Leon County Wellness Program Guidelines

Purpose Statement:

Since 2008, the Leon County Board of County Commissioners has demonstrated its commitment to increasing the health and productivity of its employees, while trying to mitigate employee medical insurance costs through their support of a wellness program. Research has shown that healthier employees are more productive, engaged, resilient and overall happier, incur less health care costs, and are more satisfied with their jobs and their employer.

The Wellness Program has flourished since 2008 by offering its employees many activities created to bring about awareness and behavior changes to improve their health. This type of approach is called an "activity-oriented" program.

In 2012, the Board took that commitment to a higher level by approving the funding of a full time Health and Wellness Coordinator position to expand the wellness program from an "activity-oriented" program to a "participation based" program. A "participation-based" program integrates the wellness program with the benefits program, creates data to evaluate the program and measures its success.

Although activities and programs are necessary for any wellness program, systemic changes that are needed to truly build a "Culture of Health" can only happen when environment and policy changes to support those activities, programs and desired health behavior improvements are implemented.

Hence, the Wellness Program will have Policies and Guidelines that are designed to try to make the "Healthy Choice" the "Easy Choice" for the County's employees in order to encourage and support them to get healthier.

The following are the Leon County Wellness Program Guidelines designed to help support the Wellness Program Policy and encourage Leon County employees to develop healthier lifestyles.

Definitions

1. County Sponsored Programs - A County sponsored wellness program is one that is developed by the Leon County Wellness Team under the division of Human Resources and one in which participation can be tracked by the Wellness Team
2. Value Based Design (VBD) - An employee-driven benefit strategy that builds employee incentives into the benefit design and premium contributions structure to encourage employees to adopt healthy behaviors.
3. HRA/PHA - A Health Risk Appraisal (HRA) or Personal Health Assessment (PHA) is a self-reported survey that evaluates a person's risk for health problems and/or chronic diseases based on their lifestyle behaviors such as tobacco use, eating and exercise habits, ability to manage stress, etc.
4. Rewards Program - The wellness activities that will qualify employees to receive premium discount contribution rates under the VBD program.

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Implementation of Wellness Program
Key Focus Areas:

The County Wellness Program will address the following key areas:

I. Wellness Education
II. Physical Activity
III. Health and Nutrition
IV. Stress Management and Work/Life Balance
V. Tobacco Cessation
VI. Preventative Care

I. Wellness Education

Wellness Education is vital to health behavior improvements. Awareness is the first step in behavior change, so educating employees on various health and wellness topics throughout the year is the first step in getting people healthier. The next step is educating employees on how to build the skills to make the needed changes. Each year the Leon County Wellness Team will provide various opportunities for employees to be educated in many different areas of health and wellness. These programs and activities will require the employees to register on the Intranet, as well as sign up onsite, so the Wellness Team can track participation. The employee may utilize administrative leave, as permitted, in the Wellness Program Policy. The following are examples of programs and activities where attendance could be verified through sign up/registration sheets:

1. Lunch N Learns/Breakfast N Learns
2. The Annual Health Fair
3. Screenings
4. Tobacco Cessation Programs
5. Stress Programs
6. Physical activities, such as a group exercise program offered on County property

II. Physical Activity

Whether at the desk, driving, or in meetings, many County employees sit for long periods of time, contributing to circulatory problems, stiffness, muscle aches and pain, ergonomic injuries, and obesity, which negatively affect health and productivity. The County wants to encourage employees to increase their physical activity throughout the day.

The following are some of the recommendations the County would like to encourage its employees to do while at work:

1. Use the Stretch Clock located on the Intranet as a reminder to stop and stretch at least twice in the morning and twice in the afternoon—preferably once each hour. Be sure to include neck, back, shoulders, legs and wrists stretches.
2. When working at the desk, get up and move around each hour. Go to the photocopier, walk up and down some steps, walk outside for a few minutes, stand up while on the phone or talking to a co-worker, stretch while listening to webinars or on a speaker call, etc.
3. When spending a good amount of time in a vehicle, stop, get out, walk around, and stretch.

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4. During meetings lasting more than an hour, take an activity break; walk to the bathroom, to get water, or to go around the building; or, stand in place and stretch.
5. Take the stairs, when possible, as opposed to using the elevator.
6. Take advantage of the shower facility offered to employees; bicycle to and from work, or exercise at lunch.
7. When allowed, use breaks or lunchtime to walk or exercise.

III. Health and Nutrition

In order to create an environment that encourages and supports employees to eat healthier, the Wellness Team will implement the following things:

- 30% of the food/drink/condiments, when food is offered to County employees, will be healthy.

This will include Lunch N Learns, Board meetings, workshops, and other events where food may be served. Examples of healthy options include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Entrees--baked or grilled instead of fried; lower-fat hotdogs and hamburgers; casseroles made with lower fat ingredients, etc.
2. Condiments - low fat mayonnaise, dressings, dips, cheese, cream cheese, jams, etc.
3. Whole wheat grain pastas, crackers, and breads
4. Drinks- unsweetened beverages
5. Vegetarian options for those people who do not eat meat
6. Fruit and/or vegetable trays
7. Low fat/sugar desserts, such as frozen yogurt, angel food cake, fruit, graham crackers, Fig Newtons, dried fruit, or trail mix

- Vending service contractors will work with the Wellness Team to:

1. Have a minimum of 30% of the vending machine choices as healthy options, which would include things like baked chips, fruit bars, unsweetened beverages, yogurt, etc.
2. Develop and make available point of purchase nutrition information for posting at the vending machines.
3. Encourage selection of the healthier choices by charging less for the healthy food and more for the unhealthier choices.

- Additionally, the Wellness Team will encourage County employees to try healthier foods by:

1. Feature healthy recipes on the County's Wellness site
2. Have at least one employee lunch a year for the purpose of exchanging healthy recipes

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IV. Stress Management and Work/Life Balance

An effective Employee Wellness Program addresses overall Employee well-being that includes finding ways to help employees manage stress and balance their personal and professional lives. Leon County has many voluntary benefits in place to help employees do those things, and the Wellness Team encourages employees to take advantage of them. These include the following policies that are outlined in the County Policy Manual - Section 11.01-Personnel Policies and Procedures.

1. Section 6.11 - Employee Assistance Programs
2. Section 7.01.1 - Flextime/Staggered Work Hours
3. Section 7.02-7.09 - Paid holidays, vacation time, annual leave and sick leave
4. Section 7.19 C - Paid leave for death in the immediate family
5. Section 7.19 E - Administrative leave to volunteer in the community
6. Section 7.20 – Parental leave
7. Policy No. 03-12 – Violence Prevention and Intervention

Because finances are one of the major drivers of stress, the County offers numerous benefits to help its employees financial well-being including:

1. The ability to purchase Health Insurance
2. The ability to purchase Dental Insurance
3. The ability to participate in Deferred Compensation
4. Tuition Assistance
5. Retirement

Through its Rewards Program, the Wellness Team also encourages employees to:

1. Get 7 hours of sleep each night
2. Improve their financial well-being by attending presentations on Financial Wellness both in person and online.
3. Take Stress Management classes and/or Lunch N Learns both in person and online.
4. Take advantage of the $150 rebate offered by CHP for belonging to a gym, Weight Watchers, or other programs to help get healthier.

V. Preventative Care

The County offers its employees a benefits package designed for the employees to be able to help prevent illness and disease from occurring and to provide healthcare in case of injury or illness. The Wellness Team highly encourages its employees to take advantage of those benefits by:

1. Getting an annual Wellness Check-up or Physical each year. There is no cost to the employee for this service.
2. Getting age-related prevention screenings such as mammograms, prostate screenings, bone density screenings, colonoscopies, etc
3. Getting an annual dental check-up
4. Getting an annual flu-shot
5. Consulting with a nurse line/health coach as needed, especially before going to the emergency room or having a surgical procedure.
6. Participating in a Chronic Disease Management Program if applicable
7. Taking an online Personal Health Assessment
8. Familiarizing yourself with your medical records

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