



Daily Physical Activity and Movement

Why This is Important

People who are physically active have a reduced risk of heart disease, diabetes, dementia, and some types of cancer. Physical activity also supports emotional health and stress reduction. All these benefits contribute to a happier and more productive employee, which can save an organization money.

It is important to consider the diverse physical abilities of employees, and to make sure that any physical activity program is inclusive of all employees. Employees should be encouraged or required to consult with a physician and/or sign a consent form before beginning any exercise program offered at a worksite.

How to Support This Outcome

Education and Awareness:

- Promote daily physical activity, movement, or stretch breaks.
- Build wellness activities into events.
- Offer incentives for active commuting, unique to employees' individual needs.
- Create a physical activity challenge with appropriate activities for all employees.
- Offer incentives for participating in active activities.
- Enter local fitness activities held during work hours, such as 5K fun runs, as a company team.
- Include family members in activities that promote physical activity.

Behavior Change:

- Offer free or discounted fitness opportunities.
- Provide space to be physically active.
- Start a bike or snowshoe sharing program.
- Provide fitness equipment on-site for employees to use.
- Support physical activity breaks and active meetings (e.g. walking or rolling meetings).
- Provide maps of trails or walking paths in the area.
- Provide discounts for fitness classes, gyms, or health clubs.
- Make sure on-site support is available for employees of all physical abilities, providing adaptive equipment and opportunities.

Policy and Environmental Change:

- Develop a wellness break policy.
- Adopt a physical activity policy.
- Create guidelines for flexible work schedules to allow physical activity.

Supporting Remote and Hybrid Employees:

- Offer virtual fitness opportunities or group stretch breaks.
- Share information about home-based physical activity that doesn't require the use of equipment.
- Allow flexible time for employees to step away from their workstation, wherever that might be located, to engage in daily physical activity and movement.

Considerations for Employers of All Sizes

Providing space for employees to be physically active or offering free fitness opportunities might not be realistic options for many employers due to financial constraints or worksite configuration. You can tailor employee surveys to reflect feasible options for employees to maintain regular physical activity, and allow these surveys to guide worksite wellness strategies that work best for both the employer and employees.

Where to Go for Resources

- Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation area maps and trails: FPR.vermont.gov/recreation/trail-maps-and-guides
- Walk With Ease: Arthritis.org/health-wellness/healthy-living/physical-activity/walking/walk-with-ease/wwe-about-the-program
- Active Commuting Resources:
 - Go! Vermont: ConnectingCommuters.org
 - Local Motion: LocalMotion.org
- Races and Physical Activity Challenges in Vermont:
 - Run Vermont: RunVermont.org/event-calendar
 - Governor's Council on Physical Fitness & Sports and Vermont Corporate Cup: VermontFitness.org
 - Vermont Senior Games: VermontSeniorGames.org
 - Come Alive Outside Physical Activity Challenges: ComeAliveOutside.com
 - Vermont **2-1-1** (dial 2-1-1)

For more info: The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office near you: HealthVermont.gov/local

See the sample physical activity policy in section 3