



RiskWise



# A Guide to Controlling Risk

## Workplace Health and Wellness Programs

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# Workplace Health and Wellness Programs

A workplace health and wellness program is a health promotion activity or organization-wide policy designed to support healthy behaviors and improve health outcomes at work. Such programs can produce many beneficial results including healthier and more resilient employees. These programs may also create risks such as increased exposure to injuries in the workplace and facility use risks.

The following considerations help agencies create workplace health and wellness programs that are safe, risk resistant and within statewide policy guidelines.

## Risks to Agencies

- Claims for injuries due to broken equipment, slips and falls, overexertion
- Absenteeism, productivity losses
- Facility losses/damages
- Contractual risks due to vendors in the workplace
- Higher agency risk charges due to increased claims

## Insurance Coverage

The state’s tort liability insurance coverage and workers’ compensation insurance coverage includes all authorized employees and volunteers while performing official duties at the state’s direction and control. Coverage applies when traveling on official state business. Coverage is valid in the U.S, its possessions, territories and Canada.

For more information see the following Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Risk Management Self-Insurance policies.

[DAS Policy 125-7-101](#), *Property Self-Insurance Policy Manual*.

[DAS Policy 125-7-201](#), *Liability Self-Insurance Policy Manual*.

[DAS Policy 125-7-202](#), *Employee Liability Self-Insurance Policy Manual*.

## Activity Sponsorship

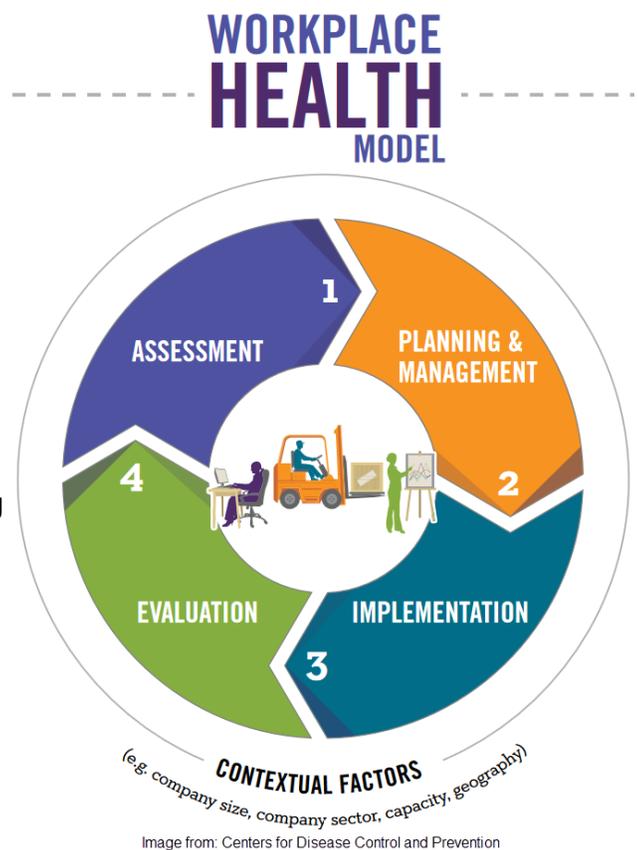
Activity Sponsorship	Risk Level	Examples
<b>Agency-sponsored, internal</b> Agency initiates activity and activity occurs on agency property.	Moderate to high	Fitness rooms, showers/locker rooms, worksite health screenings, flu shot clinics.
<b>Agency-sponsored, external</b> Agency initiates activity and activity occurs off agency property.	Moderate	Group health club membership, free/low-cost flu shots at a medical facility, extended breaks for fitness activities.
<b>Employee-sponsored, internal</b> Employee group/vendor/sponsor initiates activity and activity occurs on agency property.	Low to moderate	Weight Watchers meetings, massages, yoga/exercise classes, healthy cooking classes, fitness rooms.
<b>Employee-sponsored, external</b> Employee group/vendor/sponsor initiates activity and activity occurs off agency property.	Low	Walking clubs, sports teams/leagues (golf, softball, bowling, etc.), weight-loss contests.

# Policies to Consider for Workplace Health Programs

- Executive Order 17-01:  
[https://www.oregon.gov/gov/documents/executive\\_orders/eo\\_17-01.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/gov/documents/executive_orders/eo_17-01.pdf)
- 125-6-010: Resource Conservation (Energy, Water, etc.):  
<http://www.oregon.gov/das/policies/107-011-010.pdf>
- 125-6-310: Use of the Capitol Mall Area Parks and Grounds Control:  
<http://www.oregon.gov/das/policies/107-011-310.pdf>
- 125-6-320: Public Use of State Building Premises:  
<http://www.oregon.gov/das/policies/107-011-320.pdf>
- 125-6-322: Sales and Solicitations in State Office Buildings and on State Grounds:  
<http://www.oregon.gov/das/policies/107-011-322.pdf>
- 125-6-330: Vending Facilities in State Office Buildings Owned or Leased by DAS:  
<http://www.oregon.gov/das/policies/107-011-330.pdf>

## Workplace Health Program Risk Reduction Considerations:

- Have a Committee dedicated to the program.
- Consider having a joint Wellness and Safety Committee; especially in smaller agencies.
- Develop a Wellness Plan that defines the risk appetite for the various activities it supports.
- Match the risk with the level of health and fitness desired. Agencies who have employees with arduous work activities may want to consider a moderate risk over a low risk.
- Communicate the Plan with employees so they know limitations, restrictions and acceptable use policies.
- Avoid unnecessary workers' compensation claims:
  - Have employees sign liability waivers or have activities outside work hours.
  - Make participation voluntary.
  - Avoid combining wellness events with work-related components such as team building exercises, giving out awards/bonuses, employee choice to attend wellness event or work.
- Avoid unnecessary liability claims:
  - Have vendors sign agreements that leave them responsible for actions, decisions, damage and return of workspace to working condition.
  - Have employee sponsor activity (not agency).
- Decide if families, friends, minors or other state employees are to be invited (increases agency risk).
- Define excluded activities such as free weights in wellness rooms, karate instruction involving sparring onsite, etc.
- Assign responsibility for purchase/maintenance/adequacy of equipment.



## Resources

- Department of Justice approved: [Liability Waiver and Release Form](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Wellness at Work](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Workplace Health Model](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Workplace Health Promotion](#)
- Oregon Health Authority: [Healthy Worksites](#)

<sup>i</sup> Excerpted from CDC, "[Wellness at Work](#)", July 7, 2015

**DAS RISK MANAGEMENT**  
[www.oregon.gov/das/Risk/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/das/Risk/Pages/index.aspx)

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