



# Active at Work Toolkit

Brought to you by  
the Government of Newfoundland  
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# Introduction

Since 2015, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and ParticipACTION, with support from Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador (Recreation NL), have partnered on campaigns and engagement initiatives that motivate, educate and enable residents of Newfoundland and Labrador to get more active.

To continue our efforts together, we've created this Active at Work Toolkit, which includes information and resources that support active living during the workday, integrating some key messages and learnings from ParticipACTION's [\*Fall in with an active crowd\*](#) campaign.

Because most adults spend large parts of their lives working, the workplace is an ideal environment for introducing healthy habits that can improve our overall health and well-being.

When employees are encouraged to get active during the workday, they can benefit from [\*\*improved brain function, quality of life, sleep, and physical and mental health\*\*](#). These all directly impact organizational health because they can result in increased productivity, more meaningful employee interactions, lower injury rates, reduced absenteeism and decreased health-care costs.



# 7 keys to success

**Support from leadership is essential to foster an active, healthy work culture, increase organizational performance, enhance public image and improve employee retention.**

Here are some tips to help employees increase their workday physical activity:

**1**

## **Be inclusive**

When organizing and planning activities, consider employees' varying levels of ability as well as consider those employees working in multiple locations, working remotely and those working in person.

**2**

## **Make it social**

Being active as a group can help break down walls between employees and act as a building block to grow a stronger workforce by boosting employees' confidence and happiness.

**3**

## **Walk the talk**

Model the behaviours you want to see reflected by your employees. When your colleagues see you having on-the-move meetings, actively commuting and prioritizing movement, chances are they'll follow suit.

**4**

## **Create choice**

Employees need to feel like they have permission to make active choices to support their health during the workday.

**5**

## **Make it fun**

Engage employees in activity planning and promotion and provide incentives, if possible.

**6**

## **Spread the word**

Print and/or share the resources in this toolkit to encourage participation within your workplace.

**7**

## **Develop partnerships**

These activities are just a start. Consider adding community-boosting physical activity initiatives to your organization's calendar or partner with communities and/or businesses to provide opportunities for employees to be active.

# Tips for employees to get active at work

1



## Make meetings active

- Encourage standing meetings, if possible.
- Take short active breaks during meetings for a mood-boost.
- Have meetings on the move and outdoors, if possible.

## Use active transportation to commute

- If you're able, walk, wheel or cycle to and from work, even if it's just part of the way.
- Taking public transit? Get off a stop or two earlier.
- Driving? Park farther away from your destination.
- Working from home? Go on a walk or wheel before and after work to simulate a commute.

2



3



## Make your lunch hour active

- Organize lunch-time group workouts.
- Have a table tennis tournament in a lunchroom on a boardroom table.
- Follow along with one of [ParticipACTION's exercise videos](#) in a meeting or during a break.
- Form a running/walking/wheeling group and set combined distance or time goals with colleagues everyone's movement counts!

# Tips for employees to get active at work

4



## Make it comfortable

- Keep a pair of sneakers and/or active wear and a water bottle at your workstation.
- Use a wireless headset so you can stand and/or move while taking calls.
- Bring a set of resistance bands or small hand weights to the office to add some resistance activities throughout the day.

## Find your active crowd outside your workplace (but invite colleagues to join!)

- Figure out what physical activities and sports you enjoy.
- Join physically active groups or set up your own on online platforms or apps like [Meetup](#), [Facebook](#), [Nextdoor](#) or [Parkrun](#).
- Sign up for group fitness classes.
- Join a local recreational sport team or league.

5



## Make it fun!

- Complete a month-long stair climb challenge to encourage staff to take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Participate in a [7-day/7-minute streak challenge](#) with co-workers to add a bit of movement throughout the work week.
- Post this [Mindfulness Practice Exercise routine](#) in your office and complete a few yoga-inspired exercises in your office.

6



# Resources and support



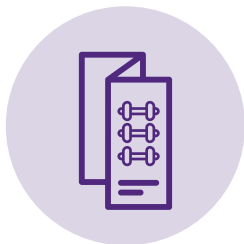
## Posters

Print and place these around your workplace to encourage your colleagues to squeeze physical activity into their workdays.



## Email template

Use this to encourage staff to take active breaks together during the workday.



## Employee handout

Print and post this at your workstation to remind you of ways to get active at your desk.



## PowerPoint template

Use this PowerPoint template throughout meetings or during active promotional weeks throughout the year to continue a conversation about being active at work.



## Stair Tracker

Use the Climb to Well-Being calendar to keep track of how many stairs you climb in a month.

# Sample policy and work environment ideas

Here are some examples of policy updates that employers could make to increase employees' physical activity at work:

- Offer flexible work hours, opportunities to work from home and dress codes that allow employees to wear comfortable clothing and footwear. This will help employees feel more comfortable getting active during their workday.
- Convert unused areas of your workplace into active spaces and/or places to store exercise equipment, yoga mats, workout clothes and other active gear. Place a TV in these spaces for playing workout videos.
- Incorporate adjustable standing desks in shared spaces to encourage standing.

## Additional links:

- Visit ParticipACTION's [“Sneak It In”](#) page for more tips on how to squeeze physical activity into your workday.
- Visit [ParticipACTION's “Get Active” page](#) for tips on how to start your own active group, to find fitness classes near you and to watch exercise videos.
- Read ParticipACTION's blog post, [“Why you should fall in with an active crowd and 5 tips to help you find one”](#).

## Want to learn more?

- Visit [ParticipACTION.com](#) for more information.