

UP 31.02.13.H0.01 Wellness Release Time Program



Approved: February 10, 2017
Next Scheduled Review: February 2020

Procedure Statement

Texas A&M University-Texarkana (A&M-Texarkana) Wellness Release Time Program is designed to enhance the well-being of employees. It is a voluntary program consisting of university-sponsored physical fitness activities and wellness education opportunities.

These voluntary programs are designed to improve overall well-being, encourage employees to adopt healthy behaviors and positive lifestyles, improve job performance, increase engagement and work satisfaction and reduce health care expenditures and insurance premiums.

Reason for Procedure

This procedure outlines the parameters of the Wellness Release Time Program and describes the application and monitoring process.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 The Wellness Release Time Program provides full-time, benefits-eligible employees 30 minutes during normal work hours up to three (3) times a week of release time for participation in physical exercise and fitness activities.
- 1.2 Participation in wellness release time occurs on-campus at the Recreation Center, through activities sponsored by the Employee Wellness Program, or by utilizing campus walking maps/routes, or other fitness activities as approved by the employee's immediate supervisor. Each approved program offering must maintain records of the specific employee participation. Supervisors may require verification of participation at any time.
- 1.3 Employees participating in the Wellness Release Time Program must submit an application attesting to a physical exam performed by a licensed physician and/or participation in a university-sponsored health screening within the past twelve months (see *Wellness Release Time Application*).

- 1.4 When feasible, wellness release time should be taken in conjunction with the start or end of the work day or in addition to the lunch break. The employee must specify the weekday(s) and time(s) of the wellness activities.
- 1.5 Wellness release time is paid time which does not have to be made up, cannot be accrued, and does not need to be documented on timesheets.
- 1.6 Wellness release time is not considered work time for purposes of Workers' Compensation. Injuries that may result during participation will not be treated as work-related injuries.
- 1.7 Each academic year (September 1 through August 31) of participation, employees must secure approval from their immediate supervisor prior to participation in the program using the *Wellness Release Time Application*.
- 1.8 Immediate supervisors are expected to make reasonable efforts to accommodate requests for participation in the Wellness Release Time Program. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure each employee has access to this policy and the workflow and operation of the department continues effectively while wellness release time is taken.
- 1.9 Participation in the Wellness Release Time Program may be disapproved for cause if the operation of the department will be negatively impacted by the absence. If an application is denied, the supervisor must indicate the reason(s) for denial.
- 1.10 Abuse of the privilege to participate in the Wellness Release Time Program will subject the employee to revocation of the privilege and/or disciplinary action.

2. APPLICATION AND MONITORING PROCEDURES

- 2.1 To apply for participation in the Wellness Release Time Program, the employee must complete a *Wellness Release Time Application* and submit it to his/her immediate supervisor. The application must specify the requested weekday(s) and time(s) of wellness activities.
- 2.2 If the application is approved by the supervisor, the employee will submit the approved application to the *Wellness Administrator*.
- 2.3 Employees are responsible for monitoring their usage of wellness release time and ensuring compliance with program guidelines. However, supervisors have the right to review records of employees' utilization of the Recreation Center and other programs or activities to verify hours of involvement.
- 2.4 The President of A&M-Texarkana supports the Wellness Release Time Program by supplementing participating employee membership costs to the Recreation Center.

Memberships are available to employees who participate in the Wellness Release Time Program at a discounted rate; however, membership to the Recreation Center is not required to participate in the Wellness Release Time Program.

- 2.5 Any exceptions or deviations from the approved schedule must be approved in writing by the employee's immediate supervisor.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[Texas Government Code Chapter 664, State Employees Health Fitness and Education System Regulation 31.02.13, Wellness Programs](#)

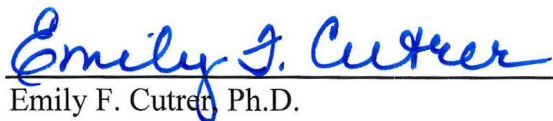
Appendix

Wellness Release Time Application

Contact Office

Office of Human Resources
(903) 223-3012

Approved:


Emily F. Cutrer, Ph.D.

President, Texas A&M University-Texarkana


Date



Texas A&M University-Texarkana

Wellness Release Time Application

Revision Date 01/20/2017

The Wellness Release Time Program provides full-time, benefits-eligible employees 30 minutes up to three (3) times per week of release time during normal work hours to participate in physical exercise and fitness activities on campus. The Wellness Release Time Application must be approved in advance by the immediate supervisor and may not interfere with the operation of the employee's department. Supervisors reserve the right to change the time requested or decrease the amount of time approved due to operational considerations. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring the employee's wellness release time usage and ensuring compliance with University Procedure 31.02.13.H0.01, *Wellness Release Time Program*.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Each academic year of participation, employees must submit a *Wellness Release Time Application* to their immediate supervisor prior to participation in the Wellness Release Time Program.
- Any deviations from the approved schedule must be pre-approved by the employee's immediate supervisor.
- If approved, submit the signed request to the Wellness Administrator in Human Resources via campus mail, e-mail to abaldwin@tamut.edu or fax to (903) 223-3130.
- If desired, membership in the Recreation Center may be obtained in the Business Office. Memberships are the responsibility of the employee.

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION:

Employee Name: _____ TAMUT E-mail: _____

Department: _____ Job Title: _____

Employee UIN: _____ Supervisor Name: _____

Weekday(s) and time(s) being requested: _____

I certify that I have visited my physician for an annual health examination or participated in a university-sponsored health screening within the past twelve months. I acknowledge that Wellness Release Time is **not** considered work time for purposes of workers' compensation benefits. I understand that participation in the Wellness Release Time Program must be in compliance with University Procedure 31.02.13.H0.01, *Wellness Release Time Program* and can be terminated by either the employee or supervisor at any time. I further understand that abuse of the privilege to participate in the Wellness Release Time Program will subject me to revocation of the privilege and my supervisor has the right to review records of my utilization of the Recreation Center or other employee wellness programs and activities to verify my hours of participation.

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

SUPERVISOR REVIEW:

Approved _____ If not approved, list
 Not Approved _____ reason(s): _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____