corrective measures to eliminate or reduce the identified risks.

The PGR must be periodically reviewed and updated, particularly when there are changes in the workplace, new processes are introduced, or accidents/ incidents occur.

Term	What is it?	Purpose	Required by
GRO	A management system	Identify, assess, and control occupational risks	NR-1 (2020)
PGR	Technical document	Record and organize GRO data and actions	Mandatory part of the GRO

And who is responsible?

Responsibility is shared – everyone has a role to play.

Responsible party	Responsibilities
Company (employer)	• Implement and maintain the GRO • Prepare and update the PGR • Ensure resources and training • Comply with legal deadlines
Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) professionals	• Identify and assess risks • Develop the PGR (Risk Inventory – Action Plan) • Monitor indicators • Train leaders and teams
Workers / CIPA	• Participate in risk identification • Suggest improvements • Comply with safety standards • Support preventive actions

OHS professionals are professionals working in the field of Occupational Health and Safety, including: occupational safety engineers, occupational safety technicians, occupational physicians and nurses, organizational psychologists (especially in relation to psychosocial risks) and external consultants or occupational health service providers.

Now that you have a more detailed understanding of the technical aspects, let’s take a closer look at the changes to NR-1 and the next steps:

WHY DID NR-1 CHANGE?

After the pandemic, mental health-related issues increased significantly. Data from the World Health Organization (WHO) show that conditions such as depression and anxiety are responsible for billions of dollars in lost productivity worldwide.

In response to this reality, Brazil's Ministry of Labor and Employment (MTE) updated NR-1 through Ordinance No. 1,419 of August 23, 2024, making the inclusion of psychosocial risks in the Risk Management Program (PGR) mandatory as of May 26, 2025.

What was it like before, and what has changed?

Previously, the focus was on mapping physical, chemical, and ergonomic risks. Now, psychosocial risks are also taken into consideration.

What are Psychosocial Risks?

Psychosocial risks are related to how work is structured, how demands are placed on employees, and how work is experienced on a daily basis. They directly affect professionals' physical and mental well-being.
Unlike risks associated with machinery or chemicals, psychosocial risks involve emotional, social, and organizational factors.

Type of Risk	Common Examples
Excessive workload	Tight deadlines, long working hours, unattainable goal
Lack of leadership support	Authoritarian or absent managers
Workplace bullying or sexual harassment	Humiliation, intimidation, abuse of power
Interpersonal conflicts	Frequent arguments, toxic work environment
Job insecurity	Fear of layoffs, punitive targets
Role ambiguity	Lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities
Lack of recognition	Efforts going unnoticed, lack of positive feedback
Social isolation	Exclusion from groups, remote work without social interaction

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON EMPLOYEES' HEALTH AND THE COMPANY'S RESULTS?

- Chronic stress
- Depression and anxiety
- Frequent absences from work
- Decreased productivity and increased conflict
- Costs related to labor disputes or employee turnover

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), psychosocial risks are among the leading causes of work-related health problems in today's workplace.

What does NR-1 require as of 2025?

The updated version of NR-1 requires psychosocial risks to be identified, assessed, and controlled as part of the Risk Management Program (PGR), with worker participation and concrete preventive actions, including measures related to leadership, organizational climate, and management processes.

That is why your role as a leader is so important!

Fundacentro, a Brazilian government technical institution, states that "an organizational culture focused on valuing mental health depends on the direct involvement of senior and middle management." - **Manual de PGR – Fundacentro, 2021**

And what is the leader's role in matters related to NR-1?

Leadership directly influences the organizational climate, culture, and quality of workplace relationships. It can serve as either a protective factor against psychosocial risks or a risk factor for a healthy work environment.
Of course, the implementation stages – which you can learn more about in our video – include specific leadership training. However, we would like to invite you to reflect on your role and on what you can do to continuously improve.

Be an ambassador for the organizational culture:

Culture refers to how things work on a daily basis – what behaviors are valued, what is allowed, and what is reinforced, both consciously and visibly as well as unconsciously.

Stay up to date on good leadership practices:

The role of leaders has changed significantly over the years, as have the challenges related to organizational culture, employee needs, and delivering results. The world is becoming increasingly complex, and we cannot assume that what made sense 20 years ago still works today.

Remember that the team's behavior reflects the leader's behavior:

If your team struggles with relationships, organization, or any other issue that may affect stress levels and results, reflect on your own behavior and how it may be impacting the team.

Pay attention to the organizational climate:

Does your team seem tense? Are engagement indicators declining? Are there many complaints or absences? Reflect on what could be improved. If the situation is not as positive as you would like, acknowledge the reality so that you can take effective action to change it.

Evaluate the data:

High turnover? Frequent absences? Declining performance? Is HR raising concerns about employee survey results? Use data to your advantage to set improvement goals or reinforce what is already working well!

Hold regular meetings to monitor the team, follow up on demands, and manage execution:

You cannot effectively support your team without knowing them, understanding their day-to-day demands, or being aware of the challenges they are facing. Create an open channel where people feel comfortable asking for help and where you can clearly understand what is working and what is not.

Don’t be afraid to show that you are learning too:

The way people and organizations operate does not change overnight. Showing that you are trying to improve and that you recognize there are areas that can be improved creates greater comfort around vulnerability, learning, and psychological safety.

Harvard Business Review (2023) – Leaders need to talk about mental health at work

Here are some examples of practical actions you can implement today to help address NR-1-related challenges:

Practice	Expected impact
Hold frequent alignment meetings	Reduces misunderstandings and tension
Encourage two-way feedback	Increases trust and engagement
Monitor organizational climate indicators	Helps identify problems before they become crises
Co-create realistic goals	Reduces excessive pressure and emotional risks
Create safe channels for employees to speak up	Helps prevent harassment, silencing, and recurring issues related to toxic behaviors

What kind of environment are you helping to build?

The organizational culture we want begins with the small choices we make every day. Be the kind of leader who inspires, supports, and transforms.

Beyond NR-1, we also need to ask ourselves: “How do we want to be remembered as leaders?” and “How would we like our team members to feel, both inside and outside the workplace?”

Creating a healthier work environment is everyone’s responsibility. In addition to helping companies adapt to NR-1 requirements, it also helps people feel more at ease, productive, and engaged in their work. This, in turn, naturally contributes to better results for both your team and the company.

LEARN MORE



Website:

Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT)
"Psychosocial risks and work-related stress", 2020

Ministério da Saúde
"Saúde Mental e Trabalho", 2022

Ministério da Saúde (2022)
Cartilha Saúde Mental e Trabalho: orientações para gestores

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International Labour Organization (OIT)
Psychosocial risks and work-related stress (2020)
https://www.ilo.org

Edgar Schein (1985, 2010)
Organizational Culture and Leadership



Podcasts:

Podcast PodJuris
Atualizações da NR1

Podcast Normas Regulamentadoras para Ouvir
A Nova NR-1

NR 01 - Gerenciamento de Riscos Ocupacionais
Fundacentro Podcast

Liderança sob Pressão
Temporada Podcast Caos corporativo

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