

# Waterloo Region's Healthy Workplace Awards 2012 Application Guide

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Can my workplace apply more than once?

Workplaces are encouraged to apply annually for these awards as a way of maintaining or expanding your comprehensive workplace health promotion programs.

### 2. Is there a deadline for the application?

Yes. The deadline is **July 1, 2012**. All applications received after that date will not be included in this year's award selection.

### 3. What is the reporting period for these awards?

For this award, only workplace wellness activities that occur between June 1, 2011 and May 31, 2012 are eligible for the 2012 award program.

### 4. How are workplace applications reviewed?

All applications will be reviewed by the Awards Selection Committee. If further clarification is required, the workplace will be contacted. Once the entire process is completed each workplace will be notified.

### 5. Who is on the Awards Selection Committee?

The Awards Selection Committee is made up of Region of Waterloo Public Health Project Health staff and local workplaces and agencies.

### 6. Can there be more than one award recipient for each category?

Yes! There may be several award recipients for each category.

### 7. If our workplace qualifies for an award, when will we receive the award?

Award recipients will receive their award at the annual Healthy Workplace Awards Celebration Event in October during Healthy Workplace Month.

### 8. What if our workplace does not qualify for an award?

If you do not qualify for one of the three levels of awards, we hope that this information will provide you with next steps in your program planning for the following year so that you can become a successful candidate in upcoming years.

### 9. Can I focus on different health promotion topics than those listed?

The listing provided is a sample to help get you started. If there is a topic that is not listed that is an issue for your workplace and your employees, then by all means, include it. The only stipulation is that the topic relates to health and wellness and of course, that you meet the minimum bronze, silver and/or gold criteria by selecting one of tobacco use, physical activity, and healthy eating.

### 10. What does 'policy' refer to in this award program?

One way to influence health behavior is through workplace health policies and procedures. A policy is a formal written statement that helps clarify roles and expectations between employers and employees. A policy typically includes an objective, definitions, and expectations of employee behaviour. In addition, a policy is generally: required, equitable, sustainable, incentive-based (punitive or positive), and enforceable (where there is meaningful consequences for unsafe, unhealthy, and/or prohibited behaviour).

A policy is NOT a guideline or recommendation.

### 11. Are guidelines the same as policies?

Sometimes guidelines are confused with policies. For example, a guideline exists when employees are provided with information that they may choose to utilize to help them make healthier lifestyle choices, yet there is no explicit expectation that the employee will follow the guidelines.

A policy is different than a guideline in that the behaviour outlined in the policy is expected and/or required of all employees, and that it is not up to the employees' discretion as to whether or not they will follow the policy.

### 12. Can one policy that covers many health topics count for each topic area?

No. If you have developed a policy that covers many topic areas, it only counts once for a total maximum of 10 points (e.g., Flex Time Policy).

### 13. Is having a policy the same as creating a supportive environment?

Supportive environments create an environment that fosters good health. Within a supportive environment, employees feel that the organization they work for provides them with encouragement, opportunities, and rewards for developing or maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Sometimes supportive environments are created in the absence of policy, and sometimes a policy may exist without a supportive environment.

### 14. Can one supportive environment strategy that covers many health topics count for each topic area?

If you have developed a supportive environment activity that potentially covers several topic areas it can only be counted once for a total maximum of 5 points (e.g., bike racks, walking groups).

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**15. If I check 'Other', do I need to specify what I mean by 'Other'?**

All 'Other' checkboxes require a written explanation. There is space available in all 'Strategies' columns for written explanations; however, if you require additional space, there is also section for free text at the end of the application.

**16. Do I add up the points for topic areas where we have not completed all four health promotion strategies?**

Yes. The application form applies to all of your workplace wellness initiatives – not just the topic areas that you have focused on to meet award level criteria.

**17. Why do you request photos?**

These photos will be used at the celebration event if your workplace is an award recipient. Taking photos of your wellness initiatives will also help you capture your successes in a visual way.

**18. What type of photos are you looking for?**

Consider taking photos of your activities, wellness committee, building/facilities, etc. Remember to get consent from employees who are in the photos.

**19. What is involved in a site visit?**

A site visit may be requested when being considered for an award. This is an opportunity for members of the Awards Selection Committee and/or Project Health staff to visit your company and meet with you face-to-face to hear all about your exciting wellness planning activities and have an opportunity to learn more about your company and site facility.

**20. Who would I contact if I require help with filling out this application?**

Support is available. Please contact Project Health at: Phone: 519-883-2287  
Email: [projecthealth@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:projecthealth@regionofwaterloo.ca)

### **Example 1: Supportive environment in absence of a workplace policy**

Workplace ABC cafeteria provider decides that it will offer a healthy entrée option every day. Although this is a positive health promotion activity, there is no formal expectation that it will continue. In this case, the cafeteria may decide that if the healthy entrée does not sell well, they would discontinue the item. Similarly, the cafeteria may consider a food item healthy; however, the workplace may disagree on the criterion that was used to determine if the item was healthy or not. If the workplace had a policy regarding healthy food items in the cafeteria, healthy/unhealthy food items would be clearly defined, and it would not be up to the discretion of the cafeteria to decide whether or not to sell a healthy entrée, or what types of foods are defined as healthy.

### **Example 2: Workplace policy in absence of a supportive environment**

Workplace ABC has a smoke-free workplace policy. Although they require that smoking does not occur on workplace premises (including workplace entrances and grounds) no other efforts are made to support employees with their smoking cessation efforts. A supportive environment that supports the workplace policy may include cessation support groups, benefits coverage for smoking cessation options, or other smoking cessation incentive programs.