
PROCEDURE SUMMARY

Employee benefits, engagement, and professional development opportunities create a culture that benefits Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research) at all levels. This procedure describes administration of the employee wellness initiative coordinated by AgriLife Research and it supplements The Texas A&M University System (A&M System) Regulation 31.02.13, *Wellness Programs*.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.0 GENERAL

- 1.1 The wellness programs are comprehensive worksite wellness programs designed to encourage employees to live healthier lifestyles, to support a healthy workplace, and to create a culture of wellness by focusing on physical, financial, and interpersonal aspects of health.
- 1.2 These voluntary programs are designed to improve overall well-being, encourage employees to adopt healthy behaviors and positive lifestyles, improve job performance, increase engagement and work satisfaction, and reduce health care expenditures and insurance premiums.

2.0 WELLNESS ROLES

- 2.1 *Wellness Program Administrator*—AgriLife Research will designate a Wellness Program Administrator. This individual is responsible for development, administration, communication, and evaluation of programs offered under the respective wellness program.
- 2.2 *Wellness Advisory Council*—AgriLife Research will designate a Wellness Advisory Council comprised of key stakeholders and partners that represent and encompass various aspects of wellness.

3.0 WELLNESS RELEASE TIME (WRT)

- 3.1 Full-time, benefits-eligible employees are eligible to use 30 minutes during the employee's regular work hours, up to three (3) times a week, to exercise or participate in physical fitness activities as authorized by A&M System Regulation 31.02.13 Wellness Programs.
- 3.2 Specific requests addressing physical limitations will be reviewed by the Wellness Program Administrator.
- 3.3 WRT is paid time which does not have to be made up. It may not be accrued, carried over, or banked.
- 3.4 WRT is not considered work time for purposes of Workers' Compensation. Injuries that may result during participation will not be treated as work-related injuries.
- 3.5 Supervisors must consider the impact of each WRT request and anticipate the impact if approval would place an unreasonable burden on the department's ability to provide services of acceptable quality and quantity during the time requested. A well-communicated, consistent, and structured WRT will help to alleviate conflicts and potential work load disruptions.

- 3.6 Supervisors and employees must complete AgriLife Form [AG-431, Wellness Release Time Acknowledgement](#), to document the mutual understanding that the release time activities are consistent with physical fitness activities.
- 3.7 The department is responsible for record keeping and compliance. The WRT acknowledgement will be kept in the employee's official personnel file.
- 3.8 If at any time the employee or supervisor deems the approved WRT needs to be adjusted or ceased, documentation to this will be placed in the employee's official personal file.

DEFINITIONS

Benefits–Eligible Employees—Employees budgeted by name for 50 percent or more time for at least four and one-half months, excluding students holding positions for which student status is a requirement for employment.

Physical Fitness Activities—Individual or group activities designed to maintain or improve strength, flexibility, balance, endurance, or cardiovascular fitness, and to sustain or increase physical fitness. Employees are encouraged to consult with a physician before undertaking any physical activity program.

Onsite Wellness Programs—Employer–sponsored wellness programs and activities offered by AgriLife Research in which employees may participate with supervisor approval without requiring use of personal leave time. These wellness programs include—but are not limited to—health fairs, flu vaccine clinics, financial wellness seminars, employee assistance programs, and onsite health screenings.

Wellness Release Time—Time allowed during an employee's regular work hours for up to 30 minutes three times a week to exercise or participate in physical fitness activities. This time is not considered work time for Workers' Compensation purposes.

RELATED STATUTES, POLICIES, OR REQUIREMENTS

[A&M System Policy 31.02, Employee Insurance and Retirement Benefits](#)

[A&M System Regulation 31.02.13, Wellness Programs](#)

[AgriLife Form AG-431, Wellness Release Time Acknowledgement](#)

CONTACT OFFICE

For questions regarding this procedure, contact Texas A&M AgriLife Human Resources at 979-845-2423, or by email at AgriLifeWellness@ag.tamu.edu.

REVISION HISTORY

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