

## **Wellness Release Time**

**Original Implementation:** July 29, 2014

**Last Revision:** July 21, 2020

### **Purpose**

The Stephen F. Austin State University employee wellness program is designed to benefit full-time employees who have completed at least six (6) months with the university and is a voluntary program of physical exercise and wellness activities designed to improve the health and well-being of employees.

### **General**

As part of the employee wellness program, the university will provide wellness release time which provides full-time, benefits-eligible employees 30 minutes of release time during normal work hours up to three (3) times a week for participation in physical exercise and wellness activities offered at the campus recreation center, employee wellness program locations, or walking on campus. Off-campus activities are not included unless sponsored by the employee wellness program.

Prior to participation in release time, the employee must complete the employee wellness participant profile, including the waiver of liability and hold harmless agreement in full. Employees should consult with a physician before undertaking any physical activity program.

Wellness release time is paid time, does not have to be made up, cannot be accrued, and may not be split or carried over from one day to another. Those employees using the time-clock system will be required to enter the appropriate task code for their release time. Wellness release time will not be counted toward Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime.

Each fiscal year (no later than September 30), or when transferring to a new position, employees must secure approval from their immediate supervisors and/or department heads prior to participation.

Immediate supervisors and department heads are expected to make reasonable efforts to accommodate requests for wellness release time. However, it must be recognized that participation may be disapproved if it is determined that the workflow and operation of the employee's department will be negatively impacted by the employee's absence due to participation in release time. If an application is denied, the supervisor or department head will indicate the reason(s) for the denial.

Abuse of the privilege to participate in release time will subject the employee to revocation of the privilege and/or disciplinary action. Supervisors have the right to review records of employees' utilization of the campus recreation center and the employee wellness program to verify hours of involvement.

**Cross Reference:** Tex. Gov't Code § 664.061

**Responsible for Implementation:** Vice President for Finance and Administration

**Contact for Revision:** Director of Human Resources

**Forms:** Wellness Release Time Approval Form

**Board Committee Assignment:** Academic and Student Affairs