

## **ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY Worksite Wellness Policy**

### **Preamble**

The Worksite Wellness Policy provides the foundation for Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) to develop activities and modify work environments and policies to support the health and well-being of its employees. In addition to the benefits for employees, positive benefits are likely to accrue to families of employees, resulting in better health for families and the community.

In partnership with the State Health Plan (SHP) and the Office of State Human Resources (OSHR), the Chancellor has the responsibility to create and participate in a Worksite Wellness program at ECSU. The Worksite Wellness initiatives shall address the primary components of a healthy lifestyle including healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco cessation, and stress management. The SHP has developed a Worksite Wellness model to assist ECSU in the establishment of the programs. To the extent that any provision of this policy conflicts with the OSHR policy, the OSHR version shall control.

### **1. Administration**

OSHR and the SHP, in collaboration with the North Carolina Division of Public Health, will guide and assist ECSU in the development of a comprehensive Worksite Wellness Program at ECSU. The NC HealthSmart Worksite Wellness Toolkit and website available at [www.shpnc.org](http://www.shpnc.org) will serve as a resource for administering and implementing the program.

### **2. Components**

ECSU has designated the Chief Human Resources Officer as Wellness Leader. In collaboration with management and employees, the Chief Human Resources Officer shall create a Worksite Wellness infrastructure, overseeing the development and implementation of employee wellness policies and committees, and provide ongoing assessment/monitoring of the effectiveness of Worksite Wellness Programs.

ECSU has established a wellness committee infrastructure consisting of a team of employees that meet formally and have identified aims, goals, and implementation strategies to encourage healthy behaviors at the workplace, advocate for policy change, and create health-friendly work environments. The wellness committee is comprised of employees who represent a cross section of the employee population.

The committee shall elect a wellness chair or co-chairs to conduct meetings and lead activities. Regarding time commitment, committee members may need as much as four hours a month and the wellness chair(s) as much as six hours a month to plan and implement

ECSU's strategic wellness plan. As appropriate, these activities may be included in an employee's work plan.

### **3. Policy Guidelines**

#### **A. Creating an Employee Worksite Wellness Infrastructure**

- i. Measureable wellness goals may be included in ECSU's strategic plan and in employee work plans, as appropriate.
- ii. Worksite wellness programs shall utilize available resources within State government and gratis/discounted services from the private sector as much as possible. In addition, ECSU and the legislature may provide fiscal support for wellness committees and activities.
- iii. The wellness committee shall have permission to hold fund raising activities and solicit donations from vendors to support employee wellness programs.
- iv. ECSU, to the extent possible, shall make computers and email accounts available to employees in order to facilitate health education, increased participation in employee wellness surveys and access to Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), SHP resources (i.e., NC HealthSmart) and incentive programs.
- v. ECSU shall promote, at all levels of the organization, their wellness initiatives as well as other resources such as, SHP's NC HealthSmart services and benefit changes, EAP, the NC Quitline, ergonomics programs, and other wellness-related programs available to employees. New employees shall receive information about the NC HealthSmart healthy living initiative and ECSU's worksite wellness program during orientation.
- vi. ECSU shall routinely monitor the quality of the wellness program provided and employee access to programs across all work sites. The Wellness Leader shall be responsible for designing the evaluation plan and discussing findings with ECSU employees. This will ensure that all employees receive the same level of services and supervisory support.
- vii. ECSU shall address liability issues depending on the nature of the wellness activity. Worksite wellness activities usually occur outside of work hours, for example, before and after work or at lunch time. Participation in wellness activities is voluntary; and, therefore, not liable for injuries sustained to employees during their participation in these activities. As a general reference, injury that occurs during non-pay status is not compensable. Non-pay status is defined as before work, after work and non-paid time during the normal workday. ECSU shall inform employees of the above information.

- viii. ECSU shall use the language from OSHR to create a liability release form for employees to sign before participating in wellness activities.

**B. Supporting Employee Participation in Wellness Activities**

- i. ECSU may provide employees with incentives for participating in wellness activities. This does not extend to offering incentive pay for performance. Guidelines will specify value limits and approval criteria for awarding incentives. Both long and short term incentives may be used to encourage engagement and sustained participation.
- ii. Service providers may be used to offer weight management programs to employees at the worksite during non-work hours, i.e. during lunch hours, or before or after the official workday, with the permission of the Chancellor or the Wellness Leader.

**C. Increasing Employee Levels of Physical Activity in the Workplace**

- i. Designation of space for wellness activities, including exercise, in state owned and leased office space shall be permissible and is encouraged.
- ii. Service providers may be used to offer weight management programs to employees at the worksite during non-work hours, i.e. during lunch hours, or before or after the official workday, with the permission of the Chancellor or the Wellness Leader.

**D. Improving Access to Healthier Food in the Workplace**

- i. ECSU shall make available 15 to 20 percent healthier snacks/foods at catered events, in vending machines, in cafeterias, and in snack bars.
- ii. Environmental accommodations for food preparation and storage (e.g. sinks, refrigerators, microwaves) are encouraged to support employees in bringing healthy lunches and snacks to work.

**E. Reducing and Managing Stress in the Work Place**

- i. Stress reduction and management training shall be provided annually to managers and supervisors to improve their supervisory skills and to reduce conflict and stress in the work place and offered to employees who want to improve their time management and stress reduction skills.
- ii. ECSU shall ensure that employees are receiving time for lunch and for appropriate breaks from repetitive and stressful work functions during the workday to help prevent stress and injury.

## **F. Supporting Tobacco Cessation**

- i. State law (S.L. 2007-193) prohibits smoking in state government buildings. The law became effective on January, 1, 2008 and applies to all buildings owned and leased by the state, and any area of a building leased and occupied by the state. The prohibition applies to the use of any lighted tobacco product. ECSU shall post signs stating that smoking is prohibited.  
See <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2007/Bills/House/HTML/H24v7.html> for a full text of the law.
- ii. State law (S.L.2007-114) allows ECSU to prohibit smoking within 100 linear feet of all buildings.  
See <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2007/Bills/Senate/HTML/S862v5.html> for a full text of the law.
- iii. Tobacco cessation programs are available through the NC Quitline, EAP Services, and the SHP. Tobacco cessation programs are available through the following:
  - a. NC Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW) offers free and confidential support from trained quit coaches 8 A.M. to Midnight seven (7) days per week to all NC youth and adults who want to quit using tobacco. For those who have already called the Quitline there are additional web resources that can be accessed 24 hours a day.
  - b. North Carolina State Health Plan offers pharmaceutical tobacco cessation aids, including over-the-counter generic nicotine replacement therapy patches, and counseling benefits. Plan members who want more information on these and other tobacco cessation resources are encouraged to visit [www.shpnc.org](http://www.shpnc.org).
  - c. ECSU provides EAP services for employees and family members through ComPsych. The services are free and confidential. A counselor may be reached toll free at 1-866-511-3365. The program accepts self-referrals.