

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council**September 16, 2014**

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**SUBJECT: Blue Zone Worksite**

Healthways Vice President Julie Wilson provided a briefing on the benefits of Blue Zones worksite designation at the August 19 pre-Council meeting. In view of the Council's expressed support for that initiative, this Informal Report describes how City staff is pursuing the designation.

Blue Zone Worksites

Employers are uniquely situated in the Blue Zone Project because of their ability to shape the workplace environment and improve employee well-being. As a part of the Blue Zone Project Worksite Pledge, organizations commit to accomplishing certain goals that are aimed at supporting employee health that will lead to improved productivity, decreased turnover and reduced healthcare costs.

Achieving Blue Zones Worksite Designation

- At least 25 percent of employees sign the Blue Zones Project Personal Pledge.
- Earn at least 72 out of 109 possible points by implementing pledge actions
- Implement at least one pledge action from each of the six foundational pillars of worksite well-being.

Foundation Pillars

The foundation pillars are different areas that contain best practices of worksite well-being in the areas of

- Leadership
- Purpose
- Habitat/Physical Environment
- Engagement/Creation of Social Networking
- Policies & Benefits
- Well-Being Solutions

The Human Resources Department has assessed that of the 109 points possible in best practices, the City of Fort Worth is currently achieving enough points for a score of 62. A number of the initiatives that the City is already doing include:

- Prominently display the organization's vision, mission and values in a public place, include it in the employee handbook, and communicate it to employees at least once a year. (3)
- Offer employer-sanctioned fitness activities (e.g., yoga, kickball, ping pong, fitness classes, walking clubs) and allow participation during work hours. (2)
- Create a pervasive brand for your health and well-being program. *Healthy Challenge!* (3)

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- Benefits designed to promote prevention (e.g., flu shots, immunizations, and preventive screenings that are 100 percent covered). (3)
- Offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) that includes financial education/planning and stress/depression management (3)
- Provide on-site / available biometric screening for employees. (3)
- Make health benefits available for full-time employees and family members (30+ hours/week). (3)
- Offer chronic-condition management with coaching. (2)

Additionally there are several initiatives that have been identified as worth pursuing for an additional 18 points that include:

- Train leaders to encourage the use of walking and/or standing meetings. (2)
- Adopting a formal policy that supports employee volunteer activities within the community in which they live. (2)
- Complete the Ergonomic Checklist to ensure that office and non-office-based employees have safe and comfortable environment. (3)
- Encourage use of existing stairwells by using signage to prompt their use, keeping them well-lit, and decorating them with art or music to increase aesthetic appeal. (2)
- Expand engagement plan for communication that includes metrics for measuring success; a calendar of social events to encourage employee well-being; and incentives designed to promote participation. (4)
- Effectively use “place-based media” to communicate well-being messages (e.g., using stairwells, elevators, restrooms, etc., for location appropriate messages). (2)
- Expand tobacco-free policy to include City grounds. (1)
- Offer Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) (1)

Summary

The Human Resources Department will work with City management in the coming months to encourage employees to sign Blue Zone Project Personal Pledges and improve our number of best practices to achieve being certified as a Blue Zone Worksite.

**David Cooke
City Manager**