

16. **EMPLOYEE WELLNESS:**

Worksite wellness policies can have long-term impacts on the health of employees and the organization. Not only does COAD support employee health on principle, but workplace wellness initiatives have been shown to reduce health care costs, increase productivity, reduce absenteeism and turnover, and improve employee morale. Participation in wellness activities, available to all employees, is encouraged, but is not mandatory, nor is it required in order to enroll in our health insurance plan. This is a participatory wellness program and non-discriminatory in design.

COAD supports employee wellness in the following ways:

1. Employees may utilize their daily breaks in a manner that optimizes employee health and wellbeing on the job. Moderate activity that promotes cardiovascular health and reduces stress, such as walking, is encouraged.
2. With supervisor approval, an employee may take an extra half hour for lunch to engage in wellness activities with the understanding that the employee will work an additional half hour in the same work day.
3. Staff who organize a full working day meeting or conference should try to incorporate two 15-minute or one 30-minute physical activity break(s) into the agenda when possible, such as stretching or walking around the building (inside) or property (outside). During shorter meetings, walking or stretching breaks should be allowed when possible, at least 5 minutes for every hour spent seated. Healthier options should be considered when providing food or beverages.
4. Employees will have the opportunity to accumulate Well Leave by actively participating in designated and approved wellness activities. Full-time employees can earn up to a maximum of 24 hours of Well Leave per calendar year. Part-time employees can earn said leave at a pro-rated amount based on the percentage of 40 hours they work per week. Well Leave can be used in the same manner as Vacation Leave (see section on Annual Vacation Leave) except that Well Leave will not carry over to the next calendar year.