



Worksite Wellness Policy Ideas and Resources



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Employees spend a big part of their day at work, making workplaces the perfect environment for influencing employee health. Workplaces that develop and implement policies that create healthy environments and provide healthy options, as well as promote preventive care, can help their employees on a path to wellness. In return the workplace enjoys the benefits of healthier employees.



This section includes several policy ideas that support health and wellness for worksites and employees. This is not an all-inclusive list, but one to get you started.

Heart Disease and Stroke

- Automated External Defibrillator (AED)
 - A policy would provide the means for and the commitment to a worksite to have AEDs
 - Allows appropriate personnel to purchase AEDs for work
- Public Access Defibrillator Program (PAD)
 - Provides general guidance for the administration of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) as appropriate
- CPR Training for employees
 - Provides employees the opportunity to learn CPR
- Awareness of heart attack and stroke
 - During February (Heart Month) and May (Stroke Month), provide information to employees about the signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke. The information can be given as a poster, cards, lunch presentations, or any other way the employees receive information.
- Provide on-site blood pressure monitoring area at work
 - Set up a blood pressure monitor in an accessible location for employees to track their blood pressure
- Develop a home monitoring program for hypertension
 - Work with your benefits provider to make blood pressure home monitors available to employees with high blood pressure

Diabetes

- Promote diabetes awareness
 - Print diabetes articles in the company newsletter (quarterly)
 - Display posters or fliers highlighting the health risks associated with diabetes (semi-annually)

Sun Safety

- Adopt a comprehensive sun-safe worksite policy
 - Such a policy could determine how to best protect employees from harmful sun exposure during work activities
- Provide sun safe environments, schedules, work clothes, and equipment
 - For employees who will be outdoors, establish shaded areas to work, set schedules around the hottest times of the day, and provide sun-protective clothing
- Encourage employees to use hats, umbrellas, long sleeve clothing, or other protective gear when outdoors
 - To ensure employees are protected, purchase uniforms or work clothes that are sun protective
- Offer awards each month for the group with the most employees wearing sun protective clothing every day
 - This is a way to incentivize employees to adopt safe sun practices
- Provide sunscreen and lip balm for outdoor workers
 - Many people forget to apply sunscreen or choose not to. To encourage employees to fully protect themselves, provide sun protective lip balm and sunscreens.

- Encourage supervisors and safety officers to set a good example by using sunscreen and lip balm
 - Have supervisors lead by example!

Wellness Program

- Adopt a healthy food policy for your worksite that always includes fresh fruit and vegetables
 - Ensure that all employees have access to healthy foods by providing these items at your worksite
- Incentivize workers to participate in a worksite wellness program
 - Provide financial or other incentives to employees to encourage their participation in a wellness program
- Provide support and educational opportunities
 - Offer fruit, tea, or juices in place of doughnuts, muffins and coffee during meetings (daily)
 - Incorporate daily stretching breaks into your meetings
 - Lead staff through three deep breaths at the end of each meeting
 - Ensure that vending machines and cafeterias offer low-fat, healthy choices (monthly)
 - Encourage a weekly walking program among employees
 - Promote health screenings and ongoing wellness support programs
 - Remind employees to take medication and/or insulin shots and to monitor blood glucose regularly
 - Encourage regular checkups with a physician

- Maintain availability of structures such as fitness centers, shower facilities, multi-purpose paths, and bicycle racks that support physical activity
 - Help employees be active during the workday by maintaining sidewalks between buildings and stairs within buildings to increase walkability (a measure of how friendly an area is to walking) in and around the workplace.
- Offer paid leave for employee exercise
 - Regardless of participation in a wellness program, every employee should be encouraged to exercise. Offering paid leave for employees to exercise can help them stay healthy and take fewer sick days.
- Provide insurance premium discounts for healthy behaviors
 - Incentivize employees to be active and eat well by offering discounts on their annual insurance premiums. Other incentives include waiving cost-sharing requirements or providing benefits that would not otherwise be provided, such as gym memberships.

Physical Activity

- Discourage sedentary behavior by providing standing workstations
 - Many indoor employees sit for eight or more hours a day. Remaining sedentary has been shown to contribute to obesity, heart disease, and other chronic diseases. Offering standing workstations is one way to reduce the sedentary nature of office work and promote health.

Radon

- Have your worksite tested for radon, an odorless, colorless gas known to cause cancer, on an annual basis
 - Radon can accumulate in worksites and impact the health of employees. The only way to know if your worksite has the gas is to test for it. Testing is easy and affordable.
- Reduce high levels of radon by installing a mitigation system
 - If testing shows your worksite to have high levels of radon, you can eliminate any risk to employees by installing a mitigation system that circulates the radon gas out of the building
- Maintain a quality HVAC system to properly circulate air
 - A quality HVAC system maintains proper circulation within the building, removing indoor pollutants such as radon
- Encourage all employees to test their homes for radon
 - Because radon testing is easy and inexpensive, all employees should test their homes to keep themselves and their families healthy
- Offer free or low-cost radon test kits to all employees
 - Radon test kits can be purchased for as little as \$7. Offering these kits to your employees will encourage them to test their homes.

Nutrition

- Under Pressure: Strategies for Sodium Reduction in Worksites
 - Provides strategies to improve the worksite food environment to reduce sodium
- Adopt a healthy food policy for your worksite that

includes fresh fruits and vegetables

- Many worksites offer food that could be more nutritious. Ensure that all employees have access to healthy foods by providing these items at your worksite in places like vending machines, cafeterias, and break rooms.
- Ensure the availability of employee break rooms to store and prepare nutritious foods from home
 - It is important for employees to have a clean, inviting place to eat a nutritious lunch and a place where they can safely store and prepare their food. This allows them to bring a healthy lunch from home instead of eating out.
- Ensure the availability of lactation rooms that support mothers who continue to breastfeed after returning to work
 - Support breastfeeding by providing designated private space for breastfeeding or expressing milk, allowing flexible scheduling, and/or providing on-site or near-site child care

Screenings

- Provide reminder cards to encourage all employees to get screenings (i.e., cancer, blood pressure, A1C)
 - This could be an employer who reminds employees to get screenings, or an employer who works with a health insurer to send out reminder cards to their enrollees
- Offer paid release time to all employees to get screened
 - During work hours, provide each employee a set amount of paid leave to see a health provider for preventive screenings
- Offer financial incentives to employees who get screened for any health issues

- Provide some screening services on-site to encourage employee participation
 - Some cancer screenings, such as mammography, A1C, diabetes, and blood pressure can be conducted using mobile screening units. To make them most accessible, employers could offer these mobile services onsite to their employees.
- Provide free or low-cost screening services to underinsured or uninsured workers
 - Ensure that all employees, including part-time and low-wage employees, have access to the same health benefits as full-time employees, including access to affordable screenings

This section provides examples of policies implemented by various workplaces in Utah

- Utah Secondhand Smoke Policy Implementation Guide
 - Encourages leaders of businesses, government agencies, and organizations to review their current workplace smoking policies, implement a smoke-free worksite environment, and offer tobacco cessation resources to their employees.
 - <http://www.tobaccofreeutah.org/pdfs/shsworksite.pdf>
- Healthy Food Policy Checklist
 - Provides guidelines for food provided at meetings/conferences sponsored by a worksite
- Exercise and Health Activity Policy
 - Gives employees the opportunity to exercise for 30 minutes, three times a week during working hours
- Breastfeeding Released Time
 - Allows employees time during working hours to breastfeed or to express milk for their child
- Administrative Leave for Preventive Health/Annual Exams
 - Gives employees 4 hours of administrative leave annually to go get preventive/annual exams during work hours
- Worksite Domestic Violence Policy
 - The purpose of this policy is to avoid or minimize the occurrence and effects of domestic violence in the workplace and to foster a safe work environment
 - <http://dohnet/edo/hrm/policy/DomesticViolencePolicy2008.pdf>
- 20% employee discount at county facilities (e.g., recreation centers, swimming pools, etc.)

- Provides discounts to selected county facilities available for both employees and family members
- County Government Center-Employee Fitness Center
 - Provides organization and general management of the fitness center
- County – Work Hours, Rest Periods (Breaks), and Fitness Program
 - Establishes uniform policy regarding working hours, rest periods, and fitness program
- Healthier Worksite Initiative – Policies
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/policy/index.htm>
 - This website contains formal laws, regulations, and rules that have been adopted on a collective basis to guide individual and collective behavior at the federal workplace. It also provides basic information about policies and explains why they are important to workforce health promotion (WHP) planners.

This section provides other resources such as toolkits and guides that provide a step-by-step plan for developing a healthier

worksite.

- CDC Worksite Health Score Card
 - http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/pubs/docs/HSC_Manual.pdf
 - An inventory of what your worksite currently provides and a worksheet to assist you in the development of a worksite program
- Reducing the Risk of Heart Disease and Stroke - A Six-Step Guide for Employers
 - http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/pubs/docs/six_step_guide.pdf
 - A handout that helps users make a strong case for investing in comprehensive programs and services to prevent heart disease and stroke. It includes information about promising practices and effective interventions for employers. It also allows employers to estimate how much they can save on costs related to health care, absenteeism, and lost productivity by investing in these programs.
- Successful Business Strategies to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke Toolkit Guide
 - http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/pubs/employers_toolkit.htm
 - Includes a checklist of successful health plan approaches and examples of successful promising practices that help promote cardiovascular health
- CDC Healthier Worksite Initiative—Nutritious Eating Toolkits
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/nutrition.htm>
 - This site is designed specifically for worksites to encourage nutritious eating and contains

checklists, guides, budgets, and other tools to aid in program planning, design, and management

- CDC Healthier Worksite Initiative - Establish a Garden Market
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/gardenmarket/index.htm>
 - This toolkit provides information on how to establish a garden market in a federal agency or other organization and demonstrates how it works at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Choosing Foods and Beverages for Healthy Meetings, Conferences, and Events
 - http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/pdf/Healthy_Worksite_Food.pdf
 - This resource provides guidelines for selecting healthful foods and beverages for breaks or meals at workplace meetings, conferences, and events
- Improving the Food Environment Through Nutrition Standards: A Guide for Government Procurement
 - http://www.cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/DHDSP_Procurement_Guide.pdf
 - This resource provides practical guidance for developing, adopting, implementing, and evaluating a food procurement policy
- Physical Activity Workplace Toolkits
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/index.htm#Exercise>
 - This web page provides links to toolkits that address reducing barriers and increasing access to places for physical activity in the workplace
- Evaluation
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/resources/>

- [index.html](#)
 - Provides resources and tools and includes planning, promoting, and evaluating physical activity programs. The promotion section includes links to brochures the CDC has developed and links to other organizations that provide resources for physical activity promotion.
- Diabetes at Work
 - <https://diabetesatwork.org/>
 - Helps companies assess their need for diabetes education at the worksite. Provides more than 30 lesson plans and fact sheets.
- Depression Calculator
 - <http://www.depressioncalculator.com/Welcome.asp>
 - This resource allows businesses to calculate the impact of depression in the workplace and the benefits of treatment

Sample Policy I. Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights,

Model Policy for a Smokefree Workplace

ABC Company No Smoking Policy

ABC Company is dedicated to providing a healthy, comfortable, and productive work environment for our employees.

The United States Surgeon General in his 1986 report on Involuntary Smoking concluded:

Involuntary Smoking is a cause of disease, including lung cancer, in healthy nonsmokers. The simple separation of smokers and nonsmokers within the same air space may reduce, but does not eliminate, the exposure of nonsmokers to environmental tobacco smoke.

In 1993, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) classified environmental tobacco smoke as a Group A carcinogen; that is, a substance known to cause cancer in humans. The EPA recognizes no safe level of exposure for Group A carcinogens.

In light of these findings, ABC Company shall be entirely smokefree effective (date)

Smoking will be strictly prohibited within company buildings, including offices, hallways, waiting rooms, restrooms, lunchrooms, elevators, meeting rooms, and all community work areas.

This policy applies to all employees, clients, contractors, and visitors.

Copies of this policy shall be distributed to all employees. Signs shall be posted at all building entrances.

This policy is being announced 3 months in advance in order to facilitate a smooth transition.

Those employees who smoke and would like to take this opportunity to quit are invited to participate in the cessation program being offered by this company.

The success of this policy will depend upon the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of smokers and nonsmokers. All employees share in the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing this policy.

Signature of CEO or President

Source: Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights.

Sample Policy II. Template for a Model Smoking Policy

1. **Rationale**

Statement of Intent - Background Information

This should briefly explain why the company/organization is introducing a formal approach to tobacco in the workplace and some key data and facts about the company/organization's previous stance (if any) and the dangers of smoking. Include the date that the policy will be introduced (or reinitiated).

2. **Objectives of the policy**

- To minimize exposure of employees to tobacco smoke while on the company premises or while engaged in the organization's business.
- To consider the welfare of all employees.
- To provide a consistent approach to break entitlements for smokers and non-smokers.

3. **Application of the policy**

Clearly state that the policy applies to all employees, subcontractors, and visitors.

4. **Non-smoking provision**

Indicate precisely where (if at all) smoking is permitted on company site(s), including buildings, car parks, company vehicles, and other external areas. Also, state when smoking is permitted during working time, for example, in designated breaks, or with agreement of individual line managers.

5. **Employee welfare/cessation support**

Outline how cessation support will be available to staff either internally or externally and how it can be accessed.

6. **Failure to comply**

Indicate the process for dealing with employees who breach the policy.

7. **Review**

Set a date for formal review and state this in the written policy. Formal reviews should take place every 12-18 months.