

Workplace Wellness and Congregational Wellness Policies*



The table below summarizes evidence for the nutrition and physical activity-related policy elements found in the *Model Workplace Wellness Policy Toolkit for Oklahoma Businesses (B1)*, and the *Model Wellness Policy Toolkit for Oklahoma Congregations (C2, C3)*.

Outcome: Adopt policies that improve the nutritional profile of food available and increase physical activity in a workplace or congregation

What does a workplace wellness policy or congregational wellness policy do?	What is the evidence-base rationale for a wellness policy?
<p>Improve Access to Healthy Foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires that healthier beverages, such as unflavored water, unsweetened tea, 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice, and unsweetened low-fat (1 percent) or non-fat milk be served/offered (B1, C2, C3). Requires that healthier foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean meats, foods that are low in sodium and fat, and foods that are cooked without frying be served/offered (B1, C2, C3). Promotes the purchase of healthy foods and beverages through practices such as pricing strategies (B1). Makes cool, clean drinking water available throughout the day at no cost (B1). Promotes smaller portion sizes (B1, C2, C3). Provides a space with an electrical outlet that is not a bathroom to be used by mothers to express breast milk (B1, C2, C3). 	<p>The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Institute of Medicine (IOM), and the Surgeon General agree that nutrition is important for the prevention of many chronic diseases including obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers.¹⁻⁴ The Community Guide recommends policy and environmental approaches, such as improving access to healthy foods, to improve nutrition.⁵ A recent review of studies found that increasing the availability and variety of healthy food options and reducing the price of healthy food in the workplace cafeteria and vending machines were effective strategies for improving access to healthy foods.⁶</p> <p>The CDC also recommends the following strategies to promote the consumption of healthier foods and beverages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering smaller portions of foods and beverages.⁷ Always offering water as a beverage.⁷ Establishing workplace programs and policies that promote breastfeeding.⁸
<p>Promote Healthy Foods and Beverages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages hosting, sponsoring, or promoting a farmers’ market on site or nearby (B1, C2, C3). Encourages hosting, sponsoring, or promoting a garden to grow fruits and vegetables (C2, C3). Provides nutritional information on foods and beverages served and offered (B1). Identifies healthy food and beverage options with signs, symbols, and/or colors (B1). Encourages hosting, sponsoring, or promoting nutrition education through seminars, workshops, classes, meetings, and newsletters (B1, C2, C3). 	<p>The CDC recommends starting or expanding farmers’ markets and supporting and promoting community gardens in order to promote the consumption of healthier foods and beverages.⁹</p> <p>A recent review of studies found promoting healthy foods and beverages to be a necessary strategy for improving access to healthy foods.⁶</p>

*For evidence supporting tobacco-free workplace or congregation policies, see the evidence-based table titled “Tobacco-Free Policies.”

<p>Create Opportunities for Physical Activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides access to an on-site fitness facility with a changing room or locker room with a shower (B1). • Provides equipment for individual and group exercise classes and programs (B1, C2, C3). • Promotes physical activity by posting flyers, hosting exercise classes, and sharing information about local physical activity resources and facilities (B1, C2, C3). • Promotes stairwell use, if applicable, by making stairs appealing and posting motivational signs (B1). 	<p>The CDC, the IOM, and the Surgeon General all agree that physical activity is important for the prevention of many chronic diseases including obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers.^{1-3,10} The Community Guide recommends policy and environmental approaches, such as providing more opportunities to be physically active, to improve physical activity.⁵ A review of studies found the following strategies for providing more opportunities to be physically active to be successful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing on-site facilities for exercise.¹⁰ • Providing on-site exercise equipment.¹⁰ • Providing health education or fitness classes.¹⁰ • Promoting stairwell use.¹⁰
<p>Promote Physical Activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides paid time and/or flexible work times for employees to participate in physical activity during the workday (B1). • Provides safe and secure bicycle parking for employees and community members (B1). • Incorporates physical activity into meetings, classes, programs, and special events (B1, C2, C3). • Opens outdoor and/or indoor facilities, such as playgrounds, sports courts, walking trails, gymnasiums, and multipurpose rooms, for employee and community recreational use during set days and times (C2, C3). 	<p>The CDC also recommends the following strategies to promote physical activity in the workplace and in the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing flexible schedules to encourage physical activity during lunch breaks or other breaks throughout the day.⁷ • Identifying walking routes indoors and outdoors.⁷ • Promoting alternative commuting such as biking.⁷ • Including activity breaks in meeting agendas.⁷

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