

# Workplace *Wellness*



## **Workplace Wellness: Low-Cost Wellness Strategies**

Workplace wellness programs that support employees and the environment they work in not only have a positive impact on employee morale, they often present a positive return on investment for the employer, too. Workplace wellness programs can often be expensive. However, there are many ways employers can make positive changes for little or no cost.

### **Nutrition**

#### *Fruit and Vegetable Consumption*

- Provide healthy eating reminders and prompts to employees using posters, email, payroll stuffers, etc.
- Offer fruits and vegetables in vending machines and in the cafeteria.
- Provide cookbooks and cooking classes for employees' families.
- Ensure on-site cafeterias follow healthy cooking practices and set nutritional standards that align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Offer healthy foods at meetings, conferences and catered events.
- Use point-of-decision prompts near vending machines and cafeteria stations to promote healthier choices.
- Offer employee-led campaigns, demonstrations or programs.
- Offer locally grown fruits and vegetables at the workplace (this could be a workplace farmer's market or a community-supported agriculture drop-off point).
- Price non-nutritious foods in vending machines and cafeterias at higher prices.
- Provide a space away from the work area for breaks and lunch.
- Make kitchen equipment available to employees.
- Provide an opportunity for on-site gardening, if possible.

#### *Beverage Consumption*

- Make water available throughout the day.
- Offer healthy drink options, such as juice and tea, in vending machines and the cafeteria.
- Modify worksite vending contracts to increase the number of healthy options.
- Price non-nutritious beverages at a higher cost.

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## *Portion Control*

- Label foods to show serving size and/or nutritional content.
- Provide food models, food scales for weighing and pictures to help employees assess portion size.
- Offer appropriate portion sizes at meetings, workplace events and in the cafeteria.

## *Breastfeeding*

- Support nursing mothers by providing rooms for expressing milk in a secure and relaxed environment, a refrigerator for storage of breast milk, policies that support breast feeding and lactation education programs.
- Offer flexible scheduling and/or on-site or near-site child care to allow for milk expression during the workday.
- Adopt alternative work options (e.g., teleworking, part-time, extended maternity) for breast-feeding mothers returning to work.
- Educate personnel on the importance of supporting breast-feeding coworkers.

## *TV & Food Advertising*

- Place TVs in non-eating areas of the workplace.
- Limit advertising (e.g., posters and other media) for unhealthy food.

## **Physical Activity/Weight Management**

- Allow access to on- and off-site gyms and recreational activities before, during and after work hours.
- Encourage and support participation in after-work recreation leagues.
- Provide cash incentives or reduced insurance costs for participation in physical activity and/or weight management or maintenance activities.
- Provide shower and/or changing facilities at the workplace.
- Provide outdoor exercise areas such as fields and trails for employee use.
- Provide bicycle racks in safe, convenient and accessible locations.
- Offer on-site fitness opportunities, such as group classes or personal training.
- Provide an on-site exercise facility.
- Set up programs that have strong social support systems and incentives:
  - Buddy or team physical activity goals
  - Programs that involve workers and family
- Provide discounted or subsidized memberships at local health clubs, recreation centers or YMCAs.
- Set up programs to encourage physical activity, such as pedometer walking challenges.
- Offer flexible work hours and breaks to allow for physical activity during the day.
- Host walk-and-talk meetings.
- Map out on-site trails or nearby walking routes and destinations.
- Have employees map out their own biking or walking route to and from work.
- Post motivational signs at elevators and escalators to encourage stair usage.
- Provide exercise/physical fitness messages and information to employees.
- Provide or support physical activity events on-site or in the community.
- Start employee activity clubs such as walking or bicycling clubs.

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- Sponsor a “bike to work” day and reward employees who participate.
- Set up a suggestion box for fitness and health tips.

## **General Health Education**

- Have a policy outlining the requirements and functions of a comprehensive workplace wellness program.
- Have a wellness plan in place that addresses the purpose, nature, duration, resources required, participants and expected results of a workplace wellness program.
- Give employees copies of the physical activity, nutrition and tobacco use policies.
- Promote and encourage employee participation in the physical activity/fitness, nutrition and weight management programs.
- Provide health education information to employees.
- Have a committee that meets at least once a month to oversee the wellness program.
- Offer regular health education presentations on various physical activity, nutrition and wellness-related topics.
- Ask health associations, health care providers and/or public health agencies to offer free on-site education classes.
- Host a health fair as a kick-off event or as a celebration for completion of a wellness campaign.
- Conduct preventive wellness screenings for blood pressure, body composition, blood cholesterol and diabetes.
- Provide confidential health risk assessments.
- Offer on-site weight management/maintenance programs for employees.
- Add counseling for weight management/maintenance, nutrition and physical activity as a member benefit in health insurance contracts.

## **Tobacco Cessation**

- Establish a company policy prohibiting tobacco use anywhere on the property.
- Provide prompts/posters to support your tobacco-free policy.
- Establish a policy supporting participation in smoking cessation activities during duty time.
- Provide counseling through an individual, group or telephone counseling program.
- Provide counseling through a health plan-sponsored individual, group or telephone counseling program.
- Provide cessation medications through health insurance.