

Operational Policy

Policy title:	Employee Wellness Policy		
Policy number:	DHS OHA 080-013		
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Approved:	Kris Kautz, Deputy Director OHA Don Erickson, Chief Administrative Officer ODHS		

Purpose

The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) are committed to supporting employees in individual and group efforts to improve their personal health and wellbeing through participation evidence-based and culturally relevant worksite wellness programs and activities.

Description

This policy provides opportunities for employees to access wellness activities in the workplace and on their own time and establishes requirements and prohibitions for ODHS and OHA support of those activities.

Applicability

This policy applies to all ODHS and OHA staff including employees, volunteers, trainees and interns.

As keepers of the public trust, all agency employees have a responsibility to comply with state and agency policies, administrative rule, and state and federal law. The agency takes this responsibility seriously and failure to fulfill this responsibility is not treated lightly. Employees who fail to comply with state or agency policy, administrative rule, or state and federal law may face progressive discipline, up to and including dismissal from state service.

Policy

1. An employee wellness committee is a group designed to facilitate wellness opportunities for individuals, work groups, and specific worksites.
2. Employee wellness committees shall be dedicated to developing worksite activities, programs, and educational opportunities that promote evidence-based and culturally relevant wellness practices that are accessible for all interested staff.
3. Leadership, managers, individuals, and units shall form partnerships to build employee wellness committees that obtain feedback from staff about the needs of employees and their interests for wellness related opportunities.

4. With manager approval and unless prevented by critical business need, staff shall be allowed to use two hours of work time (non-overtime) each month to serve as a member of an employee wellness committee.
5. Wellness committees shall not:
 - a. Engage in fundraising activities unless they create a 501(c)(3) or other appropriate entity.
 - b. Sponsor wellness activities that are opportunities to sell, promote, or solicit products or services.
6. Individual staff may offer worksite wellness opportunities without being a member of an employee wellness committee.
7. Worksite wellness activities:
 - a. Taught or supported by staff shall be publicized and provided to all staff at no cost.
 - b. Taught or supported by non-agency instructors require a licensed or certified instructor with appropriate insurance, if a fee is charged.
8. Unless prevented by a critical business need, ODHS|OHA employees shall be allowed to flex their time to take advantage of wellness opportunities during business hours. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Arriving late or leaving early to attend a wellness class and making up the time on the same or a different day during the same pay period (work week).
 - b. Extending a lunch period in order to attend a wellness class and making up the time on the same or a different day during the same pay period (work week).
 - c. Participating in worksite wellness activities.
9. Managers shall not use “critical business need” in a way that eliminates employees’ ability to participate in wellness activities indefinitely. Managers who deny requests to flex time for wellness activities or participation or in on-site wellness committees or activities because of a critical business need shall:
 - a. Provide a written explanation for the denial. The denial shall not cite only “critical business need” with no additional explanation.
 - b. Gather data on the number of staff who would take advantage of this option and report annually to the Cross-Agency Health Improvement Project (CAHIP) Steering Committee on those numbers and the obstacles to implementing this policy.
10. ODHS|OHA shall not approve funds to furnish space for wellness activities but, if space and funding allow, may include space for a workout facility option when considering new construction or leases.
 - a. If a site has an on-site work-out facility, that facility shall be created and maintained through an independent entity, separate from wellness committees.
 - b. If a site has an on-site work-out facility, the independent entity responsible for creating and maintaining the site is responsible for getting the site approved through the DHS|OHA Joint Facilities Committee prior to contracting for the site.
 - c. Requests for assistance with or approval of an on-site work-out facility shall be submitted to DHS-OHA.FacilitiesManagement@dhsaha.state.or.us.
11. ODHS|OHA facilities may offer worksite wellness opportunities that do not require specialized equipment, such as yoga or Pilates, based on the reasonable availability of facility or conference room space.
 - a. All worksite wellness opportunities shall be approved through the Joint Facilities Committee.
 - b. Worksite wellness opportunities that do not require specialized equipment, for which no fee is charged, may use agency technology such as smartboards to make the opportunity more widely available to ODHS|OHA employees.
 - c. Remote workers may use their state equipment to attend agency approved virtual wellness activities, including classes or benefits offered through state insurance programs.

- d. The Joint Facilities Committee may delegate management of worksite wellness activities to employee wellness groups in field offices after approval of the committee and activity through the agency process.
 - e. Requests to offer work-site wellness opportunities shall be submitted to DHS-OHA.FacilitiesManagement@dhs.ohio.gov.
12. The CAHIP Steering Committee and the Office of Health Safety and Emergency Services program shall make recommendations to agency leadership regarding agency-wide support for this policy.
13. To better support staff wellness, ODHS|OHA shall implement scheduling changes for shortened meeting periods and managers shall encourage staff to complete meetings within the shortened time. These changes do not apply to client service appointments and are not intended to replace the mandated 15-minute break period.
- a. Fifty-minute meeting periods (previously one-hour), with meetings beginning five minutes after the hour or half-hour and ending five minutes before the hour or half hour. This means a meeting that previously began at 10 a.m. and ended at 11 a.m. would begin at 10:05 a.m. and end at 10:55 a.m.
 - b. Twenty-five-minute meeting periods (previously half hour), with meetings beginning five minutes after the hour or ending five minutes before the hour. This means a half-hour meeting that previously began at 10:00 a.m. now begins at 10:05 a.m. and ends at 10:30 a.m. A meeting that previously began at 10:30 a.m. and ended at 11 a.m. now begins at 10:30 a.m. and ends at 10:55 a.m.
 - c. Longer meeting periods should be adjusted as necessary to align with the intent of this policy and should be managed in alignment with the ODHS|OHA Healthy Meeting Policy.
14. Managers shall:
- a. Discuss scheduling and over-scheduling with staff.
 - b. Discourage working more hours than an individual is scheduled to work.
 - c. Use the availability of flexible work hours to support meeting individual staff needs.
 - d. Encourage staff to schedule breaks and time off, including blocking break times on their calendars.
 - e. Consider avenues to help staff end their day at scheduled times, such as an end-of-day huddle that includes an opportunity to ask for support or assistance, ice-breakers, relaxation techniques, or “water cooler” activities that give staff the opportunity to disengage at the end of the day.

References

2012 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) of State and School Employees
[ODHS|OHA 010-019 Healthy Meetings, Conferences, and Events](#)
[ODHS|OHA 080-013-01 Approval for Worksite Wellness Activities](#)
[ODHS|OHA 080-013-02 Guidelines for Approved Wellness Activities](#)

Forms referenced

[Implementation Requirements](#)
[Implementation Guidance](#)
[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Contact

Office of Health, Safety and Emergency Services
Safety.healthwellness@dhs.ohio.gov
971-720-0520

Policy history

Version 1 Joint DHS|OHA 02/03/2015

Version 2 Revised and renumbered 05/04/2020

Version 3 Revised 10/04/2021

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