



Employee Wellness Program

The Employee Wellness Program is a voluntary program for full-time, benefits-eligible employees, starting on the first day of employment. It is a program of physical exercise and wellness activities designed to improve health and well-being. The objective of the Employee Wellness Program is to provide a supportive environment that encourages employees to adopt healthy behaviors and positive lifestyle changes, improve job performance, increase work satisfaction, and reduce health care/insurance costs.

The program is made up of two key components:

I. **Wellness Release Time**

- a. Eligible employees may use 30 minutes during normal work hours, up to three (3) times per week, for participation in fitness and wellness activities offered at the Bowers Center for Sports, Fitness and Well-being, Employee Wellness Team events, or walking on campus. Off-campus activities are not included unless sponsored by the Employee Wellness Team or the College. The host of each approved program offering must maintain records of employee participation. Supervisors may require verification of participation at any time.
- b. Employees should consult with a physician before undertaking any physical activity program. For some programs, employees will need to complete a waiver of liability.
- c. Wellness Release Time is paid time, does not have to be made up, cannot be accrued, and may not be split or carried over from one day to another. Wellness Release Time must be taken in conjunction with the start or end of the work day or in addition to the lunch break. The employee must specify the weekday(s) and time(s) of the wellness activities. Any deviations from the approved schedule must be pre-approved by employee's direct supervisor.
- d. Each fiscal year or when transferring to a new position, employees must secure approval to participate in the program from their immediate supervisors. Employees should talk to their supervisor about the best way to communicate the time on a regular basis. Supervisors are expected to make reasonable efforts to accommodate requests for Wellness Release Time. However, participation may be disapproved if it is determined that the workflow and operation of the employee's department will be negatively impacted by the employee's absence due to participation in release time. If an application is denied, the supervisor must indicate the reason(s) for the denial.
- e. Abuse of the privilege to participate in Wellness Release Time will subject the employee to revocation of the privilege and/or disciplinary action. Supervisors have the right to review records of employees' utilization of the Bowers Center for Sports, Fitness and Well-being and programs and the Employee Wellness Team programs to verify hours of involvement.



II. Wellness Flex Time

- a. Wellness Flex Time is an arrangement that allows for the flexibility of working hours for eligible employees. Wellness Flex Time allows employees to alter the time of their lunch hour during the standard work day. For example: employees may work through the standard lunch break and use their wellness flex time from 4-5 p.m. It does not reduce the total number of hours worked during a given work week nor the service, quality of work, or productivity of the office/department. Lunch breaks scheduled by supervisors must be staggered to provide adequate office/service coverage so that at least one person is on duty to accept calls, receive visitors, or transact business.
- b. Wellness Flex Time can be combined with Wellness Release Time for a total of 90-minutes. For example, an employee may work through their lunch hour and use 60 minutes of Wellness Flex Time from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. along with 30 minutes of Wellness Release Time (limited to three times per week) from 2:30 to 3 p.m. This could be especially helpful to complete an hour-long wellness program and allow for 30 minutes to shower and/or travel back to the office.
- c. Employees seeking to take advantage of Wellness Flex Time should seek approval from their supervisor. If the supervisor approves, the employee and the supervisor must document that alternative schedule in writing, noting that it is voluntary and may be discontinued by either party at any time. Participation may be disapproved if it is determined that the workflow and operation of the employee's department will be negatively impacted by the employee's absence due to participation in flex time. If an application is denied, the supervisor must indicate the reason(s) for the denial.
- d. Every employee, with limited exception, shall take a lunch break or replace it with Wellness Flex Time. A lunch break is an approved period of time that interrupts a basic workday for the purpose of permitting the employee to eat or engage in permitted personal activities. During the break, employees are relieved of all work duties and are not paid. The supervisor should encourage their employees to leave their workstation during lunch breaks.
- e. Examples of approved wellness programs, activities, or events:
 1. **Aquatic programs;** lap swim, fitness classes
 2. **Health based;** health screenings, Employee Wellness Team events, fitness educational presentations, walking on campus
 3. **Group Fitness;** organized classes offered by RecWell
 4. **Informal Drop In;** activities at the Bowers Center for Sports, Fitness and Well-being including but not limited to: basketball, volleyball, pickleball, badminton, fitness center.