



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Jefferson County

Wellness Policy

January 2021



Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County will embrace a proactive wellness plan that maximizes the health and well-being of body, mind, and spirit.

The Organizational Wellness Policy provides the foundation for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County (CCE) to develop activities, procedures, and work environments that support the health and well-being of employees, clients, colleagues, and visitors. CCE values the health and well-being of its employees and encourages all staff to take advantage of the organizational wellness opportunities provided. Additionally, as an organization working to advance the wellness of residents in the North County, promoting internal organizational wellness models the behaviors we are promoting in the community and supports our employees by increasing the opportunity to make healthy choices within the context of the workplace.

Staff Leadership: The staff will be personal role models for health and wellness, utilize resources to support the wellness policy and environmental changes, and influence other organizations to develop organizational wellness policies and programs.

Wellness Chair: CCE will designate a Wellness Leader who will be responsible for upholding the values of wellness within the CCE workplace and assisting the committee to direct evidence-based activities that achieve the mission of the Wellness Program.

Wellness Committee: The wellness committee is a team of employees that meet formally and have identified goals, objectives, and activities to encourage healthy behaviors at the workplace, advocate for policy change, and create a health-friendly work environment. The wellness committee should be comprised of employees who represent a cross-section of the employee population.

Policy Evaluation: This policy will be evaluated every 3 years to ensure compliance with the latest nutrition, health and wellness guidelines and to evaluate changing association and staff needs. The Wellness Committee Chair and the Nutrition and Health Issue Leader will be responsible for the evaluation process. The process will include a thorough review of the written policy, discussions with the wellness committee and leadership team regarding staff compliance, and implementation of necessary updates.

Policy Awareness: As described in the New Employee Orientation Checklist, all new staff will receive a copy of the Wellness Policy from Human Resources upon hire. Supervisors will then review the Wellness Policy with new staff to discuss how the policy may impact their specific job function. In addition, the policy will be reviewed annually at an Association staff meeting.”

Food Policy

CCE promotes healthy eating among its employees, colleagues, and program participants by establishing a food policy that supports healthy food options in the workplace. These policies follow the recommendations put forth in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate.

- When food and beverages are provided for meetings/events, food that is lower in fat, sugar, salt and calories and higher in nutritional value and fiber will be offered.
- When providing refreshments or serving meals, fruits and/or vegetables are offered with preference for whole foods (natural and least processed) that are locally produced.
- Smaller portion sizes as well as vegetarian options should always be provided.
- Milk/dairy products should be low fat or fat free.

- Food from grains should be made from whole grains, including breads and pastas.
- If a beverage is offered, water is the first choice. Other optional beverage choices include 100% fruit or vegetable juices, nonfat or 1% milk, coffee - regular and decaffeinated, tea - regular and herbal teas. No beverages containing added sugars should be included.
- Follow food safety guidelines when preparing food:
 - Cook food to the appropriate temperature.
 - Keep hot foods hot.
 - Keep cold foods cold.
 - Separate, don't cross contaminate. Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from other items.
 - Keep all items clean by washing hands and surfaces often.

Environmental accommodations for food preparation and storage, as well as, sinks, refrigerators, and microwave ovens are provided to encourage and support employees to bring healthy lunches and snacks to work.

Food Reimbursement Policy

Employees/programs will only be reimbursed for foods that adhere to the guidelines above.

Healthy Vending Policy

All CCE Jefferson sponsored food sale items at CCE of Jefferson County's main office site will follow the Association's Healthy Snack policy and meet the following guidelines:

- Total fat below 5% per serving (except for nuts and seeds)
- Added sugar to 8 grams (2 teaspoons) or less per serving
- Sodium below 220 mg per serving
- Offering vegetable and fruit options as often as possible

Healthy Fundraising Policy

All Association Fundraising will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Limited food-based activities (and when food is used, healthy options are available)
- Focus on Activity-based events such as fun runs, gift wrapping, or talent shows
- Focus on Limited-time sales such as selling candles, calendars, or plants
- Focus on Ongoing programs such as collecting box tops or having can drives

Physical Activity Policy

Physical activity is encouraged in the workplace. Activity breaks will be included in all meetings lasting 90 minutes or longer. Participants should be encouraged to get up as needed for meetings with shorter time intervals.

Walking and biking to work are encouraged along with stair usage at CCE. In addition, employees have the option to choose standard ½ hour or hour (unpaid) lunch breaks and are encouraged to use that time to be physically active.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County (CCE) recognizes that with good mental health, people feel well, adapt to changing circumstances better, enjoy rewarding relationships, and work according to their abilities. As with other aspects of wellness, mental health can have an impact on

employers and businesses directly through increased absenteeism, reduced production, increased costs, and reduced profits. CCE is committed to working towards a healthy organization, which places high value on overall health and well-being.

CCE aims to:

- Acknowledge the importance of promoting good mental health practices.
- Support employees who face mental health issues.
- Create healthy work environments.

CCE will address mental health in the following ways:

- Increase employee awareness of mental health issues and work to break the stigma associated with mental illnesses by providing education including: written materials, guest speakers, webinars, etc.
- Celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month each May by sharing community resources, statistics, stories, and an on-going conversation that normalizes mental health challenges.
- Promote and encourage positive mental health practices as part of CCE Wellness Committee activities (examples include mindfulness practices and stress relief techniques).
- Make employees aware of resources available whether through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and/or the employee provided health care package.
- Highlight how to access mental health providers through our insurance via a staff meeting presentation and an email to all staff once per quarter.
- Provide staff social connectivity opportunities throughout the year such as virtual get-togethers, holiday celebrations, and staff spirit week.
- Promote and encourage team-building activities. Celebrate team accomplishments.
- Regularly communicate organizational strategies, goals, and updates, particularly during times of change.
- Ensure supervisors know the protocol for effectively responding if an employee presents a mental health challenge.
- Encourage open communication between employees and supervisors regarding work-related problems or the need for support.
- Provide reasonable accommodations, upon request, for any employee with a mental health disability.

Breastfeeding Policy

Staff whose participants are or have the potential to be pregnant or breastfeeding women will promote and support breastfeeding and provide comfortable accommodations for nursing mothers.

As indicated in Human Resource Guideline 502 and in compliance with New York State Law, lactation breaks will be provided for lactating mothers to express breast milk, and the association will make reasonable efforts to provide a private room or other location in proximity to the work area for such activity. All staff, including regular, temporary, casual staff members, and student employees may request time away from work to express breast milk for up to three years following the birth of a child.

Tobacco Policy

In order to provide the healthiest environment possible and to decrease the exposure to second-hand smoke, employees, building occupants, and visitors must comply with policy 905 and 1005 from the

Human Resource Guidelines. Smoking is prohibited in Association offices and facilities and in Association vehicles. In addition, smoking is discouraged within the property boundaries.

Opportunities to support smoking cessation will be provided to staff including but not limited to, community resources and online smoking cessation education and behavior change modules.

Employee Sun Safety Policy

CCE is committed to the health and safety of its employees and recognizes that encouraging sun safety behaviors helps create a safe workforce. For all outdoor labor occurring on sunny days-especially between 10 am and 4 pm-employees will be encouraged to carry and use sun-protective clothing, full-brimmed hats, sunglasses, sunscreen, and SPF lip balm. All employees will receive annual sun safety education encouraging them to practice sun safety behaviors while on the job. The sun safety policy guidelines will be communicated and reinforced to staff through new employee orientation as part of the CCE Wellness Policy and through verbal reminders, signs, email notifications, and at meetings.

4-H Youth and Community Programming Sun Safety Policy

4-H is committed to the health and safety of its employees as well as the youth and families engaged in programming and recognizes that encouraging sun safety behaviors helps create a safe community. For all outdoor events occurring on sunny days-especially between 10 am and 4 pm-4-H will promote basic strategies for preventing skin cancer for employees and participants including: sun-protective clothing, full-brimmed hats, sunglasses, sunscreen, SPF lip balm, and seeking shade when practical. All employees will receive annual sun safety education encouraging them to practice sun safety behaviors while on the job and to promote these behaviors to participating families. Sun safety guidelines will be communicated and reinforced to participating families through verbal reminders, written communications (ex: permission forms, parent handbooks), and signage whenever possible.

Preventative Screenings

Staff are encouraged to be proactive in regard to health by establishing a primary care physician, seeing the doctor regularly, getting an annual physical and following recommended screening guidelines. Although appointments should be scheduled to be as least disruptive as possible, personal and sick leave benefits are available to eligible employees for doctors' visits.

Cancer Screening Leave Policy

The Association, in compliance with New York State Law as amended under the Civil Service Law Section 159-b, provides up to four (4) hours away from work of paid leave annually for all types of cancer screening. All employees (regular, temporary, casual, exempt and non- exempt) are eligible for cancer screening leave. Employees must receive prior approval from their supervisor to take cancer screening leave. The request for leave should be submitted to the supervisor in writing a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance whenever possible. The employee must be scheduled to work on the scheduled day of the screening in order to be eligible for the cancer screening paid leave. Absence beyond the four (4) hours must be charged to accrued time or unpaid time. The leave is not cumulative and expires at the close of the calendar year. The Association reserves the right to request medical verification from the screening facility and/or healthcare provider verifying that the screening took place. An employee whose employment with the Association is terminated for any reason, including retirement, will not receive cash payment for unused cancer screening leave. Cancer screening leave may not be taken after the last day worked.

Wellness Resources

Dietary Guidelines for Americans: <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/dietaryguidelines.htm>

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans: <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/>

National Institutes of Health: <http://www.nih.gov/health/wellness/>

Examples of Healthy Food in the Workplace

Beverages

Tap or filtered water
Sparkling water
100% fruit or vegetable juices
Skim or 1% milk
Coffee, regular and decaffeinated
Tea, regular and herbal, hot or cold
Coffee/tea creamers of milk or half-and-half, if individual-size packages

Breakfast Meetings

Fresh fruit
Yogurt, non-fat or fat-free, with minimal grams of sugar
Whole grain bagels and cereals
Natural breakfast bars with less than 5 grams of fat

Snacks

Fresh fruit, cut up and offered with low fat yogurt dip
Raw vegetables
Whole grain crackers or unsalted nuts

Catered Lunches and Dinners

Entrees with no more than 12 to 15 g fat
Always offer a vegetarian entrée
Include a protein source
Avoid fried foods or cream sauces
Include fresh fruit
Include at least one vegetable, fresh or cooked with no butter or cream sauces
Serve salads with dressing on the side
Include whole grain breads and skip the butter or margarine
Choose lower fat/lower calorie desserts, such as fresh fruit with yogurt dip or frozen yogurt (non-fat or fat-free, with minimal grams of sugar)

Receptions and Celebrations

Fresh fruit, cut up and offered with low-fat yogurt dip
Raw vegetables, cut up and offered with low-fat dressing, salsa, or tofu dip
Raw vegetable salads
Vegetable spring rolls, fresh—not fried
Vegetable sushi rolls
Low-fat Cheese cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ " squares or smaller
Whole grain crackers
Salmon, poached or steamed
Lean beef or turkey, 1 oz. slices