

# Workplace Health and Wellness Programs



RiskWise



## A Guide to Controlling Risk

### Workplace Health and Wellness Programs

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Published June 2017  
Revised March 2021

Workplace health and wellness programs, as described by the CDC, are a health promotion activities or organization-wide policies 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 also create risks, such as potential injuries in the workplace and state facility property damage.

The considerations below are a starting place when exploring workplace health and wellness programs that create safe, risk resistant programs within statewide guidelines.

## Risks to Agencies

Workplace health and wellness programs have many benefits. They also pose potential risks. Agencies should consider each risk when developing agency specific programs.

- Injuries from broken equipment, slips and falls, overexertion, etc.
- Facility and property losses/damages
- Liability risks from inadequate contracts with service providing vendors
- Liability risks around equal access or opportunities
- Higher agency risk charges from increased claims

## Insurance Coverage

The state's self-insurance programs and workers' compensation insurance covers all authorized employees and volunteers while performing official duties at the state's direction and control.

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](#), *Agency Liability Self-Insurance Policy Manual*.

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

[Workers' Compensation Coverage](#) may apply when activities or programs require mandatory participation by employees, is on paid time, and is at the direction and control of the sponsoring agency.



## Activity Sponsorship

Activity Sponsorship	Risk Level	Examples
<b>Agency-sponsored, internal</b> Agency initiates activity and activity occurs on agency property.		State managed 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.		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.		Weight Watchers meetings, massages, yoga/exercise classes, healthy cooking classes, fitness rooms where employee's assume liabilities.
<b>Employee-sponsored, external</b> Employee group/vendor/sponsor initiates activity and activity occurs off agency property.		Walking clubs, sports teams/leagues (golf, softball, bowling, etc.), weight-loss contests.

# State Policies to Consider Before Starting Workplace Health Programs

- Executive Order [17-01](#): Employee Wellness
- [50-010-06](#): Employee Health and Wellness ([Implementation Procedures for Agency Wellness Plans](#))
- [125-6-010](#): Energy and Resource Conservation (Energy, Water, etc.)
- [125-6-310](#): Use of the Capitol Mall Area Parks and Grounds Control
- [125-6-320](#): Public Use of State Building Premises
- [125-6-322](#): Sales and Solicitations in State Office Buildings and on State Grounds
- [125-6-330](#): Vending Facilities in State Office Buildings Owned or Leased by DAS

## Workplace Health Program Risk Reduction Considerations:

Agencies have many risk reduction considerations when developing a workplace health program. Some of the important risk reduction considerations for agencies are:

- Consider having a committee dedicated to the program, or a joint Wellness and Safety Committee. They can perform [risk assessments](#) for activities or sponsored events to help weigh the risks vs. benefits.
- Match the risk with the level of health or fitness desired. Agencies who have employees with arduous work activities may want to consider moderate risk activities over low risk ones.
- Develop a Wellness Plan that defines the risk appetite for the various activities it supports.
- Communicate the Plan with employees so they know limitations, restrictions and acceptable use policies.
- Have employees sponsor activities (not agency) outside work hours.
- Have employees sign [liability waivers](#). This can help avoid the occurrence of workers' compensation claims.
- Make participation voluntary.
- Decide if families, friends, minors or other state employees are included (increases agency risk).
- Assign responsibility for purchase/maintenance/adequacy of equipment.
- Define excluded activities such as using free weights, karate instruction involving sparring onsite, etc.
- To further reduce risk exposures, agencies should consider avoiding:
  - Combining wellness events with work-related components such as team building exercises.
  - Making employee's choose between attending a wellness event or working.
  - Unnecessary liability claims. Have vendors sign agreements. This can make them responsible for their actions, decisions, and damage.
  - Giving out awards/bonuses.

The CDC's [Workplace Health Model](#) provides considerations for a coordinated, systematic and comprehensive approach to assist organizations in developing a workplace health program. Click on each of the four steps of the model for more resources and information from the CDC.



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

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## Additional Resources, Links and Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Workplace Health Promotion](#)  
Oregon Health Authority: [Healthy Worksites](#)  
Public Employees' Benefit Board: [Wellness Central](#)  
Oregon [Positivity Project](#)  
SAIF Corporation: [Promote Health](#)  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health: [Total Worker Health](#)

[<https://www.oregon.gov/das/Risk/Pages/PubsToolsRes.aspx>]