

NPS Reference Manual 50B

Occupational Safety and Health Program

Chapter 26: Employee Wellness Program

Approval for inclusion in Reference Manual 50B:

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Chapter 26

Employee Wellness Program

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26.1 Introduction

The National Park Service (NPS) Employee Wellness Program was created to promote a work environment that encourages NPS employees to make healthy life choices for their overall well-being and develop and maintain active and healthy lifestyles. While participation in regular health and wellness activities is primarily a personal responsibility, an established, effective employee wellness program can help employees improve and maintain good health and well-being which may be free of preventable disease, disability, injury, and premature death and realize satisfying, productive lives. The NPS, our families, and communities across the country also benefit from a healthy workforce through lower absenteeism, increased job productivity and morale, and reduced overall healthcare costs.

26.2 Scope

This chapter applies to all NPS employees, regardless of type of appointment or position. This chapter does not apply to volunteers. Employees are encouraged to participate in their park/office Employee Wellness Program, and participation is voluntary. With limited exceptions, participation in wellness program activities must occur while off duty (refer to section 26.6.3) for all employees who are not eligible for the Mandatory Fitness Program. Wellness Program services may address any of the [eight components of wellness](#) (refer to section 26.4 for definitions of career, emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual wellness) and include, but are not limited to, any of the following health-related activities:

1. *Education* to encourage employees to maintain a healthy lifestyle, to understand their risk for disease, and become aware of appropriate preventive practices. Examples of educational formats include wellness fairs, presentations, clinics, resource libraries, newsletters, and training programs.
2. *Intervention programs* to promote and maintain physical and emotional health and to help prevent illness and disease by encouraging and enabling employees to initiate healthy behavior changes. Example interventions include group activities and classes, individual counseling, demonstrations, and self-help materials.

Common subject areas for health education and intervention programs include: smoking cessation, diet and nutrition, mental health and stress management, financial management, substance abuse, traditional/non-western healing techniques, physical activity, back care, disease prevention and management, and weight control.

3. *Individual and group engagement activities* to motivate employees to improve their overall well-being and cultivate a sense of community¹. Parks/offices are encouraged to be creative and implement a wide range of strategies to address any component(s) of wellness. Examples include book groups, meditation groups, donation drives, community service days or programs, mentorship programs, healthy recipe exchanges, healthy potluck lunches, peer support groups, and team competitions.

¹“Community” can refer to internal to the park/office, the local area in which the park/office resides, and/or the larger NPS population.

4. *Physical exercise activities* to help improve and maintain physical and emotional health. Examples of such activities may be conducted individually and/or in groups and may include, but are not limited to: use of on or off-site fitness facilities, walking clubs/events, aerobic exercises, weight lifting, stretching classes, yoga, dance, fun runs, and fitness assessments. Activities may be conducted in both on- and off-duty settings. The Voluntary Physical Activity Program (see section 26.6.2), includes specific requirements, limitations, and approved physical activity-related activities.
5. *Health screenings, physical examinations, and immunizations* administered by qualified medical staff to assess an employee's health status and detect the presence or risk of disease. Based on the results of the exam and/or testing, medical staff may refer employees to the Employee Assistance Program, private physicians, and/or other health resources. Common workplace screenings include exams for blood pressure, mammography, blood lipids, glucose, vision, and hearing. Common immunizations include influenza and tetanus.
6. *Park/Office policy changes* to encourage wellness such as adoption of a healthy meeting policy, increasing telework opportunities, and promoting flexible schedules to help improve employees' work-life balance.
7. *Physical environment* adjustments to provide equipment and space that encourages wellness. Examples include making stairways available and desirable for walking; installing bike racks, standing desks, showers, and/or gyms; setting aside quiet rooms for stress relief or meditation; or creating a community garden.

Nothing in this chapter is intended to eliminate or modify any requirements established by law, regulation, or Executive Order.

26.3 References

Detailed information for implementation is contained in the following references.

1. 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) 7901 (September 1996), Health Services Programs.
2. Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), 29 CFR 1904.5(b)(2), Recording and Reporting Occupational Injuries and Illnesses.
3. OSHA, 29 CFR Part 1635 (January 10, 2011), Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.
4. Federal Property Management Regulations, 41 CFR Part 101-5.3 Centralized Services in Federal Buildings and Complexes; Federal Employee Health Services.
5. Federal Property Management Regulations, 41 CFR Part 102-79.30 (September 30, 2005) and Part 102-79.35 (July 1, 2003), Assignment and Utilization of Space: Fitness Centers.
6. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) M-09-20, section IV, Memorandum for the Heads of Departments and Agencies (June 11, 2009), Planning for the President's Fiscal Year 2011

Budget and Performance Plans.

7. Government Accountability Office (GAO) Comptroller General Decision:
 - a) 70 Comp. Gen. 190 (B-240371; January 18, 1991): “Matter of: Defense Medical Systems Support Center-Health and Fitness Program” [holding that “5 U.S.C. sec. 7901 (1988) authorizes heads of departments or agencies to establish health service programs by contract or otherwise to promote and maintain the physical and mental fitness of Federal employees. B-226569, Nov. 30, 1987. These health service programs include "preventive programs relating to health." 5 U.S.C. sec. 7901(c)(4).”].
 - b) 73 Comp. Gen. 169 (B-256194; June 1, 1994): “Matter of: Department of Energy--Payment of Registration Fees for Competitive Fitness and Sports Activities” [holding that Registration fees for an athletic competition is not an essential part of a physical fitness program and may not be paid for with appropriated funds].
 - c) 1996 Comp. Gen. LEXIS 528 (B-262008; October 23, 1996): “Matter of: Mr. John F. Best Chief” [holding that participation of an agency “team” in an athletic competition does not change analysis that registration fees for such athletic competition are not an appropriate use of agency funds].
8. OPM [Work-Life Health & Wellness](#) website and [Frequently Asked Questions](#).
9. Department of Interior (DOI) [Absence and Leave Handbook 2012](#).
10. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (DHHS’) [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans 2nd Edition](#).
11. [NPS Reference Manual \(RM\) 57B Occupational Health and Fitness](#).
12. [NPS Employee Wellness Portal](#): inside.nps.gov/wellness.

26.4 Definitions

This section includes a list of definitions relevant to Employee Wellness Programs.

Name	Definition
Duty Time	The period of time an employee begins work or has signed on for the purposes of duties designated by the employer until the time s/he is relieved from work and all responsibility for performing work.
Health	The state of overall well-being, not merely the absence of disease and infirmity.
Management Team	The senior park/office/site manager, deputy(ies), and next level (e.g. Division Chiefs).
Management Team Representative	A member of the management team assigned to or designated with duties related to the park/office safety, health, and wellness program.
Office	Refers to NPS administrative locations that are not enacted by Congress but have a single senior manager responsible for their operation. This includes national and regional offices, training centers, and other specialty offices such as the Denver Service Center, Harpers Ferry Center, and Western Archeological Center.

Name	Definition
Park	Generic term for any one of the hundreds of areas of land and water administered as part of the national park system.
Participant Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q)	A voluntary self-screening tool available to employees planning to engage in a physical activity program. (See Appendix E of this chapter.)
Senior Park/Office Manager	The Senior Management Official responsible for park/office operations, planning, and administration, including the Superintendent, Site Manager, Office Manager, Center Manager and/or his/her Deputy.
Wellness	<p>An active, on-going process of becoming aware of choices and making decisions toward a more balanced and fulfilling life. Components can include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Career - the process of developing skills in and achieving personal fulfillment from our jobs while still maintaining balance in our lives. 2. Emotional – the process of recognizing, expressing, and managing one’s full range of emotions, including coping with stress. It also encompasses the process of developing self-esteem and a positive outlook on life. 3. Environmental – the process of making choices which will contribute to sustaining or improving the quality of life in the world. 4. Financial – the process of learning to plan, save, and spend financial resources efficiently and within one’s means. 5. Intellectual – the process of expanding knowledge and skills as well as engaging in creative and mentally stimulating activities. 6. Physical – the process of engaging in healthy activities that benefit the body, such as nutritious eating and exercise. 7. Social – the process of creating and maintaining healthy, meaningful relationships with those around us. 8. Spiritual – the process of discovering purpose and meaning in life and living a fulfilling life consistent with one’s beliefs and values.
Wellness Action Plan	Clear and measurable goals, action items, and delegation of responsibilities.
Wellness Management Plan	Overarching requirements and systems for the employee wellness program, documenting how the park/office implements the elements of an effective wellness program.

26.5 Responsibilities

This section addresses the responsibilities and requirements for all Employee Wellness Program related roles.

NOTE: Some responsibilities for the development of wellness programs may be incurred incrementally over time using a tiered performance system as outlined in the [Safety, Health, and Wellness Strategy](#). Tier 1 refers to the initial “Baseline” level, Tier 2 is the “Intermediate” level, and Tier 3 is “Leading.” Responsibilities in Tier 1 should be assumed prior to progressing to Tier 2 and so on.

26.5.1 NPS Director

The NPS Director will, to the extent that is consistent with the NPS’s mission and Federal authorities and regulations, promote a culture of health and wellness and implement policies that support efforts to improve employee wellness.

26.5.2 Washington Area Support Office (WASO) Employee Wellness Program Manager

The WASO Employee Wellness Program Manager is responsible for creating and disseminating OPM, DOI, and NPS policies, guidance, information, and tools to all NPS parks/offices and employees through NPS regions as appropriate to promote health and wellness, reduce incidence of illness and disease, and better manage chronic disease.

26.5.3 Senior Park/Office Managers

Senior park/office managers will promote employee health and wellness and demonstrate that employee well-being is an important part of the NPS and park/office values.

Tier 1: The senior park/office manager will support the implementation and management of a park/office Employee Wellness Program; appoint a wellness coordinator, convene a committee, or include these responsibilities in another new or existing body; provide resources; and support reasonable efforts of a park/office wellness committee or coordinator to engage employees in improving their health and wellness.

If a park/office wellness committee is established, the senior park/office manager will charter that committee to determine wellness program components, implement a program, and prioritize activities.

The senior park/office manager or management team representative will regularly attend and participate in wellness-related activities, such as work group meetings, planned programs, and training.

Tier 2: The senior park/office manager or management team representative has been appointed to the wellness committee (if established). The senior park/office manager is encouraged to approve a wellness management plan that includes the overarching requirements and systems for the Employee Wellness Program and documents how the park/office

implements all elements of an effective wellness program.

The senior park/office manager is encouraged to approve an annual employee wellness action plan that includes clear and measurable goals, action items, and delegation of responsibilities.

26.5.4 Wellness Committee/Coordinator

The Wellness Committee/Coordinator will support efforts to embed a culture of wellness into the workplace by developing, implementing, and maintaining a park/office Employee Wellness Program. At a minimum, a Wellness Committee/Coordinator (or point of contact) must be identified; however, the wellness program may be integrated into an existing related park committee, e.g., safety and health committee or workplace enrichment committee. To establish and maintain a wellness program, the Wellness Committee/Coordinator will conduct and/or coordinate the following activities, as appropriate:

(Note: There is no expectation the Wellness Coordinator will perform all activities or have specialized wellness training and/or experience.)

Tier 1: Assess existing and needed resources (such as facilities, expertise, and funding) at the park/office and in the community and initiate an assessment of employee needs and interests in a park/office wellness program.

Note: Assessing levels of interest and the kinds of activities most appealing to employees does not need to be complicated. Examples include holding one or more employee meetings and recording ideas, asking employees to submit suggestions, or conducting a formal survey of all park/office employees.

Tier 2: Complete an assessment of employee interests in a park/office wellness program; prioritize, plan, and implement appropriate wellness activities; communicate wellness activities to all employees; establish performance measures (e.g. attendance at wellness activities, employee input and feedback from activities), data collection methods (e.g. pre- and post-event surveys, feedback forms), and a process of collecting data to evaluate participation in and the effectiveness of wellness activities and the overall wellness program; conduct annual program reviews summarizing program strengths, opportunities for improvement, and progress toward achieving targeted goals and objectives.

Tier 3: Conduct wellness needs assessments periodically²; proactively review wellness data and documentation to identify potential trends and improvement opportunities; evaluate employee wellness activities and overall program on an on-going basis using identified performance measures.

26.5.5 Employees

Employees should take responsibility for their own health and wellness, make choices, and engage in behaviors that demonstrate an understanding of the importance of taking care of their

² The format and manner in which the program/office conducts assessments and the level of depth each one assesses may vary based on the frequency they are conducted and changes in the employee population. Some level of assessment should occur biennially at minimum.

health holistically. Employees are encouraged to participate in individually appropriate park/office-sponsored wellness programs where offered and as schedules permit.

26.6 Program Elements

This section describes the basic program elements for an Employee Wellness Program.

26.6.1 Policy Statements

Each NPS park/office will:

1. Develop an Employee Wellness Program that promotes healthy behavior choices. For additional guidance on how to start a Wellness Program, please refer to <http://inside.nps.gov/wellness> for the “How to Start an Employee Wellness Program” guide.
2. Form a Wellness Committee or appoint a Coordinator to conduct and/or coordinate efforts to assess the needs and interests of the park/office’s employee population and plan, implement, and evaluate health and wellness activities that address those needs and interests.
3. Educate employees about relevant health and wellness topics through programs and activities such as workshops, meetings, publications, bulletin boards, and other communications.
4. Provide support to and/or encourage employees to participate in activities that promote health and wellness, reduce incidence of illness and disease, and better manage chronic disease.
5. Conduct periodic assessments of the park/office Employee Wellness Program.

26.6.2 Voluntary Physical Activity Program³

Being physically active is one of the most important steps to improve overall health and fitness and to prevent and manage chronic disease. The U.S. DHHS’ [*Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition*](#) recommends that adults engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity a week, or an equivalent combination, as well as muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days a week that work all major muscle groups.

The Voluntary Physical Activity Program allows employees who are not eligible for the Mandatory Fitness Program (see [NPS RM 57B](#)) to engage in off-duty physical activity during the work day, on or off premises, and/or immediately before or after work on premises.

In recognition of the benefits of employees’ overall health and wellness, the Voluntary Physical Activity Program encourages worksites to organize and promote participation in fitness activities. Appropriate activities associated with this program may include walking clubs/events, aerobic exercise classes, weight-lifting instruction, stretching classes, fun runs, health education

³ This Voluntary Physical Activity Program supersedes the Voluntary Fitness Program contained in NPS RM 57B.

on physical exercise, and fitness assessments. Additionally, Voluntary Physical Activity Program activities can include such activities as running and use of fitness facilities during lunch time or breaks. See [Appendix D](#) of this chapter for further discussion of fitness activities that appropriately fall within the scope of this program.

All Voluntary Physical Activity Program activities must be performed while off duty. Before engaging in fitness activities sponsored by the agency or in agency facilities, the employee must sign a consent waiver (see [Appendix B](#) of this chapter) to participate. Employees are responsible for determining the degree to which their personal health allows for voluntary fitness activity and are encouraged to seek advice from their physician before making this determination.

Generally, an injury or illness resulting from participation in a voluntary employee wellness activity is not considered a recordable workplace incident under OSHA and NPS reporting requirements. While it is possible that injuries sustained while engaging in wellness activities from a Voluntary Physical Activity Program could be covered under workers' compensation on a case-by-case basis, employees should be prepared for the likelihood that workers' compensation may not be available for an injury or condition sustained while participating in an off duty voluntary fitness activity. The Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP) determines whether or not an employee is entitled to workers' compensation benefits, and decisions are made based on a number of factors that may vary by individual case or circumstance. Major considerations involved in the adjudication of each worker's compensation claim include, but are not limited to: the injury occurred while engaging in an activity specifically identified in an approved Physical Fitness Program, whether or not the incident occurred while participating in an agency-sponsored activity or program, the incident occurred at the employee's worksite, and/or the incident occurred during the employee's normal working hours. For additional information, consult with your workers' compensation program manager or regional safety manager.

Use of on-site fitness facilities. Access to NPS- or General Services Administration (GSA)-leased fitness facilities should be extended to all employees as appropriate. Employees participating in the Voluntary Physical Activity Program should be allowed to use the facilities on a voluntary basis while off duty at the discretion of the park/office. Mandatory Fitness Program participants have priority over use of NPS- and GSA-leased fitness facilities.

26.6.3 Time for Participation in Wellness Program

Employees who are not in the Mandatory Fitness Program (as outlined in NPS [RM 57B](#)) are not eligible to engage in wellness activities while on duty. Supervisors are encouraged to accommodate employee requests for flexible and alternative work schedules and to grant annual leave or leave without pay in order to enhance opportunities for employees to engage in wellness activities. Employee participation in wellness activities (including physical activity) cannot interfere with an employee's work schedule/duty hours, as such interference could result in discipline.

In certain limited circumstances, supervisors may grant short periods of excused leave (designated as administrative leave) for participation in wellness activities. The following policies will apply to the use of excused leave for wellness activities:

1. It is appropriate to grant administrative leave for one-time wellness events. Events must be officially sponsored and administered, such as an annual park/office wellness day event or a park/office sponsored health screening. The period of excused leave should be of short and fixed duration. Examples of such activities include participation in a fitness center orientation or a smoking cessation program consisting of several brief class sessions.
2. It is not appropriate to grant administrative leave for reoccurring activities or activities occurring over an extended or indefinite period of time. Employees may only engage in these activities using off-duty time. Examples of such activities include an employee's weekly yoga class or routine workout session.
3. Employees and supervisors are encouraged to incorporate wellness activities into their everyday job duties. Employees are encouraged to take brief breaks (e.g., a minute or less 'micro-break') as needed to rest or stretch to reduce strain from job duties that are repetitive in nature, stationary, or require awkward posture or movement, etc. Supervisors are authorized to incorporate brief stretch breaks, for example, as needed throughout the workday.

26.6.4 Awards and Recognition

The Director's Safety, Health, and Wellness Achievement Award is the highest award bestowed by the NPS for outstanding achievement in employee safety, health, and wellness. One category for this national award is the Wellness Award, which recognizes efforts to improve employee wellness in the NPS. (Please refer to the NPS [RM50B](#) chapter addressing Awards.)

26.6.5 Additional Resources

Additional resources such as Frequently Asked Questions, How to Start a Wellness Program Guide, and example wellness activities are available on the NPS [Employee Wellness Portal](http://inside.nps.gov/wellness) at <http://inside.nps.gov/wellness>.

26.7 Technical Appendices

Appendix A: Park/Office Wellness Charter Template

Appendix B: Consent Agreement and Liability Waiver Form Template

Appendix C: Sample List of Rules for Fitness Center

Appendix D: List of Examples of Appropriate Fitness Activities

Appendix E: PAR-Q Self-Assessment Form

Appendix A: Park/Office Wellness Charter Template

PARK/OFFICE WELLNESS [Committee] Charter

NOTE: The below charter is an example, representative charter that should be modified to each NPS park/office's use. At a minimum, wording below in brackets should be customized; however, any section may be modified.

Purpose and Scope

This charter describes the purpose of the [park/office] Wellness Committee (Committee), how it conducts its business, and its objectives. The scope of the [Committee] is limited to [park/office] employees working in [this park/office].

Vision, Mission, Goal

Vision: Inspire and support [park/office] employees to make healthy life choices in a way that embeds wellness into the NPS culture resulting in happier, healthier, and more productive employees who increase their positive impact on the NPS mission and beyond.

Mission: Connect [park/office] employees to resources that enhance their wellness.

Goal: Motivate action, encourage positive growth, and nurture the wellness of the [park/office] community by delivering opportunities that foster awareness and engage employees in the full spectrum of wellness.

Definition of Wellness

Wellness, for the purpose of this charter, is defined as “an active, on-going process of becoming aware of choices and making decisions toward a more balanced and fulfilling life.”

The Wellness [Committee] has separated “wellness” into the following eight categories:

1. Career wellness – the process of developing skills in and achieving personal fulfillment from our jobs while still maintaining balance in our lives.
2. Emotional wellness – the process of recognizing, expressing, and managing one's full range of emotions including coping with stress. In addition, it also encompasses the process of developing self-esteem and a positive outlook on life.
3. Environmental wellness – the process of making choices which will contribute to sustaining or improving the quality of life in the world.
4. Financial wellness – the process of learning to plan, save, and spend financial resources efficiently and within one's means.
5. Intellectual wellness – the process of expanding knowledge and skills as well as engaging in creative and mentally stimulating activities.
6. Physical wellness – the process of engaging in healthy activities that benefit the body, such as

nutritious eating and exercise.

7. Social wellness – the process of creating and maintaining healthy, meaningful relationships with those around us.
8. Spiritual wellness – the process of discovering purpose and meaning in life and living a fulfilling life consistent with one's beliefs and values.

Membership and Structure

The [Committee] should consist of members from diverse program areas within the [park/office]. Ideally, all Divisions/Branches will be represented. Supervisory approval is required to participate, and effort will be made to encourage self-nomination from interested candidates. Wellness is a program officially assigned to the [superintendent's office]. A management team representative will have a standing membership to the [Committee].

Members are expected to commit to the [Committee] and remain active for a minimum term of one year, which correlates with the fiscal calendar. At the end of each [fiscal] year, members will reassess their commitment and either rotate off the [Committee] or continue to serve for another term.

Recruitment – Membership vacancies will be filled as they occur through solicitation for volunteers. In instances when there are more interested candidates than vacancies, the [Committee/Management Team] will make the selection decision.

Voluntary Deferral - [Committee] members may terminate or temporarily suspend their membership before the end of their term. In such cases, the vacating member in conjuncture with the [Committee] will make efforts to fill the vacancy.

[Committee] Structure

A Chairperson will coordinate and administer the Wellness [Committee]'s activities. Similar to other members of the [Committee], the Chairperson is a volunteer and must have supervisory approval to participate. The [Committee] approves the Chairperson who serves for a term of one year from the date of selection, but may serve multiple, consecutive terms at the discretion of the [Committee].

The Chairperson serves as the point of contact and is responsible for facilitating logistics including coordinating meetings, sharing information, and monitoring the effectiveness of the [Committee]. Members provide support to the Chairperson and membership as a whole towards achievement of the [Committee]'s goals. The [Committee] reports to the [Deputy Superintendent].

Operation

Members are expected to actively participate and demonstrate commitment to the vision, mission, and goals outlined in this Charter. [Committee] members agree to:

1. Regularly attend [Committee] meetings;
2. Actively participate and volunteer for assignments;
3. Treat other members and their ideas respectfully;
4. Promote the idea of bringing wellness to everyone;

5. Encourage wellness on an individual and collective basis;
6. Hold [Committee] discussions and communications in confidence until the [Committee] decides it is appropriate to move forward with action;
7. Have “fun” and maintain a positive attitude for the good of the group.

[Committee] Meetings - The [Committee] will meet in person at regular intervals [e.g., monthly, bimonthly] to be determined by the [Committee]. Alternates may attend meetings when members are unavailable and carry the same level of responsibility as members. Guests may be invited to participate in [Committee] meetings when deemed appropriate by the [Committee].

Task Groups - Task groups may be set up as necessary to accomplish specific goals. [Committee] members are expected to participate in these task groups as workloads allow.

Supervisor Updates - Supervisory approval of [Committee] participation covers all activities of the Wellness [Committee], and [Committee] members are responsible for communicating their activities and commitments to their supervisor.

Decision Making

[Committee] decisions will be made through consensus when possible. However, when consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be made through a vote. To hold a vote, a quorum of 51 percent or more of the current membership must be present. For a decision to be approved, it must receive a two-thirds majority of the vote. Members may vote via email or by proxy if they are unable to be present.

Communication

[Committee] members are to serve as liaisons between [park/office] employees and the [Committee]; the [Committee] will communicate regularly with the [Park/Office Manager].

Appropriate and effective mechanisms for both internal and external communication will be maintained to ensure that information is shared with [park/office] employees and that [park/office] employees are able to provide input to the [Committee].

Administration

The [Committee] Chairperson is responsible for the general administration of the [Committee]’s activities (e.g. coordinate and facilitate meetings, ensure minutes are recorded and distributed, track membership, etc.). The [Superintendent’s Office] is responsible for records storage via [the N: drive, SharePoint site, and/or other].

Amendments

This charter will be reviewed annually coinciding with the fiscal year to assess its effectiveness and may be amended when deemed appropriate by the [Committee]. All changes to the Charter must have approval of [park/office] management prior to being enacted.

Recommended:

_____ NAME, TITLE, PARK [Example title includes Safety Committee Chair, Workplace Enrichment Committee Chair]	_____ Date
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_____ NAME, TITLE, PARK [Optional. Example title includes Deputy Superintendent]	_____ Date
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Approved:

_____ NAME, TITLE, PARK [Example title includes Superintendent]	_____ Date
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Appendix B: Consent Agreement and Liability Waiver Form Template

(For use of fitness facilities and/or participation in wellness activities)

**INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT AND LIABILITY WAIVER FORM FOR USE OF
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PHYSICAL FITNESS FACILITIES & PARTICIPATION IN
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE VOLUNTARY PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES**

I wish to participate voluntarily in the use of the National Park Service (NPS) physical fitness facilities (“facilities”) and/or NPS sponsored, hosted, or promoted physical fitness events (“events”). The use of the facilities includes, without limitation, any use of the premises, facilities, or equipment located therein. I understand that participation in events and the use of facilities is a privilege and not a right, and that my choice to participate constitutes consent to the conditions stated herein. Therefore, I agree to abide by any applicable NPS rule or regulation and understand that violation of applicable rules may result the revocation of my access to these facilities or events. I further understand that the NPS makes no assurance as to the quality or fitness of the facilities or equipment associated with the use described herein.

I recognize the potential risks involved with strenuous exercise and inherent in the use of the facilities or participation in the events. I therefore accept all responsibility and assume the risk of injury or damage to my person or property that may arise, whether directly or indirectly, as a result of my participation in physical activity. I represent that I am physically able at the time of each use of the facilities or participation in the events, and I agree that I will cease my participation in any or all fitness activities if I feel that such participation is too strenuous or places me at specific risk of injury.

In no event shall the United States, the Department of the Interior, or the National Park Service be liable in any way for any personal injury, death, or property loss or damage sustained by or through me in connection with the use of the fitness facilities or participation in the events. I agree for myself and anyone claiming through me to defend and hold harmless each such party aforementioned from and against any claim or demand that may be asserted against any or all of them arising out of any such injury, death, loss, or damage. However, the foregoing shall be of no force or effect with respect to any claim or demand covered by the Federal Employees’ Compensation Act (FECA), 5 U.S.C. §8101 et seq. This agreement shall not be construed to relieve any insurance carrier from any duty to pay, adjust, or defend any claim or demand whatsoever.

Unless amended by mutual agreement, this waiver shall remain binding and in effect so long as I participate in the facilities and/or events.

I have read and understand this document in its entirety.

Signature of Facility User or Events Participant

Date

Print Name

Date

Witness

Date

Appendix C: Sample List of Rules for Fitness Center

NOTE: The below list of rules is an example that should be modified to each NPS park/office's use. Any section may be modified as appropriate.

[SAMPLE] PARK/OFFICE FITNESS CENTER RULES

1. Smoking is not permitted in the Fitness Center.
2. Food or beverages may not be consumed in or brought into the Fitness Center, with the exception of water/beverages in a plastic bottle with a lid.
3. Individuals must use designated entrances and exits at all times.
4. PARK/OFFICE reserves the right to sever all membership privileges for participants if at any time it feels that such participation is interfering with service to other fitness facility users.
5. If you are using a locker that is designated for "Day Use only," the lock and all contents must be removed by the close of the fitness center that day. Any locks or items left overnight will be removed by the PARK/OFFICE Fitness Center management.
6. Clothing with belts, buckles, and zippers or other features judged by the staff to be potentially destructive to upholstery or other Fitness Center equipment are not permitted.
7. Towels are permitted in the weight room. All other personal items, including gym bags, must be kept in lockers.
8. Shirts must be worn at all times while in weight room, aerobic area, cardiovascular area, etc.
9. Members may not display actions that the Fitness Center staff deem unsportsmanlike or rude, or misuse, move, or alter any portion of the Fitness Center environment or property.
10. No bare feet or open-toed shoes allowed outside of locker rooms.
11. Members must wipe down equipment after use and put equipment back in proper place.
12. Members are fully responsible for personal items that are lost, stolen, or damaged at the Fitness Center.
13. Street shoes and black-soled shoes of any kind are not permitted on the hardwood gym floor, with the exception of non-marking black soled fitness sneakers.
14. Employees participating on a voluntary basis must sign an informed "Consent Waiver" prior to participating in any activity.
15. Mandatory Fitness Program participants have priority over use of Fitness Center.
16. Members must adhere to any other rules and regulations that are posted throughout the Fitness Center.

I have read the rules and regulations pertaining to my use of the PARK/OFFICE Fitness Center. By signing below, I agree to comply with said requirements as well as other posted rules and regulations with the understanding that if I do not, permission to use the Fitness Center will be forfeited.

Signature

Date

Appendix D: List of Examples of Appropriate Fitness Activities

Voluntary Physical Activity Program Appropriate Fitness Activities

The Voluntary Physical Activity Program provides employees the opportunity to engage in off-duty physical activity at the employee's worksite to improve his or her well-being. To limit the risk of injury, parks/offices and employees should consider appropriate fitness activities according to the principles of Operational Leadership.⁴

Voluntary fitness activities must be conducted in a safe place and in a safe manner. The employee is responsible for his or her own safety in engaging in voluntary fitness activities and should not expect any injury to be compensated either by worker's compensation or the National Park Service. The employee is responsible for complying with rules and program requirements established by the park/office. The Voluntary Physical Activity Program authorizes only those fitness activities that may be performed with reasonably expected safety for the participant and others in the area; competitive sports and elevated-risk activities are not authorized. The following is not an all-inclusive list of appropriate fitness activities for the Voluntary Activity Program:

Examples of Appropriate Fitness Activities

- Running
- Walking
- Weight training
- Bicycling
- Use of gym equipment
- Aerobics/calisthenics
- Stretching/yoga
- Swimming
- Cross-country skiing
- Snowshoeing
- Non-sparring, non-impact martial art training (cardio-kickboxing, etc.)
- Paddling or rowing in still or Class 1 water

The following is not an all-inclusive list of inappropriate fitness activities for the Voluntary Physical Activity Program:

Examples of Inappropriate Fitness Activities

- Competitive sports such as basketball, baseball, softball, volleyball, football, and soccer
- Wrestling
- Martial arts
- Rock climbing
- Surfing
- Downhill skiing/snowboarding

⁴ Operational Leadership (OL) provides tools and helps employees to understand how to assess risk and reduce it to as low as reasonably practical. Refer to [Inside NPS – Operational Leadership Program](#) for additional information on OL.

Appendix E: PAR-Q Self-Assessment Form

Employees are encouraged to complete this form for the purposes of self-assessment. This form's only function is to aid individuals in assessing their own health and fitness before engaging in fitness activities. The PAR-Q should never be collected by the agency, nor should it be made accessible to supervisors or others who make employment decisions, or to anyone else in the workplace.



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE FITNESS PROGRAM PAR-Q

A Participant Activity Readiness Questionnaire

Regular physical activity is fun and healthy, and increasingly, more and more people are starting to become more active every day. Being more active is very safe for most people. However, some people should check with their doctor before they become more physically active. If you are between the ages of 15 and 69, the PAR-Q will tell you if you should check with your doctor before you become more physically active. If you are over 69 years of age, and you are not used to being very active, check with your doctor. Common sense is your best guide when you answer these questions. Please read the questions carefully and answer each one honestly: check YES or NO.

Question	Yes	No
Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition <u>and</u> that you should only do physical activity recommended by a doctor?		
Do you feel a pain in your chest when you do physical activity?		
In the past month, have you had chest pain when you were not doing physical activity?		
Do you lose your balance because of dizziness or do you ever lose consciousness?		
Do you have a bone or joint problem that could be made worse by a change in your physical activity?		
Is your doctor currently prescribing drugs (i.e., water pills) for your blood pressure or heart condition?		
Do you know of <u>any other reason</u> why you should not do physical activity?		

**If you
Answered:**

YES to one or more questions

Talk with your doctor by phone or in person BEFORE you start becoming much more physically active or BEFORE you have a physical fitness appraisal. Tell your doctor about the PAR-Q and which questions you answered YES.

- You may be able to do any activity you want - as long as you start slowly and build up gradually. Alternatively, you may need to restrict your activities to those which are safe for you. Talk with your doctor about the kinds of activities you wish to participate in and follow his/her advice.
- Find out which community programs are safe and helpful to you.

NO to all questions

If you answered NO honestly to all PAR-Q questions, you can be reasonably sure that you can:

- Start becoming much more physically active - begin slowly and build up gradually. This is the safest and easiest way to go.
- Take part in a fitness appraisal - this is an excellent way to determine your basic fitness so that you can plan the best way for you to live actively.

DELAY BECOMING MUCH MORE ACTIVE

- If you are not feeling well because of a temporary illness such as cold or fever - wait until you feel better; or
- If you are or may be pregnant - talk to your doctor before you start becoming more active.

Please note: If your health changes so that you then answer YES to any of the above questions, tell your fitness or health professional. Ask whether you should change your physical activity plan.

I have read, understood and completed the questionnaire. Any questions I had were answered to my full satisfaction.

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

SIGNATURE OF FITNESS COORDINATOR _____

WITNESS SIGNATURE*: _____

*Note: Only applicable for participants in the NPS Mandatory Fitness Program.