

# Manager's Toolkit

For Promoting Employee Wellness



Health and Wellness Services  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

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# SURGEON GENERAL'S FRAMEWORK

The United States Surgeon General recently released a framework that can help us to understand the essential and core components to workplace well-being. Health and Wellness utilizes this framework in conjunction with the [Eight Dimensions of Wellness](#) when considering the needs of our employees for workplace wellness.

## Five Essentials for Workplace Mental Health & Well-Being

Centered on the worker voice and equity, these five Essentials support workplaces as engines of well-being. Each Essential is grounded in two human needs, shared across industries and roles.



## Components

Creating a plan with all workers to enact these components can help reimagine workplaces as engines of well-being.

### Protection from Harm

- Prioritize workplace physical and psychological safety
- Enable adequate rest
- Normalize and support mental health
- Operationalize DEIA\* norms, policies, and programs

### Connection & Community

- Create cultures of inclusion and belonging
- Cultivate trusted relationships
- Foster collaboration and teamwork

### Work-Life Harmony

- Provide more autonomy over how work is done
- Make schedules as flexible and predictable as possible
- Increase access to paid leave
- Respect boundaries between work and non-work time

### Mattering at Work

- Provide a living wage
- Engage workers in workplace decisions
- Build a culture of gratitude and recognition
- Connect individual work with organizational mission

### Opportunity for Growth

- Offer quality training, education, and mentoring
- Foster clear, equitable pathways for career advancement
- Ensure relevant, reciprocal feedback

\*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

 Office of the U.S. Surgeon General

For more detailed information regarding the framework you can access the entire publication released by the Surgeon General [HERE](#)

# WORKPLACE WELLNESS CULTURE SELF ASSESSMENT

Having a solid understanding of where you are currently at as a manager and team in terms of wellness is crucial to moving forward in a way that best meets everyone's needs. As a starting point, we have created a Wellness Culture Assessment (adapted from University Health Services at UC Berkeley).

Tick the correct column then self-assess your work

**ALWAYS/  
OFTEN**

**SOMETIMES**

**RARELY/  
NEVER/ NA**

## Wellness Leadership & Organizational Support

<b>1.</b>	Leadership promotes and supports the health and well-being of faculty and staff through their own participation, role modeling, and/or communication.			
<b>2.</b>	Health and Wellness programs offered to faculty and staff are integrated into the department new employee onboarding/training.			
<b>3.</b>	Themes of health and well-being are incorporated into the department's values, mission, and/or vision statements.			
<b>4.</b>	Leadership supports the health and wellbeing of staff through praise and recognition for healthy choices and outcomes.			

## Department Managers & Supervisors

<b>5.</b>	Are Provided with the Manager Toolkit for Promoting Employee Wellness when beginning role.			
<b>6.</b>	Staff participation in wellness-related activities is supported.			
<b>7.</b>	Are supported in their own completion of training on workplace health and wellness issues.			
<b>8.</b>	Are aware of and communicate to staff about campus health-related policies and guidelines such as (remote work agreement, lactation stations, accommodations policy, and tobacco free policy)			
<b>9.</b>	Strive to foster healthy workplace interactions and dynamics.			

## Department Culture

<b>10.</b>	We participate in training, skill building, and career development.			
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# WORKPLACE WELLNESS CULTURE SELF ASSESSMENT

Tick the correct column then  
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**ALWAYS/  
OFTEN**

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NEVER/ NA**

## Department Culture Cont'd

<b>11.</b>	We take breaks, including eating lunch away from our desks or workspaces.			
<b>12.</b>	We share healthy snacks in the breakroom.			
<b>13.</b>	We allow time between meetings to transition and minimize the stress created by back-to-back meetings.			
<b>14.</b>	We begin meetings with a breathing/relaxation break to promote staff focus and engagement.			

## Wellness & Sustainability

<b>15.</b>	There is access to food storage and preparation options (refrigerator, microwave, etc.)			
<b>16.</b>	There is access to tap water from a well-functioning kitchen sink, drinking fountain, water pitcher, or water dispenser.			
<b>17.</b>	Faculty/staff are aware of and support using active transportation options (walking, biking, public transportation)			
<b>18.</b>	Faculty/staff have access to storage space for personal exercise items (athletic shoes, towel, exercise clothes)			
<b>19.</b>	There is access to or knowledge of options for shower(s) for those engaging in exercise or other related activities during the workday.			
<b>20.</b>	There is awareness of proper hand-washing guidelines and/or bathroom signage.			
<b>21.</b>	There is a reduction in waste by promoting reuse of materials such as the use of reusable water bottles and cutlery.			

## Physical Activity

<b>21.</b>	We engage in walking groups or walking meetings.			
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# WORKPLACE WELLNESS CULTURE SELF ASSESSMENT

Tick the correct column then  
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OFTEN**

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NEVER/ NA**

## Physical Activity Cont'd

<b>22.</b>	We gather at specific days/time to participate in a 5-10 minute stretch or activity break.			
<b>23.</b>	We are aware of memberships and opportunities for faculty/staff at the rec.			
<b>24.</b>	We actively take the stairs as an alternative to the elevator for those who are able.			

## Stress Management & Emotional Health

<b>25.</b>	We provide recognition through praise, positive feedback and campus recognition programs (i.e. service awards)			
<b>26.</b>	We promote and organize opportunities through department wide events (celebrations, retreats, recreational activities)			
<b>27.</b>	We have quiet space available for relaxation and/or meditation.			
<b>28.</b>	We have a healthy process for dealing with workplace challenges, tensions, or conflicts.			

## Equity & Inclusion

<b>29.</b>	We foster an environment of respect and inclusion.			
<b>30.</b>	We demonstrate value for diversity and the importance of ensuring an inclusive climate for all.			
<b>31.</b>	We ensure productive, supportive, and equitable resolution of issues around harassment and bias behavior.			
<b>32.</b>	We ensure that department infrastructure and environment are supportive of faculty/staff with disabilities.			

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## Ergonomics & Safety

<b>33.</b>	We encourage faculty/staff who need an ergonomic evaluation to request one through Human Resources.			
<b>34.</b>	We promote sitting, standing, and moving every hour.			
<b>35.</b>	We are required to review the department building emergency plan.			
<b>36.</b>	We receive regular training/updates on safety-related policies and procedures.			
<b>37.</b>	We are aware of fire extinguisher and AED locations.			
<b>38.</b>	We ensure our safety plans are inclusive of people with disabilities and non-English speakers.			

## Final Tallies

**Total the Number of Responses  
for Each Column**

## HOW TO USE THE RESULTS

- Use the question content to give you ideas for improving the wellness culture in your department
- Focus in on sections that have a particularly low score and begin making improvements in one area at a time
- Provide the self assessment to your team to see if your assessment matches theirs
- Find resources and services at CU Boulder that can help you make a change in the area you identified as opportunities for growth.

# SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT IN WELLNESS

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADING AN ENGAGED TEAM

## KNOW WHATS HAPPENING AT CU

- Ensure team is aware of resources and programs available and how to access and use them
- Publicly endorse wellness initiatives and programs
- Discuss upcoming wellness events and services via email, during meetings, and encourage your team to sign up for (newsletter? Emails?)
- Embed health and well-being promotion in multiple aspects of your departments structure (onboarding, training, meetings, celebrations, etc.)

## ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

- Find ways to schedule wellness activities for the team
- Provide support or alternatives for employees whose jobs make it difficult to participate in wellness while at work
- Create a “backup” for employees who work at a service point

## LEAD BY EXAMPLE

- Demonstrate the importance of wellness for your team by participating in activities and wellness trainings
- Build wellness into your routine and share with your team
- Take vacation time and limit email access while away
- Participate in and encourage your team to utilize stress management tools

# SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT IN WELLNESS

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADING AN ENGAGED TEAM

## COMMUNITY & CONNECTIONS

- Check in with direct reports regularly, especially during times of transition
- Go beyond “how are you” by being intentional with questions and actively participate in conversation with your team member(s)
- Don’t assume what individuals need, take a customized approach to helping address stressors
- Recognize wellness achievements and milestones, show appreciation regularly
- If one of your team members looks burnt out, anxious or depressed, talk to them and ask “are you okay?”
- Create connection opportunities for your team members throughout the weekly touch bases or Microsoft Teams channels

## SET & RESPECT HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

- Limit or stop sending emails after work hours
- Save emails as a draft and send the next day or use delayed delivery.
- Create “email holidays” or schedule days where sending emails should be limited to allow the team to focus on individual work

# INCORPORATING WELLNESS INTO YOUR TEAM

TIPS AND IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED

## MEETINGS

- Start meetings with gratitude by having people name one person or thing they are grateful for
- Encourage standing movement (Standing, stretching, walking, etc...) during in person or virtual meetings
- Hold meetings outside in a place where the team can see nature or just a different view than usual
- Shorten meetings by 10-15 minutes and use the extra time to disengage from work and engage in a wellness activity (e.g., practice mindfulness, take 5 deep abdominal breaths, take a brisk walk, climb the stairs, dance to music, etc.)
- Create “meeting holidays” where meetings cannot be scheduled (except for emergencies) to allow the team to focus on individual work

## TEAM ACTIVITIES

- Share wellness ideas and successful wellness activities
- Create a gratitude board, post one for the office or use Teams or a similar software to develop one digitally
- Host free trainings and seminars aimed at building relationships with team members
- Collaborate to create team wellness goals

## LEAVE & FLEXIBLE WORK

- Use sick leave for self-care as appropriate
- Communicate the importance of using time off to prevent burnout
- Discuss how to plan as a team to take time off to reduce stress and workload upon return.
- Encourage regular breaks from mental tasks, allowing team members time to generate new and creative solutions or ideas.
- Time away reduces stress and helps employees maintain focus when at work.