

Sam Houston State University
A Member of the Texas State University System

Finance & Operations Human Resources Policy ER-11
Employee Wellness Program

SUBJECT: Policy Statement and Procedure for Employee Wellness Program.

PURPOSE: To encourage employees to engage in wellness related activities and establish a standard process which allows employees of Sam Houston State University to participate in an Employee Wellness Program.

POLICY: The purpose of this program is to provide, as a privilege, an opportunity for regular full-time Sam Houston State employees to participate in a voluntary wellness program by utilizing wellness related educational and recreational opportunities and facilities made available to them on the Sam Houston State campus.

Chapter 664 of the Government Code authorizes state agencies to use funds and facilities for fitness programs.

01. OBJECTIVE AND DEFINITION

The objective of the Sam Houston State Wellness Program is to encourage faculty and staff to achieve and maintain an improved level of personal health and wellness which research shows leads to improved job performance, increased work satisfaction and reduced health care/insurance costs, through participation in wellness related activities described below.

The Sam Houston State Wellness Program consists of various voluntary wellness related activities that qualify as eligible for release time. Activities that qualify for release time are:

- a. Official Elevate Healthy Campus Initiative Events
- b. Wellness Activities
- c. Health Fitness Screenings/Assessments
- d. Stress Management Classes
- e. Smoking Cessation Classes
- f. Weight Loss Classes
- g. Nutrition Classes
- h. Health Risk/Injury Reduction Classes
- i. Exercise Activities

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02. PROCEDURES FOR PARTICIPATION

- A. Employees approved for participation in the Wellness Program shall receive a maximum of two and one-half (2.5) hours of release time per week, taken in increments of no greater than one (1) hour per day for approved wellness activities with prior approval from the employees supervisor. Release time is paid time and does not have to be made up.
- B. Approval from the appropriate authority must be secured prior to participation in the Wellness Program. The approval authority is the employee's current supervisor and department head. If the employee's supervision changes, the employee will need to request approval from the new approval authority.
- C. Approval authorities shall make reasonable efforts to honor requests for participation in the Wellness Program but retain sole judgment and discretion whether granting a wellness request is in the best interests of his or her work unit.
- D. To apply for approval to participate in the Sam Houston State Wellness Program, employees must fill out the Sam Houston State University Employee Development Participation & Teaching Request Form. Participation requires annual enrollment, which expires at the end of each fiscal year.
- E. Only current full-time employees who have been with the University a minimum of six (6) months and are not currently approved for education or teaching release time are eligible to participate in the Sam Houston State Wellness Program. Wellness, education and teaching release time are mutually exclusive and a supervisor may not approve leave for more than one of these activities.
- F. Abuse of the privilege to participate in the Wellness Program will subject the employee to revocation of the privilege and the possibility of disciplinary action.

Reviewed by: Rhonda Vickers Beassie, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources –
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