



Howard County Government 15-Minute Walking Program for Employees

DESCRIPTION

The 15-Minute Walking Program gives all employees a health promotion opportunity to walk for exercise on a regular basis during the workday. Employees must have supervisor approval to ensure that work obligations are met and burdens are not put on co-workers.

Walking for exercise has a positive impact on physical and mental health. Compared to a single 30-minute daily walk, research shows that shorter bouts of brisk walking resulted in similar improvements in fitness and in decreasing body fat. Schedule one walk during the workday and add another walking session before or after work to get up to 30 minutes a day.

If you need accommodations to participate in the Walking Program, contact Wanda Hutchinson, Deputy Administrator, Office of Human Resources, at (410) 313-3458 or whutchinson@howardcountymd.gov.

GUIDELINES

- 1) Employee and supervisor must sign the Walking Agreement. Supervisors can require employees to reschedule any or all walking sessions, if needed for worksite duties.
- 2) No walk breaks are permitted within a half hour of your arrival or departure time. However, the walking time can be added to a lunch period, with supervisor approval.
- 3) The 15 minutes:
 - Can only be spent on WALKING – no errands or other non walking uses are permitted.
 - Do not require additions or subtractions to timesheets
 - Can be scheduled for limited number of days or for each day you work
 - Cannot be accumulated for future use.
- 4) Supervisors can revoke the walking privileges during the workday if abused by the employee.

TIPS FOR A HEALTHY WALK

- ✓ **Walk with a partner** to keep you motivated and add to the fun!
- ✓ Keep a **walking log** – it increases your sense of reward and inspires you to do more!
- ✓ Wear **comfortable and appropriate shoes** – walking shoes will prevent injury.
- ✓ **Drink plenty of water.**
- ✓ **Keep safe** - use good judgment about weather conditions, choose an inside walking path if necessary, and in inclement weather avoid using icy or snowy sidewalks, paths, or parking lots.
- ✓ **Discuss this exercise plan** with your personal physician if you are not currently active.
- ✓ **Check out “Get Active”** on Quick Tips for Healthy Living
http://www.howardcountymd.gov/WW/WW_QuickTips0.htm

Howard County Government
Agreement for 15-Minute Walking Program

A successful Walking program requires flexibility on the part of employees and supervisors. This agreement recognizes that employee and supervisor should mutually determine the option that works best for the employee, the department, and co-workers. Due to the nature of some work assignments, not all employees may be able to participate.

I, _____, (printed name), wish to participate in the Walking Program.

Check BOTH areas and fill in specific information, where indicated:

I plan to walk:

- Mornings Afternoons (Circle one)**
- Number of Days per week _____**

My supervisor and I have agreed that my plans might change depending on the daily work flow and needs of my worksite.

I understand that this is a health promotion program and agree to adhere to the stated guidelines. If I abuse this privilege or do not adhere to the guidelines, I fully understand that my supervisor can revoke the permission for me to participate.

Employee: _____ Date _____
(Signature)

Supervisor to keep signed original in employee's file and returns a copy to employee.

Supervisor: _____ Date _____
(Signature)

If you need the Walking Program Guidelines or Approval Form in an alternative format, please contact Kathy Burk, HR Assistant, at kburk@howardcountymd.gov or (410) 313-2033.

Authorized: Lonnie Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer
August 2009