

# ***TOWN OF ANNAPOLIS ROYAL***

## **POLICY**

**Title:** Employee Wellness

**Policy No.:** 2008 - 5

**Supersedes:** N/A

**Effective Date:** June 16, 2008

**Approval By Council Motion No.:** 5

### **1.0 Purpose:**

Wellness programs have been demonstrated to improve morale, reduce absenteeism, and add to the health and longevity of each participant. Wellness programs are instrumental in keeping people on a healthy living path, especially in office environments where the employees are sedentary for significant period of the day.

### **1.1 Eligibility:**

All staff members of the Town of Annapolis Royal and the Annapolis Royal Police Department, with the exception of summer students, are eligible for this program.

### **1.2 Benefits for the Employee**

A healthy lifestyle impacts every part of the day-to-day work environment. Corporate wellness programs translate into fewer injuries, less human error, and a more harmonious office environment. They also demonstrate that the Town is concerned about employee general health and well being.

A wellness program will also help reduce stress. Stress from the workday also affects personal relationships and physical and mental health.

Taking advantage of programs offered not only will help employees accomplish more during work hours; it will give them more energy and patience for home and personal life as well.

### **1.3 Benefits for the Employer**

Statistics show that a healthy workplace increases employee morale, improves the ability to attract and retain key people, all the while having more alert and productive employees. Other benefits are improved health and general wellness of staff, resulting in a reduction in the number of sick days. In effect, a wellness program will help employees become happier, healthier, and more productive.

### **1.4 Introduction**

The purpose of this program is to maintain and improve the lifestyle, fitness and health and safety of all employees through promoting well-being and ensuring employee fitness for work.

This program is a small step in the direction of increased physical activity for Town staff and represents a minimal financial commitment by the Town.

The program is not limited to the items outlined within; this is merely a guide to provide examples of what can be included. There are several ways that an employee can increase or maintain his/her well-being. A wellness program will also differ for individuals based on their own level of wellness. Various options have been explored for the convenience and benefit of employees. All copies are provided within the employee wellness package. This is not a comprehensive list of available activities, but will provide employees with a sample of activities and opportunities to choose from.

## **1.5 Background**

During a recent review of Town policies, it was agreed by staff and Council that the Town should eliminate such policies as smoking cessation and the Weight Watchers subsidy and instead adapt a general wellness or well-being program/policy. This program is the result.

## **1.6 Objectives**

The objectives of this program are to:

- develop, in consultation with employees, workplace specific programs and procedures to address lifestyle, fitness and health and safety issues;
- Monitor fatigue levels, hours of work and implement appropriate management programs;
- Encourage employee wellness and pro-actively manage risk of illness;
- Encourage employees to take periodic annual leave to maintain the life balance between work, family and friends;
- Communicate to all employees methods to access appropriate assistance for any issue that may impact fitness for work;
- Actively promote exercise, healthy eating and a smoke free environment to improve or maintain employee well-being;
- Provide confidential employee assistance and counseling services for the benefit of all employees.

## **2.0 WELLNESS PROGRAM**

Today it is widely recognized that a healthy employee is a more content and productive employee, missing fewer days due to illness and stress. Both employees and employers have a responsibility for creating a healthy workplace. Employees are expected to arrive for work in good physical and mental health, and the employer is expected to provide an environment that allows employees to maintain that good health and enjoy their work. The Town has outlined the following incentives for the benefit of employees:

### **2.1 Fitness and Recreation**

The Town encourages all staff members to pursue healthy lifestyles, including physical fitness. In order to allow full participation in Town organized and other fitness type programs, staff members are offered the following incentives:

### **2.1.1 *Town Recreation Programs and Facilities***

Staff Members are eligible for a 50% fee reduction on all active programs provided through the Town Recreation Department as well as a 50% fee reduction on membership fees for Town-owned recreation facilities. The rebate for active programs provided by the Town Recreation Department may also be extended to immediate family members of employees. This incentive can be applied to programs and facilities that currently exist as well as programs and facilities that may be created in the future.

### **2.1.2 *Walk Break***

Employees are granted a maximum of 15 minutes to incorporate a walk break during the work day, in addition to existing breaks. This break can be added to the regular lunch period or taken at another time during the day. The onus is on the employee to make any necessary arrangements with supervisors or colleagues to ensure that the break does not interfere with work load or services provided.

### **2.1.3 *General Recreation and Fitness***

All employees are encouraged, when possible, to use active modes of transportation (walking/cycling) when traveling to work or work-related functions.

## **2.2 Shower Facilities**

Offering shower facilities supports physical activity by removing a barrier. The Town Hall is currently equipped with a shower that is in need of repair and is under utilized. Through this program, the Town is committed to repairing the existing shower and making the area available to staff for their use.

## **2.4 Stress Management**

Stress reduction is important to overall health and job productivity. It is important to monitor, and to deal with stress levels on a regular basis to prevent cumulative effects.

Identifying unrelieved stress and being aware of its effect on our lives is not sufficient for reducing its harmful effects. Just as there are many sources of stress, there are many possibilities for its management.

Taking advantage of healthy lifestyle options, as offered in this policy, can also assist in reducing stress levels. The Employee Assistance Program can also offer more in depth advice and Counselling.

## **2.4 Addiction**

An addict is defined as someone who has a recurring compulsion to engage in some specific activity. Typically, the term 'addiction' will immediately bring to mind a person who is addicted to drugs or alcohol. If unacceptable conduct is linked to an 'addiction', the Town may consider disciplinary action. This program does not treat problems but rather offers help and referral to the appropriate resource.

The Town's Employee Assistance Program can refer employees to professional counselors who can assist them in resolving a wide range of personal problems, including additions.

### **2.4.1 *Addiction Support Groups***

Considering the broad range of possible addictions, it is impossible to identify each and offer a specific incentive for treatment. Addiction support groups are available to address many possible addictions.

## **2.5 Nutrition**

In its efforts to create and maintain a healthy workplace, the Town will make the following efforts towards healthy eating among employees:

- offer healthy snack options during meetings, staff gatherings and other work related events;
- make time and space available for a speaker to present healthy eating options;
- ensure that healthy options are provided at all staff functions outside of the workplace;
- provide healthy drink options during the regular working day; and
- provide a copy of Canada's Food Guide to each employee and keep copies for reference.

## **3.0 Vacation**

All staff members are encouraged to take all of their vacation entitlement annually to ensure that they get a break from work. All permanent Town employees are entitled to vacation with pay as outlined in section 3.13 of the Human Resources Manual.

## **4.0 Sick Time**

As indicated in section 3.12 of the Human Resources Manual, permanent full time employees shall accumulate sick leave at a rate of 1.5 days per month to a maximum of 150 days.

## **5.0 Health and Safety**

The Town is committed to maintaining a healthy and safe work environment. To this end, employees must:

- Follow all proper health and safety procedures when carrying out jobs;
- Comply with all Town policies, all relevant laws and regulations governing workplace health and safety; and
- Take reasonable care to protect themselves and others who may be affected by their actions or omission.

The Town regards health and safety as a priority, and will ensure that effective policies and practices are in place to protect the health, safety and well-being of employees. A copy of the Town's Occupational Health and Safety Manual will be provided to all employees.

## 6.0 Employee Assistance Program

Employee Assistance Services (EAS) is one of the largest national Employee Assistance Program providers in Canada. They are recognized for responding to ever changing needs of organizations and can adapt and design programs to meet specific requirements.

To access the confidential Employee Assistance Program, call 1-800-268-7708.

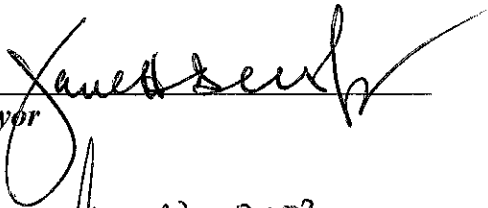
## 7.0 Website Links

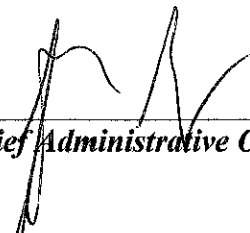
For your information, the following links have been included in this policy.

[www.wellnesssolutions.ca](http://www.wellnesssolutions.ca)

<http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/>

The Town encourages you to complete the tests provided. The Myers Briggs test helps to identify individual personality traits and can assist in understanding differences between people. It is a useful tool for self knowledge. The Health Risk Assessment will be kept on file so that your future assessments can be compared to the original. These comparisons may assist you in choosing programs that will assist you in maintaining or achieving a higher level of wellness.

  
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*Mayor*  
  
June 23, 2008  
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*Date*

  
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*Chief Administrative Officer*  
  
June 23, 2008  
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