2014 – 2015 Health Impact Program (HIP)

Walk for Wellness

Worksite Walking Toolkit

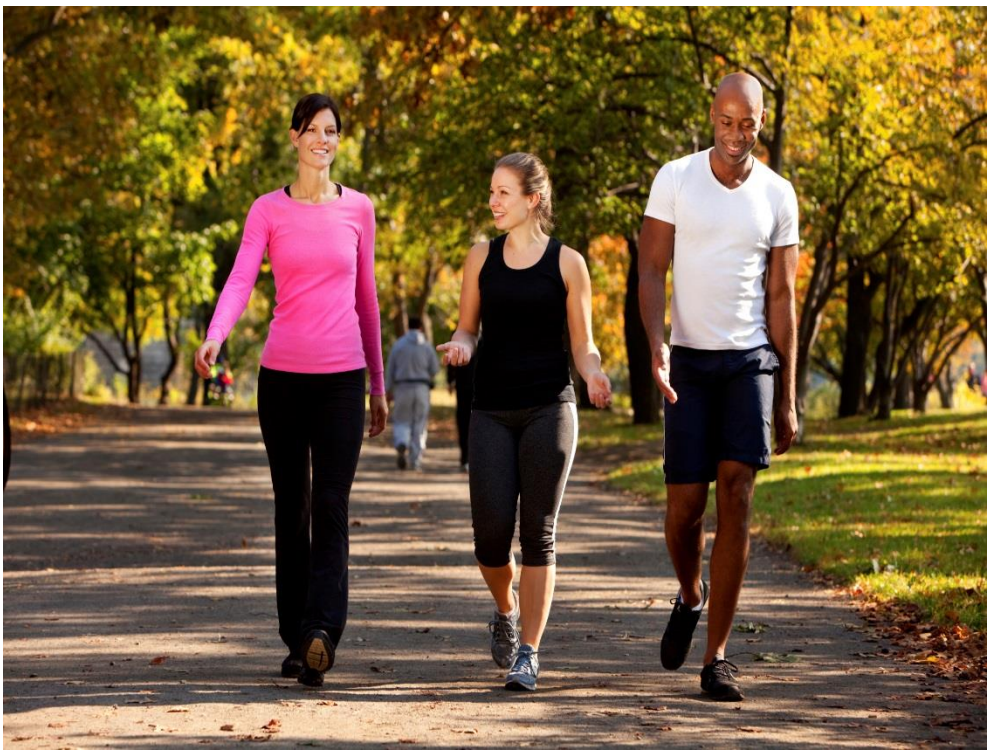

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1: Introduction pg. 3

Section 2: Steps to Start a Walking Group pg. 4

Section 3: Materials and Handouts

- Attendance Sheet pg. 6
- Safety Tips pg. 7
- Rules of Walking pg. 8
- Walking Tips pg. 9
- Finding Your Target Heart Rate pg. 10
- Steps Conversion pg. 11
- Creating SMART Goals pg. 12
- How to Buy the Right Walking Shoes pg. 13

Section 4: Sample emails for Walking Group Leaders pg. 14 - 20

Section 5: Resources pg. 21

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The ***Walk for Wellness*** toolkit is designed to encourage State of Arizona employees to participate in a walking program for physical fitness as part of their everyday lifestyle. A worksite walking group is a way to get agencies and their employees more physically active.

The Health Impact Program (HIP) provides a resource to help agencies and employees create a worksite walking group and to assist in developing a walking program to encourage healthier lifestyles. Use this manual and its attachments to assist in the organization, promotion, and execution for the ***Walk for Wellness*** program.

Participation in the ***Walk for Wellness*** program will earn points toward the Health Impact Program (HIP). For complete program information, visit the Benefit Options Wellness website at www.benefitoptions.az.gov/wellness.

Why Walk?

The average American spends the majority of the day in a sedentary position, especially in the workplace when sitting at a desk. Excessive sitting can negatively affect our bodies and is linked to health risks such as obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer and depression. To combat the sitting disease, it is recommended to take a break by simply standing up or walking at work.

The recommended physical activity guidelines for adults is at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on 5 or more days each week. Walking is one of the easiest ways to increase your physical activity and improve your overall health.

Benefits of Walking

- Improve your cholesterol profile
- Lower blood pressure
- Increase your energy and stamina
- Boost bone strength
- Assist in weight management

In addition to the numerous benefits to personal health, there are many benefits of an active workplace. Physically active workers are likely to experience higher work satisfaction and motivation, increased productivity and reduced absenteeism. A walking group can foster healthy relationships at work and improve worksite morale.

SECTION 2: STEPS TO START A WALKING GROUP

►STEP 1: Start a Walking Group at Work

After a long day of work, we find it difficult to motivate ourselves to exercise. Organizing a walking group is an easy, fun and an inexpensive way to incorporate exercise during the work day. Walking together makes exercise fun, motivating and holds you accountable to your group.

First, make sure that you receive the approval from leaders of your agency and your supervisor. Then, garner interest from within your agency, using the sample interest email template. Schedule an informative meeting and consider the following when planning a walking group:

- ✓ Recruit 2-3 group leaders. Alternate the responsibilities with colleagues to share the load and time commitment.
- ✓ Discuss the logistical details. When and how often will the group meet? Choose a time when most employee can attend. Try to get the group together at least 2 to 3 days per week.
- ✓ Get creative, select a walking theme or a group name.
- ✓ Select a walking route. Create a loop around your work area using technological tools such as Google Maps or Map My Walk.
- ✓ Discuss any safety concerns. If your work area is not walkable due to safety, find a nearby park or a safer area.

►STEP 2: Promote Your Walking Group

Start marketing the walking group using the promotional materials to market via intranet, emails, flyers, and monthly newsletters. Announce the group at department meetings. Schedule a kick-off event.

►STEP 3: Walk for Wellness Kick-Off

The kick-off event marks the first walking group meeting. Invite agency leaders to speak at or lead the event. Create walking path signs that direct employees along your walking route. **Be sure to circulate a sign-in sheet to earn points toward the Health Impact Program (HIP).**

►STEP 4: Keep Walking

Spread the word and continue to expand membership. Rotate group leaders to keep things fresh, or change the route by alternating walking paths.

Maintain motivation by making it a challenge. Train together for a walking event, or track your progress by counting steps or mileage.

SECTION 3: MATERIALS AND HANDOUTS

- Attendance Sheet
- Safety Tips
- Rules of Walking
- Walking Tips
- Finding Your Target Heart Rate
- Steps Conversion
- Creating SMART Goals
- How to Buy The Right Walking Shoe

(AGENCY) Walk for Wellness Attendance Sheet

To receive credit for program completion, you must attend a minimum of 75% of the scheduled sessions.

Walk Dates:	
Walk Time(s):	
Walk Location:	
Walk Coordinator:	
Group Leader:	
Group Leader Phone:	

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	Kick-off	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Session 8

Safety Tips

Below are tips and helpful reminders for pedestrians to make your walks both fun and safe.

The Top Ten Tips:

1. Wear closed toe, comfortable shoes that will not slip.
2. Consider what you are wearing and choose clothes that drivers can easily see. Light or bright colors, reflective material and flashing lights are best.
3. If you have a choice about where you walk, choose a route with sidewalks or a shoulder to give yourself space away from traffic.
4. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic.
5. Important things to carry with you are water, a driver's license or ID, and a cell phone.
6. Always look for cars before crossing a street or stepping off a curb.
7. Use crosswalks and follow traffic signals when crossing at street lights.
8. Before stepping in front of a car make eye contact with the driver. Make sure they see you; plan on stopping and have time to stop.

Source: *Street Smart*

Rules of Walking

Stay safe as a pedestrian by following the laws. Below is additional information to help keep you safe.

1. **Be aware. Cross with care.**

   Make eye contact with drivers turning right before you step into a crosswalk. Make sure they see you, plan on stopping, and have time to stop. Also, don't assume that because the car in the lane closest to you has stopped that other cars will stop too.

2. **Don't be "dead right."**

   Pedestrians do have the right of way at marked and unmarked crosswalks; but be careful, some drivers might not know that rule or always follow it. Being right won't keep you from being hit.

3. **The fine print.**

   Pedestrians only have the right of way when drivers can reasonably stop. Drivers can't read your mind. At 20 mph, the total stopping distance needed is 69 feet; at 30 mph it's 123 feet and at 40 pm it's 189 feet. Slippery roads and other factors can increase the distances needed to stop. At night, without additional street lighting, drivers may only be able to see as far as their headlights — 160 feet. Wear light or bright colors, reflective material and flashing lights to increase your visibility.

4. **They're there for a reason.**

   Always use sidewalks when they are available. If not, walk on the left side of the street facing traffic.

5. **Obey traffic control devices.**

   Red Light, Steady Hand, or "Don't Walk" – do not enter the intersection.
   Yellow Light, Flashing Hand or "Don't Walk" – do not enter, but people already in the intersection may finish crossing.
   Green Light, Walking Person or "Walk" – enter when it is safe. Look left, right, and left again. Keep looking.

6. **Distracted walking can be deadly.**

   UNPLUG headphones when crossing the street.
   HANG UP your cell phone until you are out of the intersection.
   TEXTING can wait until you know you are safe.
   LOOK UP! Make eye contact with the approaching driver and make sure the driver sees you!

Source: *Street Smart*

Walking Tips

- Quicker, smaller steps will cover more ground. Longer strides can tire your muscles.
- Strike the floor with the heel of your shoe onto the ball of your foot and aim to push off with your toes.
- Proper arm posture includes a 90-degree bend. This will put your arm in an “L” position opposed to having your arms straight at your sides. Your arm speed controls your leg speed while walking—so remember to “swing” your arms during your walk.
- Take your heart rate in the middle of your walk to see if you are reaching your Target Heart Rate (THR). Information on Finding Your Target Heart Rate is included in your participant packet.
- Control your breathing, take full breaths and exhale completely. Remember to inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth.
- Avoid bending over or looking down. Stand tall with your head up, checking for any obstacles that are in your path.
- Exercise should never be painful. If you feel any pain during your activity, slow down or stop exercising. Seek medical assistance if the pain does not subside.
- When walking uphill, take smaller strides, leaning into the hill. If the hill is really steep, zigzag up the hill to make it easier on your legs.

Finding Your Target Heart Rate

When you exercise, do you wonder if you are working hard enough or hardly working? The simple way to figure out is to keep track of your heart rate.

Before you calculate and monitor your target training heart rate, you have to know your resting heart rate.

Resting Heart Rate = Number of times your heart beats per minute while it's at rest.

Your maximum heart rate is the fastest your heart can beat, per minute, while exercising safely. Exercising at the correct intensity can help you get the most out of your physical activity. Exercise above 75% of your maximum heart rate may be too strenuous unless you are in excellent physical condition. Exercise below 50% gives your heart and lungs minimal conditioning. Therefore, the most beneficial activity level is 50 – 75% of your maximum heart rate. This range is called your Target Heart Rate Zone.

Maximum Heart Rate = 220 minus Age (years)

Use the chart below to identify your Target Heart Rate Zone.

Age	Target HR Zone 50-85%	Average Maximum Heart Rate, 100%
20 years	100-170 beats per minute	200 beats per minute
30 years	95-162 beats per minute	190 beats per minute
35 years	93-157 beats per minute	185 beats per minute
40 years	90-153 beats per minute	180 beats per minute
45 years	88-149 beats per minute	175 beats per minute
50 years	85-145 beats per minute	170 beats per minute
55 years	83-140 beats per minute	165 beats per minute
60 years	80-136 beats per minute	160 beats per minute
65 years	78-132 beats per minute	155 beats per minute
70 years	75-128 beats per minute	150 beats per minute

Source: *American Heart Association*

Steps Conversion

Long before pedometers, activity monitoring devices, and mobile phones apps, there was a simple method to estimate your walking progress based on duration, steps, and distance.

A general rule of thumb is 2,000 steps will equal 1 mile. However this varies depending on your length of stride, for some it might take up to 2,500 steps to equal 1 mile.

Keep in mind that these are estimated figures:

- 10,000 steps should be considered 5 miles.
- 200 steps is about one city block.
- 9 holes of golf (without use of cart) equals about 8,000 steps.

Time (minutes)	Steps	Distance (miles)
12-15	2,000	1
24-30	4,000	2
36-45	6,000	3
48-60	8,000	4
60-75	10,000	5

Step Estimates based on Activity Levels*

You Are:	
Very Inactive	2,500 Steps or Less Per Day
Inactive	2,501 - 5,000 Steps Per Day
Moderately Active	5,001 - 7,500 Steps Per Day
Active	7,501 - 10,000 Steps Per Day
Very Active	Greater Than 10,000 Steps Per Day

*Estimated figures. Use as a general guideline.

Creating SMART Goals

Setting the right goal is an important first step. A SMART goal is a goal that is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely. Create a SMART goal that is very clear and easily understood.

Today's Date: _____ Target Date: _____ Start Date: _____

Date Achieved: _____

Goal:

_____

_____

_____

_____

	DESCRIPTION
Specific *What exactly will you accomplish?*	
Measureable *How will you know when you have reached this goal?*	
Attainable *Is achieving this goal realistic with effort and commitment?*	
Realistic *Why is this goal significant to your life?*	
Timely *When will you achieve this goal?*	

How to Buy the Right Walking Shoe

The most important piece of equipment for walking is a pair of walking shoes. You need to take the time to select the right walking shoes for your feet, which means getting fit by an athletic shoe expert, not just buying what is cheapest or the most popular.

The Right Shoe For Your Stride: The type of shoe you need breaks down into a few major categories. Lightweight performance trainers are great all-around walking shoes for those who don't need motion control. If you walk very long distances, a cushioned shoe might be more comfortable. Stability shoes are for mid-weight people who do not have severe motion control problems, but who want a stable and durable shoe.

Motion Control for Overpronators: If you overpronate, and especially if you are a heavy person who overpronates, you may need the correction and support these firm and heavy shoes provide. Overpronators can prevent injury by wearing these shoes. Have your gait analyzed at a running shoe store in your area to determine whether you overpronate and need motion control shoes.

Walking Shoe Fit: You should locate a local running specialty store in your area and they will have the fit experts who will take the time to fit you into the right shoes. Don't trust your walking comfort to a salesman who doesn't know pronation from prunes. Get fit right, and after that you can buy similar shoes online or from discounters.

Flat and No Flare: Walking shoes should not have a high heel; the heel should be no more than an inch higher than the sole under the ball of the foot. Walkers strike first with the heel and roll through the step, while some running shoes have a built-up heel for the runners who strike mid-sole. Walkers also do not need flared soles. These give some runners stability but get in the way for heel-striking walkers.

Flex: Walking shoes must be flexible or your foot will fight them as it rolls through each step, leading to shin splints. Twist them - they should twist. Bend them and they should bend at the ball of the foot, not in the middle of the arch. Set them down and poke the toe - it should rock as the toe should be slightly off the ground. If it passes these tests, it may be ok for walking.

Price: An appropriate pair of running shoes will cost from $60-120 US suggested retail. If the usual price is less, you are buying the mass market knock-off shoes without the comfort features. If you pay more, you are paying for style. Shop for sales and close-outs on the good shoes.

Going Fast: For race-walking, you will want the most flexible and lightweight shoe possible. Some of the performance trainer shoes work well for race-walking, but others turn to even more specialized shoes or even to custom shoes.

SECTION 3: SAMPLE EMAILS

Interest Email

(Agency/Division) is offering a Walking Group at (AGENCY LOCATION). The ***Walk for Wellness*** program is open to all employees at (AGENCY/DIVISION), and will be led by you and your peers. All fitness levels are encouraged to join. Let's make the (AGENCY) a healthier worksite together!

If you are interested in joining the ***Walk for Wellness*** program, please attend the following informative meeting:

Date: (ENTER DAY)

Time: (ENTER TIME)

Location: (ENTER LOCATION)

At this meeting you will receive an overview of the program, meet your walking mates and discuss the logistical details of the walk.

We look forward to seeing you. For any additional questions please contact (NAME) at (EMAIL OR PHONE).

Welcome Email

Thank you for registering for the ***Walk for Wellness*** program. Congratulations on taking this important step towards better health and making exercise a part of your daily routine.

Starting (ENTER DATE), the walking group will meet on the following days and times:

Dates: (ENTER START DATE AND END DATE)

Days: (ENTER SCHEDULED DAY OR DAYS)

Time: (ENTER TIME)

If any group is cancelled due to weather or if a route is changed for any reason, you will be contacted via email from your group leader. We look forward to walking with you.

For any additional questions please contact (NAME) at (EMAIL OR PHONE).

(INSERT OUTLOOK CALENDAR INVITE)

Reminder email

A friendly reminder that the ***Walk for Wellness*** group begins tomorrow, (ENTER DATE AND TIME). We will meet at (LOCATION) (ROOM/AREA).

Be sure to wear comfortable shoes, socks, clothing and sunscreen. Feel free bring a friend. We look forward to walking with you. See you tomorrow!

Remember to sign the attendance sheet to earn your HIP points.

For any additional questions please contact (NAME) at (EMAIL OR PHONE).

(INSERT OUTLOOK CALENDAR INVITE)

Weekly email content

Week 1 - Getting Started!

This is the 1st week of your ***Walk for Wellness*** program. Now is the time to commit yourself to better health and fitness. Walking is one of the easiest ways to increase your physical activity and it is suited for all fitness levels.

Building a regular habit requires discipline, but making it stick takes 3 to 4 weeks. Repetition is the key to building any behavior into a habit, so maintain the schedule and stay consistent. Be accountable to your walking mates and encourage them to maintain their commitment. With a little sustained practice, walking can be an effortless part of your daily routine.

(ATTACH "Walking Tips" & "Safety Tips")

Week 2 – Goal Setting

You are now in the 2nd week of your ***Walk for Wellness*** program. If you haven't already done so, now is the time to set some goals for yourself.

Goals can be short-term or long-term. Make your goals **SMART** to stay focused.

Specific
Measureable
Attainable
Realistic
Timely

A simple way to give your goal a reality check is to write them down using the attached worksheet. Write down why you choose to walk and track your progress with the activity log.

If you are comfortable, share your goal with your group so they can keep you encourage you and hold you accountable.

(ATTACH "Creating SMART Goals")

Week 3 – Walk for Heart Health

You've made it to the 3rd week of your ***Walk for Wellness*** program. You are walking towards a healthier you.

You are reaping plenty of benefits of walking. Walking on a regular basis can lower your risk of:

- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Bone and joint deterioration
- Stress

Walking at work can provide a break from the everyday stressors of the job. Step away from your desk and go for it!

DID YOU KNOW: For every hour of brisk walking, life expectancy for some may potentially increase by 2 hours.

(ATTACH "Finding your Target Heart Rate")

Week 4 – Why Hydrate?

You've reached the 4th week of your ***Walk for Wellness*** program. Do you feel that your walking routine is now a habit?

Are you drinking enough water? Water is an essential nutrient for your body. On average, an adult's body weight is made up of about 50 -65% of body weight. Water intake recommendations vary based on age, gender, fitness level, and temperature climate. A good rule of thumb is to drink enough fluid so you rarely feel thirsty and produce urine that is colorless/slightly yellow.

Rethink your drink. Compared to sugar-sweetened beverages, water is a zero calorie beverage and typically free of cost. For an enhance flavor, infuse your water with a slice of fruit, or add fresh herbs.

Stay hydrated and enjoy your walk!

Week 5 – Encountering Barriers

Do you find yourself making excuses? It's the 5th week of your ***Walk for Wellness*** program, let's take a look at common barrier and create strategies to overcome them.

- **Lack of time**: Squeeze in short walks (10 minute bouts) throughout the day: before work, lunch break, break time, or after work. Drive less, and walk more. Park further in the parking lot and walk to your destination. Take the stairs instead of the elevators.
- **Temperature**: It's too HOT…or too COLD! Bring an extra layer of clothing to wear or remove during your walk. If the weather forecast predicts rain, wear rain gear and bring an umbrella. Remember to put your safety first!
- **Too much stress**: We all know that physical activity can relieve stress. Don't let stress stop you!
- **Lack of interest**: If you find walking boring, try varying the routine. Talk to your team leader about alternating walking routines, or try listening to music.

If you have faltered, it's never too late to just start over! Don't use any excuses to give up, keep on walking!

Week 6 – Stay Motivated

You've made it to the 6th week, but have you been maintaining a positive mindset? Think about the outcomes gained from the walking program.

This week, take a moment to reflect on your progress. At the start of the program, you wrote down why you choose to walk. Has this reason changed for you? If it has, write down another motivating factor, and let this be a positive reminder.

Always remember that you are one step closer towards a healthier you! Let's make the (AGENCY) a healthier worksite together!

(ATTACH "Steps Conversion")

Week 7 – Long Term Goals

This week, take the time to look back at your **SMART** goals. Have you achieved your goal? What do you need to do to accomplish them? It's ok to revise your goals. Create a new strategy to help you succeed.

Take action today to set and reach your long term goals. Consider signing up for a walking event with your group. Perhaps pick up the pace of the walk, or maintain the pace and extend the duration of the walk.

Whatever long term goal you set, take ownership of it. Share your goal with your group so they can help you stay positive.

Week 8 - Keep Walking: One Step at a Time

Congratulations, you did it! You completed the ***Walk for Wellness*** program.

But remember, your journey to good health is not over. Keep the walking routine in your daily schedule. And consider the following tips to maintain a healthy work environment:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Go for a walk during your coffee or lunch break.
- Park in the furthest parking spot.
- Stick to the buddy system.
- Make it a challenge and reward yourself.
- Check your progress.

Keep up the good work! Let's make the (AGENCY) a healthier worksite together!

SECTION 5: RESOURCES

1. American Heart Association: Start walking now
   http://www.startwalkingnow.org/home.jsp
2. Walking: Make it count with activity trackers
   http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/fitness/in-depth/walking/art-20047880
3. Get walking with this 12-week walking schedule
   http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/fitness/in-depth/walking/art-20050972
4. Map my Walk
   http://www.mapmywalk.com/
5. Upcoming Arizona Races
   http://www.runningintheusa.com/Race/List.aspx?State=AZ
6. Arizona State Parks Hiking Trails
   http://azstateparks.com/find/f_act_hiking.html