

Wellness Policy

The University of the West Indies

St Augustine Campus

The University of the West Indies is committed to providing a healthy environment which encompasses positive lifelong health, personal fitness, safety, and good nutritional behaviour for all its employees. We put forward this policy with the aim of accomplishing this goal. Our main focus will be on exercise and nutrition, mental and emotional wellbeing and stress management.

Mission Statement

The UWI will develop strategies and initiatives in order to provide the necessary information, instruction and direction to our Faculty/Staff to ensure that they embrace a healthy lifestyle which will contribute to lifelong health and wellbeing. We will help our staff to improve their nutritional habits, to assist them in the development of their mental health and inspire and encourage them to participate in physical activity. The university promises to continue to render support to its employees through its Employee Assistance Programme which will now include the Wellness Programme and will undeniably improve the work life balance of our human resources. (EAWP)

Proper eating habits will support and contribute to our employee's health and ultimate performance. (Weight management)

- We shall emphasize foods that are “*nutrient dense per calorie*”. (Food and snacks)
- We shall encourage the availability of fruits and vegetables at most, if not all food outlets to encourage healthy choices.
- All foods available on our Campus at St Augustine should be appealing to taste, should be safe and should be well presented in terms of packaging.

Marketing of good nutrition and eating habits.

- We shall ensure that messages about healthy eating habits are conveyed to staff.
- We shall ensure that employees are kept abreast of current trends in health and well being.
- We shall ensure that all advertisements are in the best interest of the employees and therefore ‘*reduce or eventually eliminate advertising*’ that does not promote nutritious and healthy choices.
- We shall establish a Wellness Committee that will “*oversee a multifaceted plan to promote health and wellness*”.

We shall promote Physical activity through a Gym programme which would include the following:

- Weight training
- Aerobic classes
- Group Walking
- Aqua-aerobics
- Swimming

For stress relief and relaxation we shall include:

- Stretching
- Massages
- EAP

Promotional Activities

- We will encourage activities such as Wellness Fairs, Health Fairs and promote physical activity such as walkathons and group walking.
- “Weight management and stress management groups and seminars shall be put in place to support employees facing these issues”.
- Time off during the work day, (through our already existing Training Programmes) during which faculty and other staff members can participate in health-promoting Seminars, Conferences etc.
- Clinics to provide periodic screening at work for lifestyle diseases.
- Encouragement of staff members to set medical appointments for screening for cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and other lifestyle diseases.
- We shall provide links to our already established Employee Assistance Programme.
- We shall also ensure the *“implementation of an ongoing assessment process to update and improve the effectiveness of the Wellness Programme”*.

The Wellness Programme is totally **voluntary** and employees **will not** be allowed to participate in physical activity without presenting a fitness certificate from their Health Care Professionals.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

The University's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to help staff deal with personal problems that might adversely impact their work performance, health, and well-being. The employee assistance programme will now be expanded and will include our Wellness Programme. (EAWP)

The Employee Assistance Programme is a free service available to all members of staff, their spouse and dependants under the age of 18, for their use and guidance. It is provided through a highly qualified team of consultants – Help Consultants and their Administrator, Mr. J. David Ramkeesoon, B.A. (OXON.)

The EAP is necessary to assist those employees who may be experiencing problems that contribute to deteriorating job performance. It provides professional assessment, referral, and counselling services to employees who wish to return to full productivity.

It can be accessed through:

- Managerial/Supervisory referral
- Self-referral
- Referral by a Union Official
- Peer referral

The service is also held in strict confidence. Information about an employee and his/her problem will not be divulged or discussed with the Employee's family, peers, or employer without prior written consent from the Employee.

A troubled employee may convey signs that include:

- Tardiness
- Misconduct
- Depression

Some types of services available are:

- Anger Management & Conflict Resolution
- Crisis Trauma Debriefing
- Stress Management-for managers & employees
- HIV/AIDS Prevention & counseling
- Grief Therapy
- Financial Counseling
- Men's Health Problems & Sexuality
- Women's Health Problems & Sexuality
- Health & Safety Awareness
- Acupuncture Therapy

Establishment of a Wellness Committee -The University of the West Indies will establish a staff wellness committee comprised of at least one HR representative, Health Service Unit representative, dietitian or other health professional, representative, union representative, and employee benefits specialist.

The committee shall develop, promote, and oversee a comprehensive plan to aid in the promotion of staff health and wellness. Staff and health workers shall contribute to the plan which should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of holistic health among our human resources.

Monitoring the Wellness Policy -The Wellness Policy will be monitored by the Human Resources Division and the members of the Wellness Committee. They will ensure compliance with established guidelines. A summary report shall be developed by the Human Resource Department.

Policy Review - The Wellness Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure relevance and adherence to best practices and would include physical activity, nutrition education/guidelines. This will be done with the aim of promoting good health and the reduction of chronic diseases as well as other activities that are designed to encourage and maintain wellness in a manner that the university determines appropriate.

All staff members interested in being a part of the wellness programme will be required to sign a disclaimer.

References

http://www.hsc.wvu.edu/wellness/about_the_wellness-program.htm

Wrentham Public Schools Wellness Policy

MEDICA

Drake Public School Wellness Policy

Florida State University Wellness Policy

Harvard University Wellness Policy