



Healthy Meeting Guidelines



Purpose

Washington County recognizes the importance of encouraging behaviors that contribute to and support a healthier workforce. By incorporating healthy meeting practices that address healthy food options and increase opportunities for physical activity, we are able to support and encourage the health and well-being of our workforce, community partners and guests while attending a meeting, event or activity.



Guiding Principles

These guidelines were developed by the Washington County Wellness Committee to support healthy behaviors that will lower health risks by offering nutritional food options and incorporating physical activity into daily practices when employees are at work. Specific goals are to have healthy options accessible wherever food is provided and have an activity break at meetings longer than two hours.



Scope

These guidelines apply to onsite meetings, trainings, potlucks, celebrations, snack cabinets or stores, onsite vendors and other County sponsored activities or events where food or snacks may be served.



Best Practices

1) Healthy Eating

Healthy eating is not about all or nothing-it is about balancing choices. **See Addendum – Healthy Snacking tips**

Departments are encouraged to:

- Consider whether food or beverages are necessary for their meeting, event, or activity.
- Incorporate fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and nonfat or low-fat dairy products as an alternative. If organic or local, note them as such.
- Have low-calorie, low-fat, low-sodium and low or no added sugar items available for people to choose from.
- Choose wisely and in moderation, if serving sweet treats. Plan to also serve a fruit or vegetable option so people have a choice.
- Serve small portions (e.g., cut bagels in halves or quarters).
- Use small plates to encourage smaller portions, discourage overeating and reduce waste. 🍃
- Provide low-fat or non-fat milk for coffee rather than cream or half and half.
- Provide pitchers of tap water and reusable cups. 🍃
- Serve 100% fruit or vegetable juice, water or iced tea (unsweetened) or low-fat or non-fat milk instead of soft drinks.

- Encourage attendees to bring their own reusable coffee mugs or cups for drinks. 
- Consider purchasing beverages and foods in bulk, not individual containers or wrappers. 
- Follow food safety principles. **See addendum - Food Safety Principles**

2) Physical Activity

Providing physical activity breaks at meetings and events will help participants stay alert and focused. A physical activity break should be completely voluntary, allow participants to go at their own pace and remain comfortable and pain-free. Advise participants to do only what feels good and to stop immediately if anything hurts. Be fun and safe. **See addendum – Desk Stretches**

- For two-hour meetings, include a “stand-up-and-stretch” break.
- For two to four hour meetings, include a 5-10 minute activity break for walking.
- For all-day meetings, in addition to stretch breaks and 5-minute activity breaks, schedule time for a lunch break and encourage participants to take a walk or engage in another physical activity.
- Organize physical activity breaks that can be modified or adapted for people of all abilities, such as stretching exercises that can be performed in a seated position.
- Choose a location where participants can easily and safely take a walk.
- For smaller meetings, utilize a “walking meeting” style. **See Addendum – Walking Meeting**
- Encourage meeting attendees to take the stairs if possible.



Responsibilities

Wellness Committee Members and Wellness Program advisors can provide further information to ensure that employees are educated on the guidelines. Departments are not precluded from adopting separate internal department policies with additional actions that support these guidelines. Meeting and event organizers are responsible for complying with the guidelines to the best of their ability. Wellness Committee Members and the Wellness Program advisors are available to provide advice and consultation for meeting and event organizers upon request.



- Denotes Healthy Meeting Guideline



- Denotes Sustainable Meeting and Event Guideline

Approved:



Signature

7-23-13

Date

Healthy Meeting Guideline Addendum



Healthy Snacking Tips:

1. Focus on fiber and protein. Choose cereal bars, granola bars or energy bars with protein (check nutrition facts) and fiber.
2. Pretzels or baked chips are a great low-fat, low-calorie choice.
3. It is unrealistic to give up sweet treats if you really enjoy them. Like anything else, eat them “wisely” and in moderation.
4. Craving sweet treats? Animal crackers, fig bars, ginger snaps, or graham crackers are great tasting lower fat choices.
5. A small serving of mixed nuts or almonds packs 3 grams of heart-healthy fiber.
6. Hydrate. Water should always be included, preferably in bulk containers such as pitchers.



Food Safety Principles:

Be food-safe.

1. **Clean:** Wash hands, utensils, and cutting boards before and after contact with raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs.
2. **Separate:** Keep raw meat and poultry apart from foods that won't be cooked.
3. **Cook:** Use a food thermometer. You can't tell if food is cooked safely by how it looks.
4. **Chill:** Chill (refrigerate) leftovers and takeout foods within 2 hours and keep the refrigerator at 40°F or below.

Derived from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 www.dietaryguidelines.gov



Walking Meeting

It's like a regular meeting, only more productive, fun, creative, and stimulating. You can still have an agenda. Be sure the person (or people) know you will be walking, and they have appropriate shoes. Check the weather.

1. When you are walking and talking side by side, you cut through work distinctions. This sets people at ease and stimulates new ideas.
2. Being outside with fresh air and natural light helps you physically and improves mental well-being.
3. Walking stimulates oxygen flow. This increases brain function and increases the ability to solve problems faster.
4. Being outside can increase confidentiality (this may seem counter-intuitive, but it works) and decreases interruptions.



DESK STRETCHES

These are stretches to do at your desk.
This program will take 2 1/2 – 3 min.

- Breathe easily
- No bouncing or forcing
- No pain!
- *Feel* the stretch
- Relax
- See Stretching Instructions, pp. 77–84

1
5 sec, 3 times
p. 82



2
5 sec, 3 times
p. 82



3
5 sec, 2 times
p. 81



4
5 sec, 2 times
p. 84



5
5 sec
p. 84



6
5 sec
each side
p. 84



7
5 sec
p. 84



8
10 sec
each arm
p. 81



9
10 sec
p. 82



10
10 sec
p. 81



11
9 sec
each side
p. 82



12
10 sec
p. 79



- Prolonged sitting at a desk or computer terminal can cause muscular tension and pain.
- Taking a few minutes to do a series of stretches can make your whole body feel better.
- Learn to stretch spontaneously throughout the day whenever you feel tense.
- Don't just do seated stretches, but do some standing stretches too. Good for circulation.

From the book:

34 Getting in Shape © 2002 Shelter Publications, Inc.

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Photocopy this page and keep it in your desk drawer.