



UPDE Employee Wellness Program

Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Employee Wellness Program! This program challenges employees to develop and sustain healthy habits guided by personal goals and a holistic approach to wellness. What is wellness, exactly, you might ask? The [NPS Employee Wellness Portal](#) describes wellness as the “on-going process of becoming aware of choices and making decisions toward a more balanced and fulfilling life.” The graphic to the right breaks down the “8 components of wellness” adopted by the NPS wellness model.



Within the program, you will find information, resources, and activities to promote your well-being in each wellness category. As an additional bonus to the intrinsic rewards of a healthy lifestyle, the UPDE Wellness Program is a chance to track your activities and earn extra time off.

The activities described within this program are to be completed outside of work time unless your position includes participation in a mandatory fitness program (VRP and Fire). If there is an aspect of this program that needs to be completed during work time, first gain approval and schedule appropriately with your supervisor. Examples: Fitness Center orientation, participating in a job-related training, medical screening, etc.

The purpose of this program is to make participants feel better, more fulfilled, and help form good habits. Only you can decide your goals and whether you are reaching them, but if you feel like you are forming good healthy habits and taking steps towards becoming the best version of yourself, you are probably doing it right!

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

REGISTRATION

First, obtain approval from your direct supervisor to participate in the program. Notify the UPDE Safety Health and Wellness Chairperson via email (Jessica_weinman@nps.gov), with your supervisor CC'ed, of your intention to register for the UPDE Wellness Program. Verify that you have completed the Self-Assessment and Goal Setting forms (Pages 7 and 8 of this document). You do not need to share the completed assessments.

DURATION

The program consists of a Spring and a Fall session in which you can earn up to eight hours of paid time off each, for a total of 16 hours of paid time off per year. Spring session will be from January 1 – June 30. Fall session will be from July 1 – December 31. There is not a deadline for registration, but the longer you have to accomplish your Health & Wellness goals, the more time off you might earn.

TRACKING

As you complete checklist items from the wellness categories in this document (Pages 4-7,) total up the number of items completed. Submit that number to the UPDE Safety Health and Wellness Chairperson via email (Jessica_weinman@nps.gov) and your supervisor via email - once at the end of the Spring session and once at the end of the Fall session (June 30 and December 31, respectively).

For each checklist item completed, the participant is eligible for one hour of paid time off.

Reward hours will be paid out in the form of a Paid Time off Award. Supervisors are responsible for administratively submitting your time off award to HR.

CONSISTENCY

For each of the checklist activities, determine a reasonable frequency for you and your personal goals if it is not already stated. Utilize the "Goal Setting Worksheet" on page 8 to set out clear goals for consistency at the start of the session. Allow yourself some reasonable flexibility in meeting your goals, while still being honest with yourself on whether you achieved what you set out to do. For example - if you're legitimately too sick to go to the gym on a given day, you can still pick up where you left off when you're feeling better, and still be able to check off your goal of exercising "X" times per week.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Track your wellness goals by completing the checklist on pages 4-6 of this document *on your own*.

Recognizing that some of your wellness decisions are sensitive or personal in nature, you will independently keep track of your activities and accomplishments, reporting only the total number of activities completed at the end of each session to your supervisor and PORE fitness coordinator.

You can send any questions you have about the program before or after signing up (i.e. does this activity count for credit?) to the UPDE Safety Health and Wellness Chairperson via email ([Jessica weinman@nps.gov](mailto:Jessica_weinman@nps.gov)).

8 COMPONENTS OF WELLNESS

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Cardiovascular Exercise: Most health experts consider cardiovascular (aerobic) exercise to be the BEST thing you can do for your health because it improves every system in the body and can help prevent chronic disease. More than half of U.S. adults do not get enough physical activity to provide the short and long-term benefits necessary for good health, costing health care a staggering \$117 billion.

Strength Training: With a regular strength-training program, you can reduce body fat, increase lean muscle mass, burn calories more efficiently, and prevent bone loss and osteoporosis. If your aerobic workouts aren't balanced by a proper dose of strength training, you're missing out on a key component of overall health and fitness.

Stretching and Flexibility: Stretching and flexibility training increases range of motion, decreases muscle and back soreness and may decrease the risk of injury. It can also improve overall performance of physical activities and coordination. The best time to stretch is after you have warmed up (ex: walking for 5 minutes). It is best to focus on stretching the muscles you use the most during your specific exercise or sport.

CHECKLIST ITEMS FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH

- Participate in a workout program which promotes one of, or some combination of: Cardiovascular Fitness, Muscular Strength, and Flexibility. Many free programs can be found online, via apps, or made individually. Contact the PORE fitness coordinator if you would like assistance in choosing or finding a program, or would like an orientation to the PORE fitness center. Choose a program with an intensity and frequency of training that is appropriate for your fitness level and is **sustainable**. For example, If you're new to

using a gym and want to give it a try, starting with once a week for 30 minutes is a great jumping off point and a reasonable goal.

- Participate in a physical activity or a combination of physical activities that promote Cardiovascular

Fitness, Muscular Strength, and Flexibility. Activities such as Hiking, Cycling, Running, Walking, Rowing, Dancing, Yoga, Surfing, and Climbing are all examples and there are endless more! Again, choose an activity with an intensity and frequency that is sustainable and appropriate for your current fitness and experience level.

NUTRITION

The CDC estimates that only about 24% of Americans consume a healthy diet or understand how to eat nutritiously. Enjoying a healthy, varied diet provides fuel for you to do your favorite activities and can help you maintain a healthy weight. According to the USDA [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), a healthy eating plan consists of the following foods, within recommended amounts and calorie limits:

- Vegetables of all types—dark green; red and orange; beans, peas, and lentils; starchy; and other vegetables
- Fruits, especially whole fruit
- Grains, at least half of which are whole grain
- Dairy, including fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese, and/or lactose-free versions and fortified soy beverages and yogurt as alternatives
- Protein foods, including lean meats, poultry, and eggs; seafood; beans, peas, and lentils; and nuts, seeds, and soy products
- Oils, including vegetable oils and oils in food, such as seafood and nuts

Nutrient dense whole foods - those that are unprocessed or minimally processed - along with adequate hydration, and the avoidance of added sugars, are the key factors to a healthy diet. Multiple free resources exist online that can aid in guiding your food and drink choices. A few examples are:

[Macro Calculator for Calorie Intake | Precision Nutrition](#)

[A practical guide to the Mediterranean diet - Harvard Health](#)

[Water and Healthier Drinks | Healthy Weight, Nutrition, and Physical Activity | CDC](#)

CHECKLIST ITEMS FOR NUTRITION

- Participate in a nutrition plan that emphasizes whole foods and a healthy balance of nutrients for your individual body's needs. Create your own or utilize one of the many free diet plans that are widely available online. However you choose to approach your nutrition habits, set clear goals and be consistent.
- Drink eight ounces of water within the first hour of waking. Drink 8 ounces of fluid each hour, for the next ten hours that you are awake. This can include water from tea, coffee and other beverages but should not include sugary drinks or alcohol.

SLEEP

According to the CDC, A third of US adults report that they usually get less than the recommended amount of sleep. Not getting enough sleep is linked with many chronic diseases and conditions—such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and depression—that threaten our nation's health. Getting enough sleep is not a luxury—it is something people need for good health.

The following activities have been adapted from the CDC for achieving a healthy quantity and quality of sleep.

CHECKLIST ITEMS FOR SLEEP

- Go to sleep (when you feel sleepy) and wake up at about the time each day, including weekends.
- Do not look at screens (TV, phones, computers, etc.) and avoid bright overhead lights for at least two hours before bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine within 6-12 hours of bedtime, depending on your sensitivity. Avoid alcohol, heavy meals, nicotine, and exercise within 2-3 hours before bedtime.
- View morning sunlight (Do not look directly at the sun) for 15 minutes or more, within an hour of waking, daily. Do this without sunglasses and without a window (be outside). This will help align your circadian rhythm and hormones, helping you sleep better at night.

MEDICAL

The human body benefits from routine medical checkups, much like bringing in your car for routine maintenance. Medical screenings and checkups will help your doctor and medical staff catch issues before they progress and give you peace of mind that your physical health is in check.

CHECKLIST ITEMS FOR MEDICAL

- Engage in two or more medical screenings within the wellness session. These could include: blood pressure check, skin cancer, flu shot, teeth cleaning, general physical, etc.

MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Mental Health: A state of well-being in which the individual realizes their own abilities, and can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to their community.

Emotional Health: The ability to handle, control and express emotions comfortably and appropriately.

Stress is a regular part of life. Even if you've found ways to limit the stress in your life, there is no way to completely eliminate stressful events and situations altogether. Having tools and habits that help to cope with that stress is a valuable part of the wellness picture.

CHECKLIST ITEMS FOR MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH

- Routinely (ex: daily, weekly, etc.) follow a meditation or breath-work program. There are many free meditation resources online, such as:
 - [Waking Up with Sam Harris - Mindfulness Meditation \(9 minutes\) - YouTube](#)
 - [How to Breathe Correctly for Optimal Health, Mood, Learning & Performance | Huberman Lab Podcast - YouTube](#)
- Consult with a counselor or therapist, such as through the [Employee Assistance Program | U.S. Department of the Interior \(doi.gov\)](#)
- Perform a digital detox. Examples include:
 - Turning off notifications for social media
 - Place your phone on airplane mode/do not disturb while with friends and family
- Journal on a regular basis. Examples for various methods include: [Discover 8 Journaling Techniques for Better Mental Health | Psychology Today](#)

OCCUPATIONAL AND FINANCIAL HEALTH

Occupational Health: Feeling of comfort and accomplishment in daily work tasks

Financial Health: Ability to plan, save, and spend financial resources effectively

With a large percentage of your waking hours being spent at work, the importance of your occupational and financial health is hard to overstate. Get the most value and fulfillment out of your job to help you live a happier and less stressful lifestyle.

CHECKLIST ITEMS FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND FINANCIAL HEALTH

- Consult with a financial advisor
- Set a savings goal, routinely track, and maintain progress
- Take a job-related course, training or workshop that measurably improves your work capabilities

SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Social Health: The ability to have satisfying inter-personal relationships, positive interactions with others, and to adapt to various situations and daily behaviors

Spiritual Health: The ability to discover and articulate a personal purpose in life; to learn how to experience love, joy, peace, and fulfillment, and how to help oneself and others achieve full potential

- Participate in a routinely-meeting community, social, or volunteer event/program (weekly, monthly, etc.)
- Participate in a routinely-meeting religious or spiritual gathering (weekly, monthly, etc.)
- Be a Wellness Program buddy! Work with a partner to keep them on track with their program - check in, motivate, or participate together in shared activities on a previously agreed upon (daily/weekly/etc.) basis.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Instructions:

1. Check the circle to the left of each statement that applies to you at this time in your life.
2. Total the number of check marks to establish your overall risk level and see if you are considered low, medium, or high risk based on your current habits. (Adapted from Dee W. Edington, PhD, University of Michigan)

- I love my job most of the time.
- I take safety precautions such as using a seatbelt in a moving vehicle.
- I am within 5 lbs. of my goal weight and know that my BMI is within a healthy range.
- I know three methods to reduce stress that do not include the use of drugs or alcohol.
- I do not smoke.
- I sleep seven to nine hours each night and wake up refreshed.
- I engage in regular physical activity at least three times per week (including sustained physical exertion for 20-30 minutes, i.e., walking briskly, running, swimming, biking, resistance/weight training, plus stretching and flexibility activities).
- I drink alcohol in moderation.
- I know my blood pressure and cholesterol numbers.
- I follow sensible eating habits by generally limiting processed foods, eating fruits and vegetables daily, eating healthy portions, and drinking at least 64 oz of water per day.
- I have a good social support system.
- I maintain a positive perception of my health.

Total Check Marks: _____

5 or more checkmarks = low risk

3 – 4 checkmarks = medium risk

0 – 2 checkmarks = high risk

If you are interested in completing a more advanced self-assessment to help you with goal setting, the [Princeton's Wellness Assessment](#) provides more questions related to physical, social, emotional, environmental, and spiritual wellness.

GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to set your own personal Wellness Program goals. Use the SMART Goal approach (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic, **T**imely) to best track and measure your success in achieving your goals. Share your goals with anyone you like, especially those who you feel will support your efforts. Assess your progress on a regular basis.

1. Based on the assessment, what lifestyle habit(s) do I want to focus on at this time in my life?
2. My lifestyle goal(s) is/are:
3. What do I need to do to stay focused or increase my level of commitment to achieve this goal?
4. What can I do to support my success? Who can I get to help support me?
5. What are potential barriers or challenges that may get in the way of my achieving success?
6. What can I do to overcome these barriers or challenges?
7. How will I know I achieved my goal?