



# Section 2:

## Strategies – Core Outcomes for Healthy Worksites

### Nutritious Food

#### Why This is Important

Eating nutritious food improves overall wellbeing, helps us focus throughout the day, and can help reduce the risk of developing chronic conditions. Employers play an important role in promoting nutritious eating and making sure nutritious food and beverages are available to employees at meetings and events, and in vending machines and cafeterias.

#### How to Support This Outcome

##### Education and Awareness:

- Offer nutritious food and beverages at meetings and events (see the appendix for additional information regarding Nutrition Guidance for Worksites).
- Include employees' family members in campaigns that promote nutritious eating (for example, communications could encompass how to include children, partners, and other family members).
- Provide information about food resources in your community (as feasible dependent upon location of on-site, hybrid, and remote employees).

## **Behavior Change:**

- Host an on-site nutrition education opportunity.
- Encourage nutritious eating by supporting local food initiatives on-site by:
  - Offering an on-site Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program (discounting the cost of a CSA program can make this strategy more effective).
  - Organizing a worksite garden—consider accessibility to make sure the garden can be accessed by individuals of all abilities.
  - Providing local food in the cafeteria.
  - Exploring opportunities with local farms for a mobile or on-site farmers' market.

## **Policy and Environmental Change:**

- Provide refrigerators, microwaves, and break areas.
- Provide access to free water available throughout the day.
- Adopt a food and beverage policy, or written guidelines, for meetings and events.
- Create food and beverage guidelines for cafes and vending machines.
- Support breaktime policies by encouraging a culture where staff regularly take their lunch break.
- Encourage nutritious options from vending machines and cafeterias by:
  - Using competitive pricing to make nutritious options more affordable in vending machines or cafeterias.
  - Implementing vending machine and cafeteria standards to increase the percentage of nutritious options that are available.
  - Using signs or symbols to make nutritious options stand out and make nutrition information available for foods and beverages.

## **Supporting Remote and Hybrid Employees:**

- Offer a virtual option for cooking classes or demonstrations.
- Encourage work-life balance by stepping away from the computer, or task at hand, to enjoy lunch even if an employee works at home.
- Allow employees to submit wellness challenge information via digital forms, rather than physical forms.

## **Considerations for Employers of All Sizes**

Worksites vary in staff capacity and physical layout and in many cases, it is not feasible to furnish an employee breakroom with kitchen appliances, host a cooking class or demonstration, or operate an on-site cafeteria. It is important to meet employees where they are and listen to their needs and interests – for example, providing a lunchbox and ice pack for employees who spend most of their workday on the road.

## Where to Go for Resources

- Get worksite garden support at Vermont Community Garden Network: [VCGN.org](https://www.vcgn.org)
- Find a CSA program: [NOFAVT.org](https://www.nofavt.org)
- For healthy vending tools: [CDC.gov/nutrition/food-service-guidelines/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/food-service-guidelines/index.html)
- Vermont **2-1-1** (dial 2-1-1)
- Food access resources: [HungerFreeVT.org/GetFoodHelp](https://www.hungerfreevt.org/get-food-help)
- Healthy Living Workshops: [MyHealthyVT.org](https://www.myhealthyvt.org)
- Wellness Beyond Weight: [Wellable.co/blog/nutrition-tracking-in-wellness-programs/](https://www.wellable.co/blog/nutrition-tracking-in-wellness-programs/)
- Vermont Department of Health's Vermont Food Standards for meetings and events: [HealthVermont.gov/wellness/physical-activity-nutrition](https://www.healthvermont.gov/wellness/physical-activity-nutrition)

For more info:

The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office near you:

[HealthVermont.gov/local](https://www.healthvermont.gov/local)

*See the sample nutrition policy in section 3 and nutrition guidance in appendix*