



Workplace Wellness: Low-Cost Activities to Promote Weight Loss

Wellness issues important to you – brought to you by the insurance specialists at Life Benefits. Call us with questions – Ted Hill at 214-221-1660 ext 303.

Program Activities

Nutrition Activities

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption

1. Provide healthy eating reminders and prompts to employees via multiple means (i.e., e-mail, posters, payroll stuffers, etc.).
2. Offer appealing, low-cost fruits and vegetables in vending machines and in the cafeteria.
3. Provide cookbooks, food preparation, and cooking classes for employees' families.
4. Ensure onsite cafeterias follow healthy cooking practices and set nutritional standards for foods served that align with the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
5. Offer healthy foods at meetings, conferences, and catered events.
6. Use point-of-decision prompts as a marketing technique to promote healthier choices.
7. Provide healthy cooking demonstrations that teach skills (i.e., fruit and vegetable selection and preparation).
8. Provide taste-testing opportunities at the workplace.
9. Offer employee-led campaigns, demonstrations or programs.
10. Offer local fruits and vegetables at the workplace (i.e. workplace farmers' market or community supported agriculture drop-off point).
11. Use competitive pricing (price non-nutritious foods in vending machines and cafeterias at higher prices).
12. Provide protected time and dedicated space away from the work area for breaks and lunch.
13. Make kitchen equipment available to employees.
14. Provide an opportunity for onsite gardening if possible.

Sweetened Beverage Consumption

1. Make water available throughout the day.
2. Offer appealing, low-cost healthful drink options in vending machines and the cafeteria.
3. Modify worksite vending contracts to increase the number of healthy options.
4. Price non-nutritious beverages at a higher cost.
5. Use point-of-decision prompts to promote healthier choices.

Portion Control

1. Label foods to show serving size and/or nutritional content.
2. Provide food models, food scales for weighing and pictures to help employees assess portion size.
3. Offer appropriate portion sizes at meetings, workplace events and in the cafeteria.

TV & Food Advertising

1. Place TVs in non-eating areas of the workplace.
2. Limit food advertising in the cafeteria (i.e., print and other media).

Physical/Weight Management Activities

1. Allow access to on- and off-worksites gyms and recreational activities before, during and after work hours.
2. Offer and encourage participation in after-work recreation or leagues.
3. Provide cash incentives or reduced insurance costs for participation in physical activity and/or weight management or maintenance activities.
4. Provide shower and/or changing facilities onsite.
5. Provide outdoor exercise areas such as fields and trails for employee use.
6. Provide bicycle racks in safe, convenient, and accessible locations.
7. Offer onsite fitness opportunities, such as group classes or personal training.
8. Provide an onsite exercise facility.
9. Set up programs that have strong social support systems and incentives, such as:
 - Buddy or team physical activity goals
 - Programs that involve workers and family
 - Programs to encourage physical activity, such as pedometer walking challenges
 - Explore discounted or subsidized memberships at local health clubs, recreation centers, or YMCAs
10. Offer flexible work hours to allow for physical activity during the day.
11. Support physical activity breaks during the workday, such as stretching or walking.
12. Host walk-and-talk meetings.
13. Map out onsite trails or nearby walking routes and destinations.
14. Have employees map out their own biking or walking route to and from work.
15. Post motivational signs at elevators and escalators to encourage stair usage.
16. Provide exercise/physical fitness messages and information to employees.
17. Provide or support recreation leagues and other physical activity events onsite or in the community.
18. Start employee activity clubs such as walking or bicycling clubs.
19. Provide onsite child care facilities to facilitate physical activity (i.e., employees have more time to get exercise because they do not have to rush to pick up their children and can also play with them during break times).
20. Sponsor a "bike to work" day and reward employees who participate.
21. Set up a box and solicit fitness and health tips.

This article is not intended to be exhaustive nor should any discussion or opinions be construed as legal advice. Readers should contact legal counsel for legal advice.