

WORKPLACE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

ALBERTA CENTRE FOR
Active Living

OUR AIM

To increase opportunities for physical activity through the workplace and to create a supportive organizational environment that encourages employees to incorporate physical activity into their daily routine.

OUR COMMITMENT

As an organization dedicated to increasing physical activity in Alberta, the Alberta Centre for Active Living (ACAL) commits to creating and maintaining an organizational culture that encourages and supports daily physical activity among employees.

- **ACAL encourages the use of on-site facilities and/or on-site classes or opportunities for physical activity.**
- **ACAL encourages staff to join one of the 21 intramural activities offered by the University of Alberta Campus and Community Recreation.**
- **ACAL institutes dress down or casual dress code to encourage active transportation.**
- **ACAL provides flexible working hours for physical activity before, during or after work.**
- **ACAL supports staff participation in physical activity special events during the work day (e.g., Winter Walk Day, Faculty events).**
- **ACAL aims to reduce prolonged sitting by holding standing meetings, having breaks for meetings longer than one hour, discouraging meetings at lunch, and promoting walking to work stations/offices instead of emailing colleagues.**
- **ACAL provides maps of walking routes around the area and posts them with times and distances.**
- **ACAL posts wellness information in a central area.**
- **ACAL provides pedometers to all staff.**
- **ACAL organizes quarterly physical activity breaks to introduce new activities and to revisit favourites.**

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

ACAL's vision is "to improve health and quality of life in Alberta by influencing active living policy and practice." We recognize that physical activity is a critical element for health and overall wellbeing. We also recognize that our staff spends a significant number of their waking hours at work and that the workplace is an important setting in which they can increase their activity levels.

It is recommended that all adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity per week.¹ This can be done in bouts of 10 minutes or more. It is also beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week. Regular physical activity can decrease the risk of coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, some cancers, depression, and obesity.

As a workplace, we acknowledge that there are benefits to supporting physical activity in the workplace and creating a culture that values employee wellbeing:

- Improved productivity
- Decreased turnover
- Lower absenteeism
- Decreased short- and long-term disability
- Improved employee health
- Improved employee morale

WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

As a resident in the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation at the University of Alberta, ACAL has the privilege of accessing world class physical activity facilities, including the Hanson Fitness and Lifestyle Centre, Wilson Climbing Wall, aquatics centre, pavilion and gymnasiums. Employees have access to a wide variety of free and registered programs.

1. Physical activity (PA) is movement that increases heart rate and breathing and is any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. Moderate-intensity PA is usually a 5 or 6 on a scale of 10. Vigorous-intensity PA is usually a 7 or 8 on a scale of 10. From the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for Adults.

WHO WE ARE

The Alberta Centre for Active Living was established in 1989 and focuses on the promotion of physical activity in Alberta.

We are unique in Canada and are known nationally and internationally for effective knowledge mobilization and advocacy.

We are a research centre of the University of Alberta's Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation. We receive operational grant support from Alberta Culture and Tourism.

For more information, visit:
www.centre4activeliving.ca

MISSION

Promoting active living by bridging research, practice and decision-making.

VISION

To improve health and quality of life in Alberta by influencing active living policy and practice.

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