



Developing Healthy Workplace Policies

Workplace policies help to create and maintain a healthy work environment and culture.

Fast facts:

- Within a workplace where policies support a healthy environment, healthy choices for employees become the easy choices.
- An effective policy clearly shows what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in the workplace. It provides a framework for prevention and gives direction if screening, intervention and/or treatment are required.

Below are sample policies on a variety of health issues. You may use them as they are or modify them to fit the needs of your workplace.

Request a consultation from a Public Health Nurse for assistance.

What is a policy?

A policy guides an organization's decisions and actions regarding an issue. It also implies the accepted values or beliefs of the organization.

Policy development can also be a part of a comprehensive approach to health promotion. Policy can serve one or more of the following purposes in workplace health promotion:

- Give sustainability
- Specify expectations, regulations and guide actions
- Make healthy choices easier
- Make unhealthy choices more difficult, and/or
- Provide equitable access to the key determinants of health

Developing Health Promotion Policies

Dated: November 1, 2012

http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Developing_health_promotion_policies_2012.pdf

The Parts of a Policy

Each workplace may use a slightly different format or framework for their policies but usually a framework includes:

- The purpose of the policy, goals and objectives
- A description of the regulations and sanctions
- Procedures for non-compliance
- A plan for promoting and disseminating the policy; and
- A plan for monitoring and evaluating the policy

Once a framework is adapted, it should be used consistently. All policies should clearly state the person or persons that have created the policy and who the policy is intended for. The policy must be signed and dated by the proper official(s) and reviewed annually.

Creating and Implementing the Policy

Policy development can be divided into steps to make the process easy for your team or committee to navigate:

- 1) Have a clear goal in mind for your policy and specific objectives that can be measured to assist with evaluation of the policy.
- 2) Identify decision-makers and influencers in your organization that will help with communicating and implementing the policy.
- 3) For health promotion policies, a launch or information session is an excellent way to communicate the policy to all employees.
- 4) Policies need to be evaluated annually as situations change and organizations advance and grow.

Policy Development at a glance:

Dated: October 28/ 2013

http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Eight_steps_to_policy_development_2012.pdf

To assist you with workplace wellness programming sample policies are provided here:

Health and Safety at Work	Organizational Culture	Health and Lifestyle Practices
<u>Emergency Preparedness</u>	<u>Healthy Workplace</u>	<u>Foods Served in the Workplace</u>
<u>Fragrance Free Environment</u>	<u>Hours of Work and Associated Overtime</u>	<u>Physical Activity at Work</u>
<u>Infection Control</u>	<u>Mental Health Promotion</u>	<u>Smoking Cessation</u>
<u>Promoting Smoke-Free Policies: A Guide for Workplaces</u>	<u>Sick Leave</u>	
<u>Smoke Free Workplace</u>	<u>Supporting Breastfeeding Employees Return to Work</u>	
<u>Substance Misuse</u>	<u>Supporting Healthy Pregnancies</u>	

Your workplace may also consider creating policies in the following areas to support the development of your healthy workplace.

- Employee Immunization
- Preventing Workplace Violence and Harassment
- Motor Vehicle Safety
- Corporate Volunteering
- Green Workplace Policies

This is not an exhaustive list and policies should always be customized to your specific workplace.

General Policy Links:

- Canadian Mental Health Association
Ontario has developed a web-based mental health promotion in the workplace guide which has some sample policies affecting workplace mental health.
<http://wmhp.cmhaontario.ca/printable-resources>
- Infrastructure Health and Safety Association
Health and Safety policy and program templates
http://www.ihsa.ca/resources/health_safety_policy.cfm
http://www.ihsa.ca/resources/policy_program_resources.cfm
- Mental Health Commission of Canada
Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace Standard
<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/node/5346>
- Ontario Ministry of Labour
How to prepare an Occupational Health and Safety Policy
http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/ohsa/ohsag_appx_a.php
- Public Health Ontario
The 8 Steps to Developing a Health Promotion Policy
http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Eight_steps_to_policy_development_2012.pdf
- Public Health Ontario
Developing Health Promotion policies
http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Developing_health_promotion_policies_2012.pdf
- Workplace Implementation Guide – New Brunswick
<http://www.heartandstroke.nb.ca/atf/cf/%7Be9d7fd18-5e5f-4b5f-b6cf-4142e95dc0c8%7D/WORKPLACE%20WELLNESS%20IMPLEMENTATION%20GUIDE.PDF>

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