

Participation in Wellness Program Activities

Summary/Purpose: Employee participation in wellness program activities, including on-site seminars, demonstrations, challenges, and physical fitness activities, is supported by our University leaders as well as authorized by Mississippi Senate Bill 2646 of 2010.

This policy is in place to support the University's objective of enhancing individual health, community well-being, and positive work/life balance.

In addition to establishing a comprehensive State Employee Wellness Program of Mississippi, Mississippi Senate Bill 2646 authorizes participation and allows for the following:

1. A department head may provide flexibility in scheduling to allow for physical activity and participation in the University's wellness program. Department heads should reference the "Flextime" policy, which includes flexible schedule standards.
2. A department may allow its employees to participate in approved wellness-related activities for up to three hours each month. The needs of the department will take precedence over individual preferences. Examples of approved wellness-related activities include the University's program's hosted walks, cooking demonstrations, and physical fitness activities conducted on campus.
3. The department may allow employees to attend on-site wellness seminars when offered.

An employee with a pattern of tardiness/absences or poor work performance may not be eligible to participate during the regular work schedule. Consultation with Human Resources is suggested when there is a question of whether or not an activity is approved.

The University also recognizes this policy may yield positive business results, such as reduced healthcare costs, reduced absenteeism, improved productivity, lower turnover, and enhanced University image.