

# Indiana Healthy Worksite TOOLKIT

for small to mid-size businesses

2<sup>nd</sup> edition



Indiana State  
Department of Health



**Eric J. Holcomb**  
Governor

**Jerome M. Adams, MD, MPH**  
State Health Commissioner

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Dear Small/Mid-Size Business Partner:

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) supports state economic prosperity and quality of life. Vital to that mission is our goal to improve health behaviors and reduce the incidence of obesity and chronic disease in Indiana.

The topic of wellness has gained national attention in recent years, as obesity numbers continue to rise and physical activity decreases. Finding solutions to the nation's health challenges has become a priority to many, including employers.

For the past decade, Indiana has implemented state and local efforts in an attempt to create positive change in Hoosier wellness. The *Indiana Healthy Weight Initiative* seeks to create a network of collective impact organizations and public health stakeholders that have the capacity to make policy and create environment change. Additionally, many local entities have prioritized health and wellness initiatives to encourage their communities to thrive.

The Indiana State Department of Health believes that a healthy workplace is critical to the promotion of healthy eating and physical activity. For that purpose, we are providing the Indiana Healthy Worksite Toolkit. We hope this guide encourages your organization to launch policies, support environments and create activities designed to provide your employees with feasible strategies to increase wellness opportunities in the workplace.

Sincerely,

Jerome M. Adams, MD, MPH  
State Health Commissioner



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# Making the healthy choice the easy choice

The places where we live, learn, work and play influence how we eat and move. No one individual, group, organization, agency or community can create sustainable change alone. However, worksites can play a key role in achieving this goal. Focusing on health-related policies and environmental supports where we work is *one* way to increase access to healthy foods, promote physical activity and encourage healthier lifestyles for Hoosiers.

The strategies in this toolkit follow the objectives outlined in *Indiana's Comprehensive Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan, 2010-2020*, specific to worksites. This plan provides a framework for action across all sectors of Indiana to improve nutrition and increase physical activity.

A **policy** is a written rule or guideline that outlines a course of action applicable to all employees in order to support healthier behaviors in the worksite.

An **environmental support** is an effort or strategy (social, physical, or economic) aimed at increasing opportunities or reducing barriers for healthy choices within the worksite.

## Introduction

### Creating a culture of health in Indiana small/mid-size businesses

As chronic disease rates and associated healthcare costs increase, Indiana businesses oftentimes shoulder the burden of a sicker and more expensive workforce. Increasing insurance costs, high rates of employee absenteeism, and decreasing productivity can impact the bottom line of businesses of all sizes. In an effort to foster healthier employees, many employers choose to promote a culture of health and well-being by changing worksite policies and environment. Although small and mid-size businesses face many challenges in making this culture change, they also have a set of unique and exciting opportunities. Supporting healthier employee choices does not have to be dramatic or burdensome to be impactful. In fact, most of the tried and tested strategies provided in this toolkit are designed to yield results at little to no cost. Small and mid-size businesses around the state are experiencing the benefits of being a healthy worksite.

### Your call-to-action

Workplaces play a significant role in decreasing Indiana's high rates of obesity and associated chronic diseases. Employees' choices and behaviors are influenced by the environment in which they live, learn, work and play. For this reason, we are calling on employers around Indiana to embrace strategies that provide their workforce with ways to be healthy. This document provides tools, activities, assessments, and ideas to accomplish this goal. A healthy workforce is a healthy community.

### How to use the *Indiana Healthy Worksites Toolkit for Small/Mid-Size Businesses*

This *Indiana Healthy Worksites Toolkit for Small/Mid Size Businesses* outlines policies, environmental supports and activities to provide your employees with opportunities to make healthy choices.

This guide is divided into five sections:

1. Assess your worksite – Identify and determine opportunities for promoting good health at your worksite.
2. Enhance your environment – Use strategies and tools to implement policies, environmental supports and activities at your worksite to provide your employees with opportunities to make healthy choices easier.
3. Promote your efforts – Ensure employees are aware of your efforts; create opportunities for employees to participate.
4. Assess your efforts – Measure the effectiveness of your efforts.
5. Additional tools – Additional tools and information you may find useful.

Printable versions of each tool will be available on the Indiana Healthy Weight Initiative website at [www.indianaobesity.org](http://www.indianaobesity.org).

# Assess your worksite needs

An assessment is an examination of your current overall worksite environment. Assessments can help you understand the needs and interests of your workforce. Once completed, you can use the results to help identify ways to incorporate physical activity and healthy eating opportunities at your worksite that align with your organization's objectives as well as your employees' needs and wants.

Your assessment can help determine what approach, direction or strategy will work best for your worksite. It will help direct your time and resources to the most efficient and effective initiatives. The survey also shows your employees that you are listening to their feedback.

There are several ways to evaluate your worksite and assess employee needs. Examples surveys include: employee interest, worksite environment, and food availability (such as vending machine assessments). Be sure to use the appropriate assessment as these tools evaluate different opportunities for engagement.

## Tools

**Employee interest survey:** This short survey tool is designed to identify employee interests. Surveys introduce employees to worksite health initiatives. It solicits their involvement and approval and plays a significant role in helping to launch a successful health initiative.

**Workplace assessment:** This tool is designed to examine aspects of your worksite environment as it relates to supporting healthy behaviors. Your worksite environment can act as either a barrier or a support for healthy employee opportunities. An environmental assessment will help determine in which category your current worksite fits. It can also identify areas where you can improve your worksite to create those needed supports.



**Vending assessment:** This tool is designed to assess the number of healthier food and beverage choices available in the vending machines at your business. The more healthy choices available, the more likely your employees will choose them. You can use the results from this assessment to develop a strategy to increase the availability of healthier choices.

## Employee interest survey directions

1. Distribute the employee interest survey to all employees through either paper or online tools.
2. Designate a location and date for employees to return surveys anonymously.
3. Collect all completed surveys.
4. Tally the responses for each question on all surveys.
5. The response items with the most checkmarks will give you an indication of your employees' interests.
6. Share the results with employees so that they know their feedback was heard and taken seriously.
7. Go to the *Enhance your worksite environment* section of this toolkit for ideas and strategies on how to address employee interests through specific policy and environmental supports.

## Employee interest survey (example questions)

Thank you for completing this survey. Your responses will give us insight into the types of activities that interest you. Participation in this survey is voluntary, and you do not need to respond to any question(s) that you do not wish to answer. The survey should take about five minutes to complete. We will use the information you provide to incorporate policies and environmental supports into our worksite to help support your individual health efforts.

1. Which of the following policy supports would be of interest to you if offered at the worksite? (Check all that apply.)

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco-free grounds   | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy food/drinks at meetings           | <input type="checkbox"/> Paid time for physical activity         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible work schedule | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible dress code for physical activity | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy food/drinks in vending machines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____            |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Not interested in any of the above      |

2. Which of the following environmental supports would be of interest to you if offered at the worksite? (Check all that would be of interest.)

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Changing room          | <input type="checkbox"/> Shower facility               | <input type="checkbox"/> Aerobic/strength training equipment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Company garden         | <input type="checkbox"/> Discounted gym membership     | <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco cessation assistance        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmers market at work | <input type="checkbox"/> Discount at local restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> Walking paths around worksite       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle parking        | <input type="checkbox"/> Prompts to take the stairs    | <input type="checkbox"/> Not interested in any of the above  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____            |  |  |

3. How would you prefer to receive information about employee health activities? (Check one.)

- |  |   |                               |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulletin boards   | <input type="checkbox"/> Email            | <input type="checkbox"/> Memo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter  | <input type="checkbox"/> Paycheck stuffer |                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |   |                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not interested in receiving information about health activities |   |                               |

4. Are you interested in participating in planning health programs and/or activities?  Yes  No

If yes, please provide your name and phone number so that we may follow up (Optional):

---

For a larger employee interest survey, please go to:

[https://www.hap.org/employers/worksite/pdfs/sample\\_employee\\_interest\\_survey.pdf](https://www.hap.org/employers/worksite/pdfs/sample_employee_interest_survey.pdf)

# Workplace assessment directions

1. Read the entire assessment before you begin.
2. Check off all the items that apply to your worksite.
3. Walk through your worksite. Talk with employees and ask questions.
4. Based on your responses, identify opportunities to enhance your workplace. Carefully examine where policies and supports may be lacking.
5. Follow up with leadership and identify opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating in your worksite. The *Action cards* located with this toolkit can give you some ideas.
6. Evaluate your improvements. Note any differences in employee productivity and/or activities.
7. Schedule assessments for twice a year.



## Workplace assessment

### Workforce characteristics

1. Do you have programs to support health and wellness? (see next question for examples)

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

2. If yes, what programs do you offer? (check all that apply)

- Tobacco cessation
- Physical activity
- Nutrition
- Weight management
- Educational seminars
- Corporate sponsored team activities
- Physical activity messages to employees
- Nutrition messages
- Social support programs
- Wellness initiatives that include families
- 1-800-QUIT-NOW
- On-site childcare to facilitate participation in wellness activities
- Other

3. Does the worksite have a committee and/or representative that meets at least quarterly to oversee worksite wellness programs?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

### Physical activity

4. Which of the following facilities or offerings are available to employees at your worksites and/or surrounding area? (check all that apply)

- Changing room
- Indoor area set aside specifically for exercise
- Aerobic equipment
- Fitness classes
- Accessible/safe stairwells
- Shower facility
- Outdoor walking or bike path
- Strength training equipment
- Bike storage
- None
- Other (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

**5.** Do your employees participate in physical/manual labor and/or light physical activity as part of their routine work?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**6.** Are workstations ergonomically supportive for your employees?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**7.** Do your employees have the flexibility to stand at their desks or sit on something other than a standard desk chair (exercise ball, treadmill desk, ergonomic chair, mat, etc.)?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**8.** Have you negotiated discounts for employees who wish to exercise at an offsite fitness facility?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**9.** Do you provide or subsidize physical assessments, follow-up counseling, and physical activity recommendations either on-site or through a community exercise facility?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**10.** Do you have areas mapped, indoors and/or outdoors, to encourage walking and physical activity at your workplace?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**11.** Does your worksite have a policy that supports physical activity (walking breaks, extra lunch time to exercise, "fitness" breaks, stretch breaks, flexible schedule)?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**12.** Do you have a flexible dress code policy? (ex. employees are permitted to dress casual on \_\_\_ day, and a place to change clothes will be available for employees who'd like to be active during the work day, OR employees are permitted to wear comfortable walking shoes to support employees being physically active)

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

## **Nutrition**

**13.** Is clean drinking water readily available to employees free of charge?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**14.** Does your worksite provide employees with food preparation and storage facilities?  
(check all that apply)

- Kitchenette or break room  
 Microwave oven  
 Sink  
 Refrigerator  
 Other

**15.** Through cafeterias, snack bars, vending machines and other purchase points employees have access to:  
(check all that apply)

- Sugar-sweetened beverages (regular sodas, fruit juice, lemonade, sweet tea, sports drinks, etc.)  
 Fresh or dried fruits and vegetables  
 Low-fat or low-calorie snacks  
 Alternatives to sugar-sweetened beverages (water, diet drinks, etc.)  
 N/A

**16.** If you do offer food on-site, do you: (check all that apply)

- Subsidize or provide discounts on healthier foods and beverages offered in vending machines, cafeterias, snack bars or other purchase points.
- Implement or have in place healthier options with signs or symbols.
- Post guidelines and/or nutrition standards in order to promote healthier food and beverage choices for employees.
- N/A

**17.** Does your worksite offer or promote on-site or nearby access to fresh fruits and vegetables (nearby farmers market, onsite fruit bowl, produce sharing program)?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Considering

**18.** Does your worksite have a policy regarding availability of healthy food choices at staff meetings, events, and celebrations?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Considering

### **Health norms and values**

**19.** Are there employees to support each other in making healthy choices?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Considering

**20.** Does your leadership actively communicate support for employees' health and well-being?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Considering

**21.** Does your organization offer employees paid time to volunteer?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Considering

**22.** Is your organization involved in any community-wide health initiatives?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Considering

**23.** Do you have a policy that supports breastfeeding employees?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Considering

**24.** Do you have a room for breastfeeding employees?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Considering

### **Tobacco**

**25.** What type of cessation assistance is offered through your health insurance or the workplace?

- Individual counseling
- Group counseling
- Telephone counseling
- Referral to 1-800-QUIT-NOW
- Access to medications
- Behavioral therapies
- Family therapies
- Other
- N/A

**26.** Does employer-sponsored health insurance cost less for employees who are nonsmokers?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**27.** Do you have a tobacco-free campus policy?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**28.** Are there procedures in place to enforce the workplace tobacco use policy?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**29.** In your tobacco use policy, do you specify use of e-cigarettes, vapes, etc.?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

### **Incentives**

**30.** Do you offer incentives for healthy behaviors?

- Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

**31.** If yes, what behaviors do you incentivize? (check all that apply):

- Incentives for healthy eating
- Participating in regular physical activity
- Being a current non-user of tobacco
- Current tobacco users in cessation classes or actively quitting
- Active commuting to work

**32.** How do you incentivize healthy behaviors?

- Subsidized memberships for off-site recreation or fitness facilities?
- Free/subsidized self-management programs for healthy eating and/or physical activity
- Provide or subsidize physical fitness assessments, follow-up counseling, and physical activity recommendations on-site or through a facility
- Sponsor or pay for local fun runs/walks
- Provide an HSA eligible plan option for employees
- Other (Please list): \_\_\_\_\_

## Health Promotion

- 33.** Does the worksite provide on-site child care to facilitate participation in wellness programs and activities?  
 Yes     No     Unsure     Considering
- 34.** Do you communicate to employees about wellness program, activities, benefits and other health efforts?  
 Yes     No     Unsure     Considering
- 35.** If yes, how do you communicate this information? (check all that apply)
- Text messages
  - Emails
  - Newsletters
  - Mailings
  - Regular meetings
  - Social media
  - Other
  - N/A
- 36.** Are you considering utilization of a benefit plan design to enhance your wellness initiative?  
 Yes     No     Unsure     Considering

This tool is meant to be a self-assessment. After you complete it, look back over it and self-assess, choose your gaps and check for resources pertaining to those gaps.

### Resources:

[http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/pubs/docs/HSC\\_Manual.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/pubs/docs/HSC_Manual.pdf)

[http://www.inhealthyweight.org/files/Toolkit\\_with\\_Cover.pdf](http://www.inhealthyweight.org/files/Toolkit_with_Cover.pdf)

<http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/smart-food-choices-how-to-implement-food-service-guidelines.pdf>

<http://www.wellnessindiana.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Wellness-Inventory1.pdf>

<http://www.kychamber.com/sites/default/files/worksitewellness.pdf>

# Vending machine assessment directions

1. Take a few moments to read over the assessment tool before you begin.
2. With a pencil and a clipboard, take a tour of your worksite.
3. Complete the assessment for each vending machine at your worksite.
4. After completing the assessment, review your results: Which category has the largest number of healthier items? Which category has the least number of healthier items? Where are the healthier items located?
5. Is anything surprising to you? What areas would you like to improve?



Healthier choice Items	Number of slots	Location (top, middle, bottom)	Labeled as healthier choice?	Comments?
<b>SNACK/DRY ITEMS:</b>				
Baked chips				
Plain pretzels				
Reduced-fat popcorn				
Graham crackers				
Dried fruit				
Nuts, trail mix, seeds				
Granola bars or whole-grain fruit bars				
100-calorie packages				
Canned or individually packaged fruit (in water or natural juice only)				
Fat-free pudding				
Sugar-free candy				
Other:				
<b>REFRIGERATED/FROZEN ITEMS:</b>				
Light or nonfat yogurt				
Fresh fruit and vegetables				
Sandwiches made with whole-grain bread and lean meats				
Nonfat or 1% cottage cheese				
Sugar-free frozen fruit bars				
Other:				
<b>BEVERAGES:</b>				
Nonfat or 1% milk				
Low-calorie sports drink				
100% fruit or vegetable juice				
Plain or sugar-free flavored water				
Diet soda				
Other:				

\_\_\_\_\_ **Total number of healthier items available in this machine**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Total number of items**

(Resource: Nutrition Environment Measures Survey - Vending, <http://nems-v.com>)

(Source: Adapted from the Cater to Health Coalition Vending Machine Inventory Tool)

# Enhance your worksite environment

You can enhance your worksite environment by establishing policies and environmental supports that promote healthy activities among employees. Providing these supports can influence employee choices and create a shift to a culture of health.

These tools provide many different strategies to help you create a healthier worksite.

## Tools

**Action cards:** The *Action cards* provided with this toolkit outline strategies to enhance the worksite through policy and environmental supports, as well as activities to support your employees' individual health efforts.

**Action plan:** This document provides you with the opportunity to identify immediate, short-term, and long-term strategies you would like to implement at your worksite. This will be your company's strategy for enhancing your environment and creating opportunities for healthy choices.

**Healthy vending tips:** This document outlines discussion points for you and your vending representative to incorporate more healthy choices in your worksite vending machines.

**Healthy meetings and events guidelines:** This document provides healthy food guidelines and opportunities to incorporate physical activity into meetings at your worksite. The physical activity examples could also be used for employees whose duties may not allow for movement for extended periods of time.

**Menu suggestions for healthy catering:** This document includes a menu of recommended foods and beverages for catered events hosted at your worksite.



## Indiana healthy worksite action plan

Individual(s) completing the plan: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Overall goal:

### Short-term goals:

(in the next 1-3 months)

What do you want to accomplish?			
POLICY/ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT/ACTIVITY	DATE TO BE COMPLETED	STRATEGIES TO REACH GOAL	RESPONSIBLE PARTY

### Intermediate goals:

(in the next 3-6 months)

What do you want to accomplish?			
POLICY/ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT/ACTIVITY	DATE TO BE COMPLETED	STRATEGIES TO REACH GOAL	RESPONSIBLE PARTY

### Long-term goals:

(in the next 6-12 months)

What do you want to accomplish?			
POLICY/ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT/ACTIVITY	DATE TO BE COMPLETED	STRATEGIES TO REACH GOAL	RESPONSIBLE PARTY

# Healthy vending tips

**A worksite vending machine often provides one of the few convenient sources of food or snacks during the workday. An assessment of vending machine items (on page 11) may identify an opportunity to add healthier food and beverage options. Focus on increasing the number of healthy, affordable options in vending machines as a policy or environmental support. This can create access to healthier eating opportunities for your employees.**

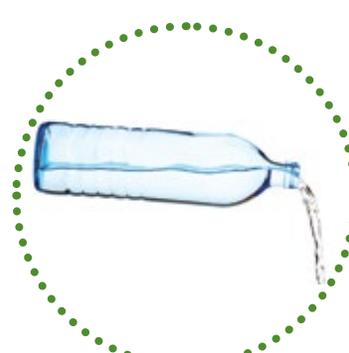
**The following tips may help you add healthier options to your vending machines.**

## **Work with your vending representative on one or more of the following efforts:**

- Rearrange the order of the foods in your machines. Vendors usually follow a standard chart for placing products in the machine. Ask them to place the healthier items at eye level and the less healthy items toward the bottom of the machine.
- Incorporate healthier options into your machines.
- Use pricing strategies to make the healthier items less expensive. This can be achieved several different ways. Talk with your vendor to see which approach could work at your location.

## **Start small by incorporating a few healthy options at a time. As employees start to purchase the healthier options, you can gradually increase the number of these items.**

- Conduct surveys or taste tests with employees to help determine which products to stock. Keep in mind that there is often a difference between what people say they will buy and what they actually select. Sometimes it is best to try different items in the machine and base decisions on what is purchased.
- Help your employees make more informed decisions about what they purchase. Ask your vendor for the nutrition facts for the foods and beverages in the vending machines. Ask your vendor to add a sticker, such as an apple, for a quick identification label of a healthy selection.



(Source: National Automatic Merchandising Association)

# Healthy meetings and events guidelines

## Food guidelines

Healthy food and beverage choices at meetings and other events make it easier for employees to make healthy choices. Food does not have to be the centerpiece of every meeting. However, when appropriate, providing healthier food options helps to increase opportunities for healthy behaviors. It also sends the message that management values the health of its employees.

Consider offering healthy foods at meetings, celebrations, potlucks and formal business receptions. Begin by adding healthier options and gradually reducing less healthy foods and beverages. You may want to create a company policy that allows offering food and/or snacks only at meetings that occur during a mealtime.

Food-service vendors are familiar with healthier food preparation options and most are willing to accommodate requests for changes to their usual fare. General guidelines for selecting healthier food and beverage options for meetings include:

- Serve low-calorie, low-fat foods.
- Serve fruits and vegetables whenever possible.
- Serve small portions (e.g., cut bagels in half).
- Serve low- or nonfat milk (1% or skim), 100% fruit or vegetable juice, water, unsweetened hot or iced tea or diet soda.
- Include a vegetarian option at all meals.
- Serve salads with dressing on the side—offer at least one low-fat or fat-free dressing.
- Provide pitchers of water.
- Provide some whole-grain breads and cereals.
- If serving a dessert, provide fresh fruit, fruit crisps, small cookies or small servings of sorbet.



(Source: New York State Department of Health, Guidelines for Healthy Meetings)

## Physical activity guidelines

Providing physical activity breaks at meetings and events can help participants remain alert and focused. Physical activity breaks re-energize participants during meetings, especially those lasting longer than one hour. Physical activity breaks that last 10-15 minutes provide a great opportunity for employees to get part of their recommended daily 30 minutes of moderate physical activity. Here are some suggestions on how to incorporate physical activity into meetings:

- Choose a meeting location where participants can safely take a walk during designated break periods. Provide attendees with maps of the area. Ensure that the walking route has walkways with ample width and curb cuts, so people who use mobility devices can participate.
- Consider a casual dress code for the meeting—this allows people to participate in physical activities more easily. Notify attendees in advance about physical activity breaks, so they can dress appropriately.
- Organize physical activity breaks that can be modified or adapted for people of all abilities, such as stretching exercises that can be done in a seated position.
- Encourage participants to take the stairs. Place signs near the elevators telling people where the stairs are located.
- Schedule brief activity breaks in the morning and afternoon (e.g., walking in place, stretching).
- Use icebreakers that encourage people to move around the room.
- Incorporate a walk-and-talk session into the meeting agenda by encouraging participants to go for short walks while they discuss agenda items.

(Sources: New York State Department of Health, Guidelines for Healthy Meetings; California Department of Public Health, Physical Activity at Meetings.)

## MENU SUGGESTIONS FOR HEALTHY CATERING

<p><b>Beverages</b></p>	<p>Water            100% fruit or vegetable juices—no larger than 12 oz. portions            Skim or 1% milk            Coffee, regular and decaffeinated            Tea—regular and herbal teas—hot or cold, unsweetened</p>
<p><b>Breakfast</b></p>	<p>Fresh fruit            High-fiber cereals            Fruit toppings for hot and cold cereals            Hard-boiled eggs            Vegetable omelets or eggs made with egg substitute or egg whites            Low-fat yogurt            Thinly sliced ham            Bagels (cut in half) served with fruit spreads, jams, hummus or low-fat cream cheese            Muffins—small or mini (5g fat or less/muffin)            Fruit bread (5g fat or less/1-oz slice)            Granola bars—low-fat (5g fat or less/bar)</p>
<p><b>Snacks</b></p>	<p>Fresh sliced fruit and vegetable tray, offered with low-fat dips            Whole-grain crackers or granola bars (5g fat or less per serving)            An assortment of low-fat cheeses and whole-grain crackers            Baked pita chips served with hummus            Low-fat yogurt            Pretzels, served with mustard dip            Tortilla chips, baked and offered with salsa dip            Popcorn, lower-fat (5g fat or less/serving)            Whole-grain crackers (5g fat or less/serving)</p>
<p><b>Lunch &amp; Dinner</b></p>	<p>Salad that includes a variety of mixed salad greens and served with low-fat dressing (on the side)            Whole-grain breads and rolls            Mustard and low-fat mayonnaise as condiments for sandwiches            Sandwiches presented in halves, so people can take a smaller portion            Broth-based soups (using a vegetarian broth) instead of cream-based soups            Pasta dishes with tomato or other vegetable-based sauces            4-ounce maximum portions of meat            Raw or steamed vegetables</p>

(Source: EAT SMART NORTH CAROLINA: Guidelines for Healthy Foods and Beverages at Meetings, Gatherings, and Events)

# Promote your efforts

Promoting your worksite health efforts plays an important role in whether or not your employees take advantage of the opportunities you are creating. Once these strategies are in place, it is important to educate your employees about the changes so they know healthier options are available.

There are several ways to promote your efforts. You will need to determine the best way to communicate with your employees based on your business's culture. Some ways to communicate with your employees about worksite initiatives include:

- Provide information to employees during meetings.
- Create flyers, brochures or posters to display around the worksite.
- Post announcements on your organization's Intranet page.
- Send email updates to your employees.
- Create a (weekly, biweekly, monthly, bimonthly, quarterly) employee newsletter or add updates to an existing employee newsletter.
- Post updates on worksite bulletin boards.



Be creative! These changes can be fun and exciting for your worksite. Relay that excitement in all your communications with employees.

## Tools

**Stairwell prompts:** These are fun sayings and facts to encourage your employees and guests to use the stairs instead of riding the elevator. They can be customized and displayed around your worksite.

**Physical activity promotion:** These are fun sayings and facts to encourage your employees to be physically active at the worksite.

**Physical activity poster/flyer:** Create a poster or flyer to hang in an employee break room. Show your employees you support physical activity at the worksite.

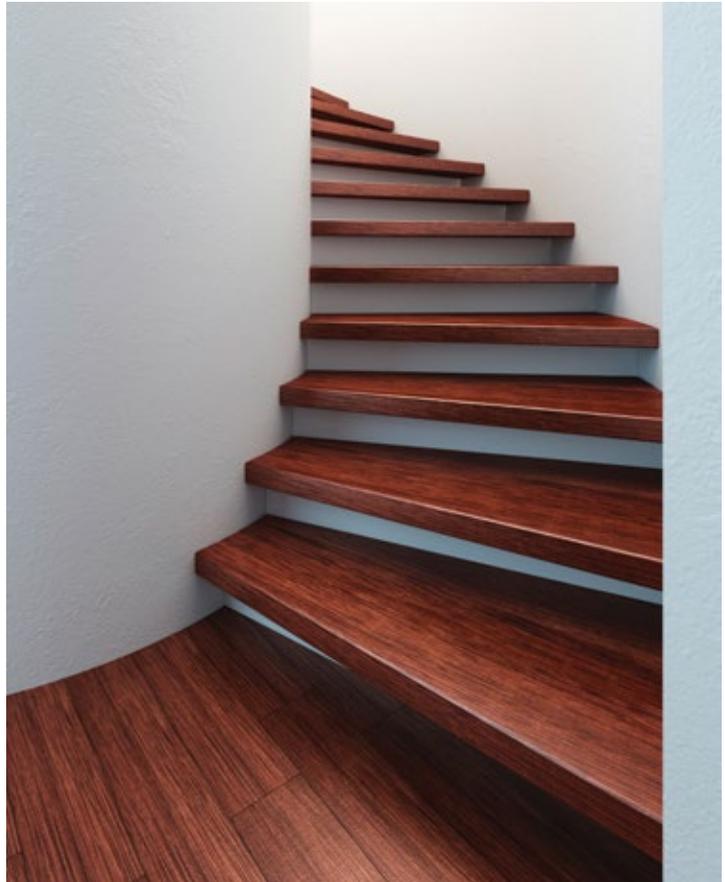
**Healthy eating poster/flyer:** Create a poster or flyer to show your employees you support healthy eating at the worksite. Hang these in the cafeteria or where your employees gather to eat lunch or snacks.

Visit Hope Health's free online resources at [www.hopehealth.com](http://www.hopehealth.com).

## Promoting stair use

Employees can easily increase the amount of physical activity they get each day simply by taking the stairs. The tips below can help promote stair use among employees and guests:

- Add footstep stickers that guide your employees and guests from the elevators to the stairs.
- Post fun and functional motivational signs.
- Post arrows from the building entrance leading to the stairs.
- Encourage employees to escort guests to the stairs rather than to the elevator or escalator.
- Use stairwell prompts with fun sayings or facts in or near the elevators to encourage stair use:
  - “A flight a day may keep chronic disease away.”
  - “Walking up stairs burns almost 5 times more calories than riding an elevator.”
  - “The victory is not always to the swift but to those who keep moving.”
  - “In one minute, a 150-lb person burns approximately 10 calories walking up stairs and only 1.5 calories riding an elevator.”



(Source: North Carolina Eat Smart, Move More)

## Physical activity promotion

Providing ways for employees to be physically active doesn't need to be difficult or burdensome. Consider adopting a few of these strategies:

- Encourage employees to host walking meetings.
- Provide all employees with a map of walking routes via newsletters, Intranet, bulletin boards or any other method your organization uses for communication.
- Encourage employees to stand at their desks whenever possible and provide standing desks when requested.
- Encourage employees to keep walking shoes at their desks or modify the dress code to include comfortable walking shoes.
- Consider adding pub tables and chairs in large conference rooms.
- Offer employees walking logs and encourage them to track the time, mileage or steps they walk on the route. This is also a way to gather data on use of the route.
- Offer paid time for physical activity or longer lunch breaks.
- Create posters/flyers using these fun sayings or facts:
  - "There are 1,440 minutes in every day. Schedule 30 of them for physical activity."
  - "It is easier to maintain good health than to recover it." Antonia Novello, MD (former US Surgeon General)
  - "We are what we repeatedly do." Aristotle
  - "No time for activity? Your opportunity is now!"



(Source: Prevention Minnesota. Providing places for physical activity)

(Sources: North Carolina Eat Smart, Move More)

# Assessing your efforts

Evaluation is a way to measure whether or not your efforts to add opportunities for physical activity and/or healthy eating have been successful. Evaluating healthy opportunities at your worksite can be a simple and practical way to highlight and improve your efforts while also determining if they have increased employee access to healthier opportunities. This step does not need to be complicated, expensive or time-consuming.

To look at your efforts, you will use your:

- Completed action plan
- Workplace assessment
- Any employee or leadership feedback received about your efforts
- Any other documents that can help showcase your efforts

## 1. Identify which policy, environmental support or activity you want to evaluate.

*Use your completed action plan. Which of those efforts would you like to evaluate?*

*Examples:*

Increasing the amount of healthy food options at meetings and celebrations.

Increasing the times employees use the microwave/refrigerator to bring healthier foods from home.

Offering flex-time for physical activity.

## 2. Was your goal completed?

*Evaluate your worksite using the Environmental Assessment or the Employee Interest Survey. Compare your most recent assessment to the previous one. Was there an increase in healthy eating and physical activity opportunities?*

*Other ways to show success:*

Initiative efforts- Participation rates, level of satisfaction

Initiative effects- Policy adjustments or worksite environment changes

Documents- Newsletters, meeting minutes, business website, photographs

Observations- Lunch events, healthy meetings, special activity events

## 3. What were your successes and challenges?

*It is important to identify what went well and which areas were more difficult. Complete the evaluation sections on your company action plan. Identify both what worked and what did not to determine what changes should be made if you continue working on the goal.*

## 4. Next Steps

*Share the information you learned with others.*

*Examples:*

Share a report on the impact of the activities with your employees.

Continue your efforts and promote your successes.

Use your results to request more funding or grants to continue your efforts.

Offer suggestions or ideas on how to improve your efforts.

Update your action plan. What do you want to continue to work on? Are there any new goals that you want to add?

# Additional resources

## Tobacco and the worksite

More than 80 percent of all smokers in Indiana want to quit (Indiana Tobacco Prevention & Cessation, 2009); many employees are looking for help to break their tobacco addiction. The Tobacco Prevention & Cessation Commission at the Indiana State Department of Health offers Indiana employers its Quit Now Preferred Employer program at no cost. The Quit Now Preferred Employer program is a great value for employers interested in reducing tobacco use among their employees and the smoking-related costs.

Becoming a Quit Now Preferred Employer is a way to reduce tobacco use in the worksite and improve the health and wellness of employees. Companies of any size have access to the resources needed to begin helping their employees who are ready to quit tobacco. By completing the brief enrollment form, your company connects to a statewide network of cessation specialists, health experts and wellness-conscious employers.

As a Quit Now Preferred Employer, you receive:

- Ability to fax-refer employees to the Indiana Tobacco Quitline.
- Materials to educate employees about tobacco use and the Quitline.
- Updates on new resources, research and Quitline promotional materials.

To enroll today in the Quit Now Preferred Employer program or for additional information, please contact the Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Commission at (317) 234-1787 or **[www.QuitNowIndiana.com](http://www.QuitNowIndiana.com)**.

(Source: Indiana Tobacco Prevention & Cessation. (2016). Results from the 2015 Indiana Adult Tobacco Survey)



**1.800.QUIT.NOW**

Indiana's Tobacco Quitline

[QuitNowIndiana.com](http://QuitNowIndiana.com)

# Chronic disease prevention

Nationally, nearly 80% of workers have at least one chronic condition. In addition to the human costs of chronic disease, the cost to employers in terms of healthcare, absenteeism, and presenteeism continues to rise. Employers have the opportunity to help prevent or mitigate chronic disease by providing their workforce with opportunities to be healthy during the workday. Many of the strategies listed in this toolkit work to reduce the chances employees will develop a chronic disease, however the reality is many individuals are already managing a condition. Below are resources for employers and employees seeking to implement supportive policies in their worksite.

- Encourage regular healthy meal breaks during the work day.
- Encourage physical activity breaks during the work day.
- Offer stress reduction techniques.
- Support tobacco cessation.
- Provide regular free or low cost biometric screenings to know your numbers.
- Offer one-on-one or group lifestyle counseling.
- Draft policies that support the prevention and maintenance of chronic diseases.

**Additionally, you can address specific chronic diseases by offering some of these strategies below:**

## Cardiovascular disease:

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. High blood pressure, high cholesterol and smoking are key risk factors for heart disease. About half of Americans have at least one of these three risk factors.

- Offer blood pressure monitoring onsite.
- Map and display onsite or nearby walking routes.
- Promote awareness of heart attack and stroke signs and symptoms on worksite TV monitors, bulletin boards and newsletters.
- Find these resources online for more information:
  - Cardiovascular Action Steps for Employers, from the Million Hearts Initiative
  - Worksite Wellness Programs for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention: A Policy Statement From the American Heart Association

## Prediabetes:

1 in 3 Hoosier adults have prediabetes, but 9 out of 10 of these individuals are unaware. You can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes by losing 5-7% of your body weight, eating healthier, and getting at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week. The medical expenditures of people with diabetes are approximately 2.3 times higher than expected costs if they did not have diabetes.

- Promote the *Prediabetes Risk Test*: [www.doihaveprediabetes.org](http://www.doihaveprediabetes.org) or text "risktest" to 97779.
- Encourage employees with prediabetes to enroll in a diabetes prevention program (DPP).
- Minimize out of pocket expenses for your employees by requesting coverage of DPP through your health insurance provider or offering DPP onsite.

(Source: Diseases vs. Populations: The Impact of Chronic Conditions. Integrated Benefits Institute. August 2008. Also, Peng T. "Five Financial Costs of American Obesity." Newsweek Web Exclusive. August 15, 2008. Accessed at: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/153309>)

## Diabetes

Diabetes is costly among the United States working population: \$176 billion in medical expenditures and \$69 billion in indirect reduced productivity costs. Indirect costs include absenteeism, reduced productivity for the employed population, reduced productivity for those not in the labor force, unemployment for disease-related disability, and lost productive capacity due to early mortality. Creating a corporate culture of good health that supports healthy lifestyle changes can help your employees control their diabetes.

- Provide safe locations and needle disposal methods for blood sugar measurements.
- Create policies that allow flexibility around treatment of low blood sugars.
- Go to the ISDH Diabetes website to find resources for businesses.

## Cancer

Unhealthy behaviors (e.g. tobacco use, poor eating habits, alcohol consumption and not getting enough physical activity) and certain chronic conditions (e.g. diabetes and obesity) can increase cancer risk. Workplace wellness programs that support healthy behaviors and employee well-being can reduce cancer risks. Supporting regular cancer screening can help prevent or treat cancer in its early stages.

- Reduce exposure to harmful substances that might be present in your workplace (such as asbestos, diesel exhaust, radon, second hand smoke, excessive sun exposure).
- Promote cancer awareness and screening on worksite TV monitors, bulletin boards, and newsletters.
- Offer paid-time-off for employees to get cancer screenings.
- Work with your health insurer to send reminders for due/past due screenings.
- Bring mobile screenings to worksites.
- Explore gaining recognition through the Indiana Cancer Consortium Employer Gold Standard Initiative.

## Asthma

Asthma affects more than 1 in 10 adults in Indiana. During the past 12 months, 1 in 3 Indiana adults with asthma were unable to work or carry out their usual activities on one or more days. Focusing on indoor air quality will help your employees with asthma manage their disease.

- Ensure employees with asthma have easy access to their rescue medication
- Decrease smoking in workplace - consider tobacco free workplace policies
- Be aware of air quality
  - o Minimize sources of indoor air pollution.
  - o Make sure air can circulate freely.
  - o Reduce potential exposure to substances that can cause asthma symptoms such as coughing, wheezing, chest discomfort and a burning feeling in the lungs.
- Go to the American Lung Association for a lung friendly workplace toolkit.

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Baicker K, Cutler D, Song Z. Workplace wellness programs can generate savings. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2010;29(2):304-311  
<http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/library/diabetesreportcard2014.pdf>  
[http://www.niddk.nih.gov/about-niddk/research-areas/diabetes/diabetes-prevention-program-dpp/Documents/DPP\\_508.pdf](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/about-niddk/research-areas/diabetes/diabetes-prevention-program-dpp/Documents/DPP_508.pdf)  
<http://www.diabetes.org/in-my-community/awareness-programs/stop-diabetes-at-work/>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db103.pdf>  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3609540/>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/implementation/topics/type2-diabetes.html>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/implementation/topics/type2-diabetes.html>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/prevention/screening.htm>  
[http://www.in.gov/isdh/files/15-Asthma\\_infographic\\_11x17\\_FINAL2.pdf](http://www.in.gov/isdh/files/15-Asthma_infographic_11x17_FINAL2.pdf)  
<http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/indoor/at-work/guide-to-safe-and-healthy-workplaces/>

# Supporting nursing moms at work

Women with children are one of the fastest-growing segments of the work force. Balancing work and family is an important priority for them. Today, approximately 75 percent of women in Indiana begin breastfeeding. When they return to work after their babies are born, time and space to express their milk during the work hours help them continue to give their best to their work and their baby.

These family-friendly benefits also bring your business a 3:1 Return on Investment (ROI) through lower health care costs, lower employee absenteeism rates (since breastfed babies are healthier), lower turnover rates and higher employee productivity and loyalty.

Businesses across Indiana have learned how to support nursing mothers at work and you can too.

To learn more about how your business can comply with state and federal laws and offer a workplace accommodation that benefits your company, employees and their families please contact Indiana Perinatal Network/Indiana Breastfeeding Coalition - [http://www.indianaperinatal.org/?page=BF\\_Workplace](http://www.indianaperinatal.org/?page=BF_Workplace).



## Helpful resources:

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/employer-solutions/>

<http://mchb.hrsa.gov/pregnancyandbeyond/breastfeeding/>

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/employer-solutions/laws.html>

(Source: North Carolina Eat Smart, Move More)

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## **Indiana State Department of Health**

Division of Chronic Disease, Primary Care & Rural Health

Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity

Tobacco Prevention & Cessation Commission

## Action tips

When you feel your business is ready to incorporate a policy, environmental support or activity, choose a tip that corresponds with your goals as identified in your workplace assessment. The tips provide direction on how to implement each strategy. Each strategy varies in the amount of time or resources required to implement in the worksite.

You do not have to tackle every tip at once. Once you have completed an assessment, you will have a roadmap for which strategies to incorporate into your worksite. You may choose not to incorporate every strategy at your worksite. Identify one or more to implement right away (within 1-3 months), one or more to implement in the near future (3-6 months) and one or more to implement in the long-term (6-12 months).



## Policy

A **policy** is a written rule or guideline that outlines a plan of action applicable to all employees to support healthier behaviors in the worksite.

Policies that support physical activity and healthy eating provide employees with opportunities to make healthier choices. Policy change can affect large groups of people and can have long-term impacts. Worksite policies shape worksite culture. Creating a worksite where healthy eating and physical activity are encouraged will support healthy behaviors. A worksite policy offers the opportunity for leaders to show a formal pledge to the health of their employees. Each policy tip includes sample policies as well as reasoning behind the proposed policy.

A food sharing policy is a creative way to promote employee access to healthy eating opportunities and encourage employees to bring in healthy food when sharing with others.

**Sample policy:** All food brought to the worksite by employees with the intent to share must meet the established Healthy Meetings and Events Food Guidelines (Refer to the Healthy Meetings and Events Guidelines on page 15 in the toolkit).



A tobacco-free policy demonstrates general support of employee health and well-being. A worksite may adopt a smoke-free policy alone or in combination with additional interventions to help tobacco-using employees who might seek assistance in quitting.

**Sample policy:** Tobacco use shall not be permitted in any enclosed company facility. This includes common work areas, auditoriums, classrooms, conference and meeting rooms, private offices, elevators, hallways, medical facilities, cafeterias, employee lounges, stairs, restrooms, vehicles and all other enclosed facilities. This policy applies to all employees, clients, contractors and visitors. Smoking shall be permitted only at a reasonable distance (e.g., 30 feet or more) outside any enclosed area where smoking is prohibited to ensure that secondhand smoke does not enter the area through entrances, windows, ventilation systems or any other means. This policy shall be distributed to all employees. "No Smoking" signs shall be posted at entrances to all company facilities. This policy is being announced three months in advance in order to give tobacco users time to adapt to the restrictions and to facilitate a smooth transition to a tobacco-free environment.

Healthier eating means balancing less healthy choices with more healthy ones. By offering healthy food choices at company meetings and functions, employees have increased opportunities to make better food choices while at work.

**Sample policy:** Meetings will not include food or beverages (excluding water) unless the meeting takes place during a mealtime. If food and/or beverages are offered at a meeting, or the company hosts a catered event, health fair, potluck meal, etc., two or more healthier options must be offered. Examples of healthier options include the following:

- Fruits and/or vegetables of all forms (fresh, frozen, canned, or dried).
- Low-fat milk and dairy products such as skim or 1% milk, low-fat and fat-free yogurt, cheese and ice cream.
- Foods made from grains (e.g., wheat, rice, and oats), especially whole grains. Examples include low-fat whole-wheat crackers, bread, and pasta; whole-grain ready-to-eat cereal, low-fat baked tortilla chips and pita bread.
- Water, coffee, teas, 100% fruit juice, diet soda.

The company will also support its healthy meeting food and beverage policy initiative by:

- Identifying healthy eating opportunities for meeting participants (e.g., restaurants, caterers, farmers markets or produce stands where healthy food choices are available).
- Providing encouragement to enjoy healthy foods, with company leadership serving as role models.

## Meetings on the move

Instead of sitting in a conference room for a meeting, attendees can meet while walking along hallways, around the building and at nearby parks or walking trails. Whenever appropriate, promote physical activity by encouraging employees to facilitate “meetings on the move.”

**Sample Policy:** Whenever possible, employees will be permitted to host “meetings on the move.” All employees shall gain supervisor approval prior to departing the worksite for a “meeting on the move.” A meeting on the move is appropriate when:

- All participants agree.
- The agenda requires mostly talking as opposed to writing.
- The meeting will last no more than 30 minutes.
- There are four or fewer participants.



## Paid time for physical activity

Policy

Allowing employees to use paid time at work to be physically active sends a strong message of support and encouragement. It also removes a major barrier to physical activity—lack of time.

**Sample Policy:** All employees will be offered 30 minutes of paid break time each day to participate in physical activity. Employees may use this time for participating in physical activity only. Employees who do not wish to participate in physical activity must decline the extra break time.

**Sample Policy:** All employees have the option to “walk or work” during the 30 minutes from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. or from 2:30 to 3:00 p.m. Employees who choose to use this time for physical activity will be paid for that time. Employees who choose to use this time for work will be paid for that time. Employees who choose to use this time for any other activities, e.g., smoking breaks or coffee breaks, will not be paid for that time.



## Physical activity breaks at meetings

Policy

By incorporating physical activity breaks into your meetings, you provide employees and participants with the opportunity to add 10 minutes of physical activity in their workday.

**Sample policy:** Employees who organize a full working day conference must incorporate at least 10 minutes of physical activity during scheduled break times.

**Sample policy:** Employees who organize a meeting lasting longer than two hours in length must incorporate a physical activity break into the meeting.



Alternative work schedules address one of the most common barriers to physical activity—lack of time. Allowing employees a flexible schedule to come in earlier or leave later allows them the flexibility for physical activity before work, after work or during an extended lunch break, when it is most convenient, based on their workload and schedule.

**Sample policy:** To the extent possible, employees will be permitted to adjust their workday schedule for physical activity within the following times: Start between 6:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.; Finish between 3:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Employees will be permitted to extend their lunch hour to 1.5 hours if the additional time is made up during the day. Individuals must establish their permanent start, finish, and lunch times with their supervisor.

## Healthy vending options

A healthy vending policy increases employee access to healthy food and beverage options at work. You will want to work with your vending representative to find the best way to phase in healthy food options into your vending machine. Additional information on healthy vending, including lists of recommended food and beverage options, is located on pages 14 and 16 of the toolkit.

**Sample policy:** In order to increase employee access to healthy food and beverage options at work, 50 percent of food and beverages offered in each vending machine shall meet the following guidelines:

### Beverages

- Fruit or vegetable-based drinks must contain at least 50 percent real fruit or vegetable juice and no additional sweeteners.
- Milk must be low fat or fat free.
- Sports drinks or carbonated beverages must be low calorie or calorie free.
- Portions must be no larger than 12 ounces.

### Foods

- 210 or fewer calories.
- 30 percent or less total calories from fat.
- 10 percent or less total calories from saturated and trans fat.
- No more than 35 percent of calories from sugars that do not occur naturally in fruits, vegetables or dairy products.
- Transition to smaller portion sizes (as those products become available).

Active transportation policies encourage employees to commute to work by means other than single-occupancy traditional fuel vehicles. Active transportation is another way to encourage and promote physical activity.

**Sample Policy:** All employees will be offered 15 minutes of paid break time each day to use environmentally friendly and/or physically active ways of commuting to and from work. These may include cycling, walking, in-line skating, skateboarding or a combination of walking and taking public transportation.



The dress code is especially important to support other strategies such as a stair use campaign, walking meetings, walking/stretching breaks, nearby mapped-out trails and on-site bike racks. Normal business attire can create a barrier for employees to be physically active during the workday.

**Sample Policy:** Employees are permitted to dress in casual attire each Friday. There will be space available for employees to change clothes during the workday if they choose to participate in physical activity other days of the week.

**Sample Policy:** To support our employees' efforts to be physically active during the workday, employees are permitted to wear comfortable walking shoes.



Shared use agreements are a way to increase opportunities for employees to be more physically active after work hours. The policy refers to sharing indoor and outdoor spaces like gymnasiums, athletic fields and playgrounds with other organizations. The concept is to share resources to keep costs down and communities healthy.

**Sample policy:** A formal agreement will be established for employees to have access to [partner agency, institution, or organization's] facilities, such as an athletic field or gymnasium, for physical activity outside of work hours.



Promotional policies for the worksite environment ensure materials located throughout the worksite encourage employees' healthy eating and physical activity.

**Sample policy:** The advertisement and marketing of unhealthy foods will not be permitted. Vending machines (if applicable) will limit displayed images to healthier food and beverage choices, physical activity, or the company logo.

**Sample policy:** There will be designated space in the employee break room for promoting outside opportunities for physical activity (such as local runs) and healthy eating (such as farmers markets). With supervisor approval, employees are welcome to post physical activity and healthy eating opportunities to this space.

An **environmental support** is an effort or strategy (social, physical or economic) aimed at reducing barriers or increasing opportunities for healthy choices within the physical environment at the worksite.

The goal of incorporating environmental supports into the worksite is to remove barriers or add opportunities for employees to engage in healthy eating or physical activity. Each environmental support tip includes a brief overview of each strategy and ideas for implementing the strategy.

## Company garden

A company garden is a plot of land or a container garden for employees to grow fruits, vegetables, and herbs. A garden at your worksite will give employees the opportunity for physical activity during the gardening process and also provides healthy produce to enjoy. The food produced from the company garden can be sold or given to employees.

### Strategy:

- Send out a questionnaire to employees to see if there is interest in creating a company garden sustained by employees.
- Identify a few employees to oversee installation and maintenance of garden.
- Find a location on the property that is sunny most of the day with access to water and receive approval to use that space for a garden. Contact companies or homeowners around your worksite that may want to collaborate on a garden space.
- If land is not available, consider creating a container garden.
- Interested employees should be assigned their own container to plant, maintain, and harvest.
- Ask employees to bring in soil, seeds, or plants to put into their own containers or the company may want to provide potting soil.
- Easy-to-grow container plants include: basil, cabbage, chives, cucumber, parsley, patio tomatoes, peppers bell or habanera, rosemary, strawberries and oregano.



Providing secure bicycle parking at your work location encourages employees to bike to work. Secure parking availability removes a barrier by providing the necessary facilities for employees to store their bikes during the workday.

**Strategy:**

There are many different ways to provide secure bicycle parking. First, assess the need for secure bike parking at your worksite. The type of facility or equipment that you need will be determined by the number of bicycles that need to be stored. Below are a few examples of different bicycle storage options:

Facility/Equipment type	Estimated cost
The bicyclist may bring the bike inside the building and store it next to or near his/her desk.	No Cost
The employer can set aside a locked closet for bicycles and issue keys to users.	Varies
Outdoor bicycle parking rack	Varies; a rack to park a few bikes might cost a few hundred dollars in addition to having it properly installed.

Providing access to clean drinking water is a fundamental and effective way to increase opportunities for employees to consume water during the workday. Water consumption and availability are especially important if your employees work outside or in non-air-conditioned indoor environments during the summer months.

**Strategy:**

There are many ways to offer a continual water source for employee use. Here are some best practices you may want to consider:

- Make water available through water fountains and water coolers in break rooms, hallways and lobbies.
- Serve bottled water or water from pitchers at employee meetings as an alternative to coffee and soda.
- Make water available in vending machines.
- Ensure that water jugs are cleaned often to prevent bacterial growth.
- Encourage employees to bring their own reusable water bottle to work or provide them with one.



Healthy food and beverage options in vending machines increase opportunities for healthy eating. Vending machine snack choices should follow standards agreed upon by your company and vending representative. This will increase the number of healthier food choices employees have while at the worksite. Additional information is located on pages 14 and 16 of the toolkit.

### **Strategy:**

Consider the following when working with a vendor to help increase healthy options:

- Take a close look at “fruit drinks” when you ask for fruit juice to be added to machines. Some fruit drinks may contain as little as 5% real fruit juice; ask for 100% fruit juices.
- Cold-food machines have a fast turnover of product because they hold perishable foods.
- Vending machine companies may allow a 60- to 90-day test trial on products. If offered, you may consider marketing items you are promoting and/or offer special taste-test events or incentives to spark employee interest.
- Some companies may be willing to subsidize a lower price on a low-fat item by charging more for a high-fat item (e.g., price the trail mix at \$0.50, and the potato chips at \$1.00).

Employees must know about the healthy worksite initiatives in order to take advantage of the opportunities made available to them. Promotional materials located throughout the worksite remind employees about the supports in place that encourage healthy eating and physical activity.

**Strategy:** There are many ways to communicate with employees about your efforts to facilitate opportunities for physical activity and healthier eating at the worksite. Promotion efforts are not one-size-fits-all. Additional information is located on page 19 of the toolkit.

### **Promoting healthy eating and physical activity:**

- Display motivating posters throughout the worksite encouraging employees to eat healthier and be more physically active.
- Remove all promotions that highlight unhealthy food choices or a sedentary lifestyle. Work with your vending representative to change the display on your vending machine if necessary. Let employees know about changes in vending options and highlight the healthier choices. Place these healthier options at eye level in the vending machines and place the less healthy options lower.
- Ensure that less healthy options cost more and healthier options cost less to encourage consumption of the healthier foods and beverages. Work with your vendor on price incentives.

The Farm to Work Initiative is an effort to connect worksites with regional or local farms in order to increase access to locally produced foods. Farm to Work partnerships increase the access to healthy foods for your employees. Community Supported Agricultures (CSA) may be willing to make deliveries to a worksite if enough employees participate. Collaborating with other worksites in your immediate area is another great way to raise the demand of a farmer's market in your community.

### Strategy:

- Discuss the possibility of a farmer's market with building management or owners. Talk with employees and other nearby small company employers about their interest in participating in a Farm to Work initiative.
- Contact the Local Growers Guild ([www.localgrowers.org](http://www.localgrowers.org)) or the Going Local website ([www.goinglocal-info.com](http://www.goinglocal-info.com)) to find a CSA near you.
- Promote the initiative with your employees.
- Establish hours and season of operation.
- Create and share recipes for items sold by the farmers, especially for uncommon produce they may have.



## Discount gym membership

Access is often a barrier for individuals to participate in physical activity. Your company can enter into an agreement with a local gym or fitness facility to offer discounts or incentives for your employees to become members or use the facility. Remember, a fitness facility can be located in a local hotel, church facility or fire department that has a fitness room.

**Strategy:** Some gyms offer discounts to people who will only use the gym during non-peak hours, only use the gym once or twice a week or are not sure whether they will use the gym more than a couple times ever. Gyms may offer employees a discounted rate without any cost to the employer.

- Talk with your employees to see how many would be interested in using a local fitness facility.
- Contact your local fitness facilities to determine what type of discount incentives are offered at each location.
- Determine which incentive would work best for you and your employees.
- Work with this facility to create an agreement for employee.



Employees benefit from having a separate area to take a break or eat lunch. Access to a refrigerator and microwave will make it easier for employees to bring in healthier foods from home, keep lunches fresh and reheat food for lunch as opposed to traveling to the local diner or fast food establishment.

**Strategy:** Provide employees with a designated break area for meals and other break periods. The break area should include a refrigerator and microwave for employee use.

- Consider the number of employees who will be utilizing these appliances.
- Provide a dormitory-size refrigerator for small spaces and few employees or a full-size refrigerator/freezer combination for a larger space and many employees.



## Shared use agreements

A shared use agreement is an agreement (formal or informal) between your company and another organization, such as a school, to share space and facilities to make it easier for your employees to be active and healthy. The agreement is a way to increase opportunities for employees to be more physically active. It refers to the sharing of indoor and outdoor spaces like gymnasiums, athletic fields and playgrounds with other organizations or companies. The concept is to share resources to keep costs down and communities healthy.

**Strategy:**

- Discuss the concept of a shared use agreement with a neighboring company or community organization.
- If you are located near a school, contact the district superintendent/school principal/administrative office to inquire about creating a shared use agreement between your company and the school.
- A formal agreement between your company and the other organization will help ensure the protection of the facility and the companies involved.

Working with local food establishments to provide healthy eating options can create an opportunity for your employees to buy healthier foods while also providing promotional opportunities for the local food establishment. You can collaborate with the local restaurants and other food establishments to incentivize your employees to go to their company for healthy food options during employee meal times.

### Strategy:

- Meet with the owners of local restaurants/establishments to see if they are agreeable to developing healthy menu options for your employees to purchase.
- Discuss with the owners of local restaurants/establishments the possibility of offering your employees financial incentives (e.g., discounts on healthy options, free salad with entrée purchase).
- Promote the availability of healthier options at the places that agree to participate.

Be sure to promote the new menu items as tasty and healthy.



## Worksite walking paths

Working with employees to identify a walking path in or around the worksite increases their access to physical activity opportunities during the workday. Your company can identify and map out a walking path inside and/or around the outside of the worksite for employees to use before or after work hours or during their break periods.

### Strategy:

- Plan a walking route that is:
  - Free from obstacles (such as doors, crowds, stop signs, traffic, etc.)
  - Well lit
  - A visually appealing area to walk
  - Accessible by all employees during working hours of all shifts
  - Wide enough to accommodate side-by-side walkers
  - Safe
- Map out a 10- to 20-minute route to make it accessible for breaks, lunchtime, and walking meetings. Create a map of the route. You can use an existing facilities map and add markings to indicate the route. You can use signs or markings directly on the route to measure the distance of the route. Employees will be able to track their distance progress. Having an indoor route will encourage use during inclement weather.

Taking the stairs is one way to be more physically active. Using the stairs requires little additional time, no wardrobe change and few additional costs. The following tips are designed to make the stairs a more attractive method of physical activity in the worksite.

**Strategy:**

- Check with your building manager and safety officer to identify all relevant permits, fire and building codes BEFORE you make any purchases to enhance the stairwells.
- Paint the walls bright colors.
- Adding carpet and rubber treading will increase safety and make your stairwell more inviting.
- Place floor numbers at each stairwell door.
- Starting at the bottom stair, number each stair so users can track their progress.
- Create a tracking system for goals for the stair users. For example, “XX steps will get you to the top of the Empire State Building (1,860 steps)/Monument Circle (330 steps)/Statue of Liberty (354 steps)/Willis Tower (formerly Sears Tower) (2,109 steps)/Washington Monument (897 steps)”.
- Hang artwork in the stairwell if permitted. Other ideas for framed art include cartoons and children’s art. Rotate the artwork every few months to keep it fresh.
- Encourage employees to escort guests to the stairs rather than to the elevator or escalator.

(Source: CDC’s StairWELL to Better Health)

## Activity

An **activity** is a specific time-limited event meant to raise awareness of the connection between health and physical activity and healthy eating.

Traditional worksite activities include walking clubs, lunch groups, activity challenges and recreational sports. Activities can supplement policies or environmental supports that promote healthy eating and/or physical activity in your worksite.

When promoting an activity for your worksite, particularly one that involves a challenge or competition, it is important to recognize that not all employees will want to participate in all of the activities. Therefore, it is important to offer a variety of activities, so each employee has an opportunity to participate. The purpose of activities is to provide time-limited opportunities for physical activity or healthy eating for all employees.

## Fruit and snack bowl

### Activity

Fruit and snack bowls make healthy items easily available to employees. These snacks are located in an area of the worksite where employees have easy access to the snacks provided. This addresses two common barriers to healthy eating: convenience and cost.

#### Strategy:

- Designate one or more employees to rotate responsibility of stocking the fruit and snack bowl. Rotate duties regularly among a group of employees agreeing to take care of the bowl.
- Charge a fair price and keep prices consistent from week to week.
- Educate employees; provide nutrition facts and ingredients information.
- Offer a variety of healthy snacks including:
  - Seasonal fruits and vegetables
  - Dried and processed fruits
  - Raw or dry-roasted nuts and “trail mix” blends of fruit and nuts (buy prepackaged or mix your own).
  - Whole grain cereals, breads, and crackers
- Identify which items sell more often.
- Refrigerate perishable stock overnight.
- Replenish fresh items regularly.



An activity club is a group of employees joined together to participate in physical activity. Employee activity clubs encourage employees with similar interests to interact in an environment that supports physical activity outside of the worksite.

### Strategy:

- Before starting a club, it is important to talk with coworkers to identify who is interested.
- Set a specific, standard time when most employees are able to attend (e.g., a time when no regularly scheduled meetings occur like during morning, lunch or afternoon break period or before or after work).
- If it is a walking, running or bicycling club, choose a route that always starts and finishes in the same place. This will allow people of different abilities to walk various distances and find their way back.



### Examples of activity clubs:

Basketball	Volleyball	Soccer
Bicycling	Kayaking	Zumba®
Hall walking	Fitness classes	Yoga
Softball	Rollerblading	Pilates
Running	Ice skating	Canoeing

A “lunch and learn” provides opportunities for employees to listen to presentations about various topics while they eat. Lunch and learns are a great way to educate employees about healthy eating and physical activity opportunities both in and out of the worksite.

### Strategy:

Identify the interests of your employees by asking what topics they would enjoy learning more about. You can bring in speakers to discuss many different topics, including:

- Nutrition and healthy eating
- Physical activity and fitness
- Local active transportation options
- Community events

Bring in speakers who are interesting to employees. You can find dynamic speakers from the Speakers Bureau at the Indiana Healthy Weight Initiative, <http://www.inhealthyweight.org>.



Recreational sports are non-competitive activities. Employees can participate as a group or individual employees can join community teams. Team sports encourage your employees to work together and become more active outside the worksite. It is a great opportunity for employees to become more involved in the community and socialize outside the worksite.

### Strategy:

- Talk with employees to find out what sports or activities they enjoy the most.
- Talk with local recreational sports teams to learn how to form a new team or join an existing team. If you have a small number of employees, try collaborating with other small companies in your area to develop a team.
- If a team or league does not exist, work with local facility managers to start your own league.
- Ask other companies and organizations to form teams and participate.

### Examples of recreational sports:

Basketball   Softball   Volleyball   Soccer   Baseball   Tennis   Bowling



A “healthy lunch club” is a group of employees who agree to meet periodically for a lunch that includes healthy food options. This can provide employees the opportunity to share healthy foods and recipes with others. The lunch consists of healthy food items brought in by the employees. Each employee brings in one dish (or more if desired) along with the recipe to share with their coworkers. These lunch clubs provide support as well as remove the barrier of not knowing how to create appetizing, healthy food items.

### Strategy:

- Investigate interest in creating a healthy lunch club.
- Recruit members by talking to coworkers about the activity.
- For each lunch, employees will have a signup sheet for what dish they will bring. This will ensure a variety of dishes.
- Healthy recipe ideas are available online from a variety of websites, cookbooks, and from some government and other organizations such as the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute and the American Cancer Society.
- After employees have the opportunity to taste the different healthy recipes, ask them to identify their favorites so the lunch organizer can create a “favorites” recipe collection for the employees.
- For more information on preparation, selection, and storage for fresh fruits and vegetables, visit Fruits and Veggies -- More Matters at **[www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org)**.

A “salad bowl lunch” is when employees each bring one ingredient for a salad to share with the group. At lunchtime, the ingredients are set out buffet style, and the employees can build their own salads. This introduces employees to foods that they may not have considered adding to salads; and each time, it turns out differently. Salad bowl lunches increase access to healthy food options for employees. For more information on preparation, selection and storage for fresh fruits and vegetables, visit Fruits and Veggies — More Matters at [www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org).

### Strategy:

- Create a signup sheet for employees to list which ingredients they plan to bring to help ensure a variety of ingredients.
- Make sure some employees sign up to bring salad dressings.
- Encourage employees to be creative when buying ingredients.
- Make it fun!

### Possible ingredients include:

Lettuce	Spinach	Ham	Walnuts	Radishes
Raisins	Pinto beans	Shrimp	Almonds	Fruit (fresh or dried)
Croutons	Low-fat cheese	Broccoli	Cucumbers	(kiwi, strawberries,
Sunflower seeds	Chicken	Tomatoes	Onion	cranberries, oranges,
Red peppers	Turkey		Celery	apples, grapes)

Fitness trackers provide a simple way for employees to track their physical activity by tracking the number of steps they take each day for a specified length of time.

### Strategy:

- Provide pedometers to your employees who wish to engage in the activity.
- There are online tracking systems available where employees can connect their pedometers to a website and the information is automatically uploaded into a program. However, your employees can track their steps just as easily with a pencil and a tracking sheet.
- Increase participation and motivation by providing employees with an incentive for participation and a reward for completing or “winning” the program.
- For ready-made walking programs and other free resources, encourage employees to visit INShape Indiana at [www.inshapeindiana.org](http://www.inshapeindiana.org).

Use physical activity breaks during long meetings or at employee workstations to incorporate physical activity into the workday.

### Strategy:

#### 1-minute breaks

**Natural face-lifts:** Raise your eyebrows, open your mouth and say “aahhh” to unkink your jaw and get blood flowing to your face.

**Back in action:** Once an hour, exhale and round your spine to press your lower back against the back of your chair; pause, release and repeat 3 or 4 times.

#### 5-minute breaks

**Walk your talk:** During phone calls, stand up and walk, step side to side, do knee lifts or stretch.

#### 10-minute breaks

**Coffee to go:** During breaks, bypass the lunchroom, change into walking shoes, and log a half mile in or out of the building.

