

Walton Healthy Worksites Physical Activity Toolkit

When the healthy choice is an easier choice, people are more likely to follow through on their commitment to health. When you make available opportunities for physical activity, employees are more likely to actively participate. Consequently, they'll be happier and more productive.

Your company may save money through reduced use of costly health benefits and compensation plans as well as reduced employee absenteeism.

Physical activity is a great way to stay healthy. Regular physical activity is defined as:

Moderate physical activity

- 30+ minutes per day
- 5 or more days per week
- Does not cause a person to sweat or breathe hard

Vigorous activity

- 20+ minutes per day
- 3 or more days per week
- Causes a person to sweat and breathe hard

RESOURCES & STRATEGIES

The policy example and graph provided on the following pages can be used as your best practices framework for developing sustainable policy, system or environmental (PSE) changes regarding issues related to physical activity:

1. What policy changes would need to be changed or added?
2. What system changes need to be addressed?
3. What issues within your work environment needs to be added or revised?
4. What are the steps to accomplish the PSE change?
5. What is the timeline and who is responsible for following through?

After answering these critical questions, determine if you have any remaining ideas that personalizes the strategy to fit your own work place.

BENEFITS

Regular physical activity can help:

- Control weight
- Strengthen bones and muscles
- Enhance mental wellness, stress management, and mood
- Result in more productive employees by reducing absenteeism
- Increase your chances of living longer
- Reduce risk of cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, some cancers and others
- Assist in managing chronic disease

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/tips-for-offering-healthier-options-and-pa-at-workplace-508.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/index.html>

Wellness Council of America

<https://www.welcoa.org/>

National Wellness Institute

<https://www.nationalwellness.org/#>



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SAMPLE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY #1

“Beginning {Date}, all employees are required to receive an additional 15 minutes of paid break time each day to participate in physical activity. This time may be combined with the current lunch time (of 40 minutes) to accumulate 55 minutes of total break time. The additional 15 minutes of break time is designated for the purpose of participating in physical activity only. Employees who do not wish to use the extra time for physical activity are not eligible to take the extra break time.

Our organization supports the effective use of walking meetings. Walking meetings are most effective when there are three or fewer individuals involved and the topic doesn't require handouts or extensive note taking.

Staff must follow the current human resources dress code policy. However, employees are encouraged to keep a pair of walking shoes at their desks to allow for a walk break or walking meeting.

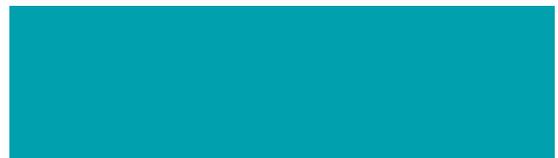
Senior leadership at our organization will provide information regarding physical activity opportunities at least quarterly to all employees.”

SAMPLE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY #2

“Beginning {Date}, facilities at {Location} are available for employees to use before and after work. This includes the fitness center, weight room, running track, gyms, locker and shower facilities, and pool. In addition, the inside hallways are available for walking before work beginning at {Time} and after work until {Time}.

In each office, there are available maps that identify outdoor walking routes, including identification of paved community walking trails.

Senior leadership within our organization will provide information regarding physical activity opportunities at least quarterly to all employees.”



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Best Practice Worksheet

Use the following graph to organize your plan to address physical activity in the workplace. Use the columns to assess your organization's current PSE.

Strategy	System Change	Environment Change	Policy Change	Steps	Timeline	Responsible Party	Notes
Offer breaks and flexible work hours to allow for physical activity during the day	X		X				
Start a walking incentive at your worksite	X						
Post motivational signs near elevators and stairwells		X					
Map out trails or walking routes	X						
Have employees map their own biking or walking routes	X						
Start employee activity clubs	X						
Provide shower and/or changing facilities		X					
Allow for use of facilities outside of normal work hours	X	X					
Provide on-site child care so parents can exercise at the worksite		X					
Provide on-site gardening		X					
Provide incentives for participation in nutrition and/or weight management/maintenance activities	X						
Employer provided bike share initiative	X						
Adopt a flexible employee dress code to allow employees to feel comfortable to walk or bike during breaks			X				