

Municipal Fire and Police Retirement System of Iowa

Wellness Guidelines

April 1, 2003

Purpose of the Guidelines

The main goal of the wellness programming as outlined is to increase an individual's knowledge in the area of personal wellness and to assist those individuals who are interested in developing healthier lifestyles. The intent of these guidelines is to provide information to the municipalities of the state of Iowa and to the police officers and fire fighters covered by Iowa Code Chapter 411, thereby, facilitating the consideration of wellness concepts by the municipalities in cooperation with the police officers and fire fighters.

Legislative Mandate; Voluntary Adoption Subject to Collective Bargaining

These guidelines have been established by the Board of Trustees of the Municipal Fire and Police Retirement System of Iowa (in consultation with the Medical Board established under Iowa Code Section 411.5), as required by Iowa Code Section 400.8A. Adoption of these guidelines by cities is voluntary, and in any event, is subject to the collective bargaining process set forth in Iowa Code Chapter 20. These guidelines are subject to modification by the Board of Trustees.

Definition of Wellness

According to the National Wellness Institute, *wellness* is defined as an active process of becoming aware and making choices toward a more successful existence. Traditionally, the physical aspects of wellness have been the focus of many programs and activities. However, wellness is multi-dimensional, with physical wellness as one of the components. The dimensions of wellness include:

- Social
- Spiritual
- Physical
- Intellectual
- Emotional
- Occupational

Social: The social dimension encourages contributing to one's human and physical environment to the common welfare of one's community. It emphasizes the interdependence with others and nature. It includes the pursuit of harmony in one's family.

Spiritual: The spiritual dimension involves seeking meaning and purpose in human existence. It includes the development of a deep appreciation for the depth and expanse of life and natural forces that exist in the universe.

Physical: The physical dimension encourages cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, and strength and also encourages regular physical activity. Physical development encourages knowledge about food and nutrition and discourages the use of tobacco, drugs and excessive alcohol consumption. It encourages consumption and activities that contribute to a high level of wellness, including medical self-care and appropriate use of the medical system.

Intellectual: The intellectual dimension encourages creative, stimulating mental activities. An intellectually well person uses the resources available to expand one's knowledge in improved skills along with expanding potential for sharing with others. An intellectually well person uses the intellectual and cultural activities in the classroom and beyond the classroom combined with the human resources and learning resources available within the municipality and the larger community.

Emotional: The emotional dimension emphasizes an awareness and acceptance of one's feelings. Emotional wellness includes the degree to which one feels positive and enthusiastic about oneself and life. It includes the capacity to manage one's feelings and related behaviors including the realistic assessment of one's limitations, development of autonomy, and ability to cope effectively with stress.

Occupational: The occupational dimension is involved in preparing for work. Occupational development is related to one's attitude about work and also maintaining a readiness to work.

Strategies/Programming for Each Wellness Dimensions

In keeping with the overall goal of providing individuals the opportunity to increase their knowledge regarding wellness issues and to assist them in leading a healthier life, the following suggestions have been identified as possible strategies and programming for each of the six dimensions of wellness. Programming options are not inclusive, rather provide a guide for those municipalities interested in offering wellness services to employees.

Physical Wellness

The physical dimension encourages cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, and strength and also encourages regular physical activity. Physical development encourages knowledge about food and nutrition and discourages the use of tobacco, drugs and excessive alcohol consumption. It encourages consumption and activities that contribute to a high level of wellness, including medical self-care and appropriate use of the medical system.

1. Employees should strive to adhere to personal physical fitness guidelines.
Examples of services to support this strategy may include:
 - Discounted memberships to fitness facilities.
 - Access to on-site fitness equipment, on a regular, scheduled basis.
 - Disseminate health information through a newsletter to include information on the benefits of physical activity and different types of exercise.
 - Assessment of an individual's fitness and the development of an individual program tailored for each specific participant. Assessment may include the areas of aerobic capacity, body composition, flexibility, and muscular strength and endurance.
 - Walking/Running incentive program to include the use of pedometers for tracking mileage/steps.
 - Access to personal training services.
 - Provision of incentives for participation and achievement.

2. Assist employees to develop and maintain healthy nutrition practices.
Examples of services to support this strategy may include:
 - Educational seminars in the area of nutrition to include seminars on meal planning, label reading, the food guide pyramid, power foods, supplements.
 - Incentive programs to support healthy eating habits. (One example is the "Colorful Choices" program provided through Health Enhancement Systems that is focused on individuals eating 5 servings of fruits and vegetables on a daily basis).

- Subscribe to free newsletters that are available from the following sources: Midlands Dairy Council, National Beef Council, Iowa Pork Producers.
 - Resource listing of local services for nutrition and weight management counseling.
 - Disseminate health information through a newsletter. Topics may include fiber, fruits and vegetables, label reading, power foods, healthy snacks and various other nutrition issues.
3. Assist employees to develop and maintain healthy behaviors in the areas of tobacco and alcohol use.
- Examples of services to support this strategy may include:
- Resource listing of local services for smoking cessation.
 - Resource listing of local services for individuals who may have consumption or usage concerns ; for example, on subjects pertaining to alcohol, drug usage, gambling.
 - Explore implementation of smoke-free work areas.
 - Disseminate health information through a newsletter. Topics may include benefits of stopping smoking and smoking cessation assistance.
4. Support employees in their medical self-care practices.
- Examples of services to support this strategy may include:
- Provide a medical self-care booklet to employees.
 - Provide educational seminars on appropriate medical self-care.
 - An excellent resource is the “HealthWise “ self care handbook and training. This includes all participants receiving a handbook along with attending a 1-hour program that focuses on: 1) assisting individuals to provide high quality care at home for minor illness and injury, and 2) strengthening relationships with their physicians.

Emotional Wellness:

The emotional dimension emphasizes an awareness and acceptance of one's feelings. Emotional wellness includes the degree to which one feels positive and enthusiastic about oneself and life. It includes the capacity to manage one's feelings and related behaviors including the realistic assessment of one's limitations, development of autonomy, and ability to cope effectively with stress.

1. Educate employees on the importance of an individual's emotional wellness. Examples of services to support this strategy may include:
 - Educational seminars. Topics may include healthy relationships, stress management, balancing work and life, conflict resolution, financial wellness, and diversity.
 - Disseminate information through a health newsletter. Topics may focus on those identified for educational seminars.
 - Access to a resource library on issues that impact emotional wellness.

2. Assist employees to develop and maintain effective stress management strategies. Examples of services to support this strategy may include:
 - Educational seminars in the area of stress management.
 - Skill development sessions for specific stress management techniques such as yoga, meditation, progressive relaxation, and guided imagery.
 - Access to massage therapy, either on-site or from a local provider.
 - Resource listing of local providers of stress management services.
 - Resource listing of local support groups.
 - Collaboration with employee assistance program (EAP) as appropriate.
 - Collaboration with critical incident debriefing team as appropriate.
 - Disseminate health information through a newsletter to include topics on specific stress management techniques.

Intellectual Wellness:

The intellectual dimension encourages creative, stimulating mental activities. An intellectually well person uses the resources available to expand one's knowledge in improved skills along with expanding potential for sharing with others. An intellectually well person uses the intellectual and cultural activities in the classroom and beyond the classroom combined with the human resources and learning resources available within the municipality and the larger community.

Provide individuals the opportunity to expand their knowledge and develop new skills both professionally and personally.

Examples of services to support this strategy may include:

- Educational seminars on topics of interest that may include financial planning, personal development, and maintaining a balance between work and life issues.
- Training sessions for work-related issues.
- Tuition reimbursement program in support of training/classes completed by employees.

Social Wellness:

The social dimension encourages contributing to one's human and physical environment to the common welfare of one's community. It emphasizes the interdependence with others and nature. It includes the pursuit of harmony in one's family.

1. Provide individuals the opportunity to enhance the human and physical environment of their respective community, to include both the work environment and the community in which they reside.

Examples of Services to support this strategy may include:

- Encourage employees to volunteer for community events.
- Host a “rally” for the community.

2. Provide individuals the opportunity to develop and/or maintain social relationships.

Examples of Services to support this strategy may include:

- Form recreational teams/participate in recreational leagues (softball, bowling, etc.).
- Host company activities for the workforce, such as recreational and social opportunities.
- Disseminate health information through a newsletter.
- Host a company health fair.
- Develop an “Employee Activity Committee” that can coordinate various events such as golf outings and excursions to places such as a baseball game or amusement park.

Spiritual Wellness:

The spiritual dimension involves seeking meaning and purpose in human existence. It includes the development of a deep appreciation for the depth and expanse of life and natural forces that exist in the universe.

Provide individuals the opportunity to enhance personal spirituality

Examples of Services to support this strategy may include:

- Provide educational seminars on topics such as meditation and holistic health.
- Disseminate health information through a newsletter. Topics may include relationships, mind/body/spirit and those identified for educational seminars.

Occupational Wellness:

The occupational dimension is involved in preparing for work. Occupational development is related to one's attitude about work and also maintaining a readiness for work.

Examples of Services in this dimension may include those already mandated by the municipality, as well as those that may enhance an individual's overall wellness.

1. Provide individuals the opportunity to receive workplace vaccinations. Examples include influenza vaccination, and hepatitis B vaccination.
2. Provide individuals the opportunity to receive screenings against certain diseases. Hepatitis B and tuberculosis screening are examples.
3. Provide an ergonomics program.

Possible Implementation Steps

- Establish the support of key stakeholders for the wellness guidelines.
- Seek approval for the guidelines as part of the labor-management negotiations.
- Identify an individual employee in each municipality that will act as a “wellness champion”. This individual needs to be at a level within the organization that has sufficient power to facilitate the implementation of the guidelines.
- Conduct an interest/needs survey regarding wellness services at each municipality.
- Based on summary analysis of this survey, implement specific programming options that may include:
 - Educational programs on specific health issues
 - Seminars
 - Health fairs
 - Incentive programs focused on specific behaviors
 - Healthy nutrition
 - Physical activity
 - Newsletters
 - Behavioral change programs (i.e., smoking cessation, weight management, stress management, etc.)
 - Skill development classes, both for professional and personal development
 - Provide access to health information (health web site, on-site health education resource area)
 - Discounted memberships to fitness facilities
 - Collaborative partnerships with local community resources