31.02.13.R0.02  Wellness Release Time

Approved July 7, 2016
Next Scheduled Review: July 7, 2021

Procedure Statement

The Texas A&M University-Commerce Employee Wellness Program is designed to enhance the well-being of employees and reduce lifestyle-related issues that affect the employee’s health and work productivity. It is a voluntary program consisting of university-sponsored physical fitness activities and open recreation opportunities during the workday.

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, cultivate work/life balance, and reduce health care/insurance costs.

Reason for Procedure

This procedure outlines the definitions of the Employee Wellness Program and describes the application and monitoring processes. This procedure is intended to be flexible and adaptable to each employee and their respective department.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1 GENERAL

1.1 The Wellness Release Time program provides full-time, benefits-eligible employees 90 minutes per week for participation in exercise and fitness activities. Participation can occur at the Morris Recreation Center, through activities sponsored by the Employee Wellness Program by utilizing the campus walking maps or campus hiking trail, or other fitness activities as approved by the employee’s immediate supervisor. Employees may elect to use the 90 minutes of release time in whichever increments are appropriate.

1.2 Employees participating in the Wellness Release Time program must submit an application with the employee attesting that they have had a physician physical or participated in a health screening within the past twelve months (see Appendix A below). To satisfy this requirement, the employee may participate in the on-campus Health Screening Fair, which is offered on a semi-annual basis.
1.3 Wellness Release Time is paid time which does not have to be made up, cannot be accrued, and does not need to be documented on timesheets.

1.4 Exercise time permitted under this procedure is not time in which participants are considered employees, and worker’s compensation coverage does not apply.

1.5 Each academic year (starting September 1) of participation, employees must submit a completed application form with approval from immediate supervisors prior to participation in the program using the Wellness Release Time application (see Appendix A below). All Wellness Release Time applications will expire on August 31 of each year.

1.6 Immediate supervisors are expected to make reasonable efforts to accommodate requests for participation in the Wellness Release Time program. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure each employee has access to this policy, and that the workflow and operation of the department continues effectively while Wellness Release Time is taken.

2 APPLICATION AND MONITORING PROCEDURES

2.1 To apply for participation in the Wellness Release Time program, the employee submits a completed application (see Appendix A below) to his or her immediate supervisor. The supervisor and employee agree on a schedule of Wellness Release Time, which is intended to be flexible and may change throughout the academic year. Any revisions from the approved schedule must be discussed in advance by the immediate supervisor. Resubmission of the application within the academic year of usage is not necessary.

2.2 The employee submits the signed and approved original application to the Employee Wellness Administrator.

2.3 Employees are responsible for monitoring their own usage of Wellness Release Time and ensuring compliance with program guidelines. Supervisors may request to verify hours of involvement for an employee that utilizes the Morris Recreation Center, Employee Wellness Program sponsored classes, and/or use the Activity Tracking Sheet (Appendix B).

2.4 The President of Texas A&M University-Commerce supports Wellness Release Time by supplementing employees’ membership costs to the Morris Recreation Center. Memberships are available to employees at a discounted rate; however, membership to the Morris Recreation Center is not required to use Wellness Release Time.

2.5 Exceptions or deviations from this procedure must be approved in writing by the Employee Wellness Administrator.
Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Texas Government Code Ch. 664 State Employees Health Fitness and Education
System Regulation 31.02.13 Wellness Programs
Suspends University Procedure 31.99.99.R0.01 Wellness Release Time

Appendixes

Appendix A Texas A&M University-Commerce Wellness Release Time Application
Appendix B Sample Wellness Release Time Activity Tracking Sheet

Contact Office

Employee Wellness Program
Human Resources/Training
903-886-5852
wellness@tamuc.edu
Appendix A: Wellness Release Time Application

The Wellness Release Time program provides full-time, benefits-eligible employees 90 minutes per week during normal work hours of release time for participation in physical exercise and fitness activities. Employee and supervisors may discuss changes to the specific time and dates requested as often as needed to ensure profitable workflow and personal wellness for the department and individual employee.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Applications are valid September 1 – August 31 of the following calendar year.
- Each academic year of participation, employees and immediate supervisors should meet to discuss how Release Time can be utilized to the mutual benefit of the employee and department and complete this application.
- Submit the completed application to the Employee Wellness via campus mail, e-mail to wellness@tamuc.edu. Employee and supervisors will receive e-mail verification of enrollment from the Employee Wellness Administrator once the application has been received and processed.
- Employees are responsible for monitoring their wellness usage time and ensuring compliance. A supervisor may request to review records of an employee’s utilization of the recreation center or Employee Wellness classes to verify hours of participation.

Employee’s Name (please print): ________________________________
Department: ________________________________ Job Title: ________________________________
Employee UIN: ________________________________
Supervisor’s Name (please print): ________________________________
Weekday(s) and time(s) being requested: ________________________________

Employee please read and initial below:

____ I certify that I have completed a health screening or preventative care visits within the past year.

____ I acknowledge that exercise time permitted under this procedure is not time which I am considered an employee, and workers’ compensation does not apply.

________________________________________  ____________
Employee Signature   Date   Supervisor Signature   Date
Appendix B: Sample Wellness Release Time Activity Tracking Sheet

This sheet may be used by employees in accordance with Section 2.3.

Employee name: _______________________________________________________________

Days/times requested: __________________________________________________________

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