

ALBERTA PUBLIC SERVICE - WORKPLACE HEALTH FRAMEWORK

VISION: The Alberta public service is respected for its attitudes, knowledge and skills, its effective management of public policy, and its dedication to achieving quality, affordable services for Albertans.

HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY: The Government of Alberta provides a safe work environment and supports the well-being of employees.

PROMOTING WORKPLACE HEALTH OBJECTIVE: The Alberta public service provides a positive, healthy and safe work environment.

WORKPLACE HEALTH: A comprehensive and integrated approach that fosters a culture where health, well-being and safety are an important part of everyday work. Workplace Health focuses on continuously improving the quality of life within the workplace by creating and sustaining a healthy work environment that supports organizational effectiveness.

ELEMENTS: Organizational and individual commitment to mental and physical health is organized under the following three elements:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

A healthy physical environment addresses the health and safety of the work force and exceeds responsibilities in relation to current health and safety legislation and directives. It fosters and supports a safe and healthy workplace with policies, programs and activities that reinforce and provide for good practices.

The Alberta government's Occupational Health and Safety Program is an example of a support for achieving a healthy physical environment.

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT AND PERSONAL RESOURCES

The social environment is the culture of an organization as experienced by its employees. Culture is created, reinforced and sustained by ongoing patterns of human relationships and communications that are known to have important influence on mental and physical health. These patterns are strongly influenced by managerial decisions about the organization and design of work as they result in policies and practices implemented and the extent to which basic human needs are routinely addressed. The employee's social environment is also effected through interpersonal relationships with supervisors and co-workers. A positive social environment nurtures the ability of people to fully use their talents and resources, and have "fun" at work.

Personal resources refer to the means by which individuals personally cope with stresses in their environment, and the sense of control they have over their work. The ability to influence events in one's immediate environment is an important part of what makes a person feel well. Personal resources also include a person's perception that there is support in his/her life during difficult times.

The Alberta government's ten **key determinants of a quality work environment*** (such as Work/Life Balance) and the Employee Assistance Program are examples of initiatives that support personal resources and a positive social environment.

HEALTH PRACTICES

A health practices environment enables and supports healthy lifestyles, behaviors and coping skills for dealing with life in healthy ways.

The Alberta government's flu clinics, fitness and nutrition initiatives and Workplace Health Conferences are examples of supports that promote healthy practices.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- ▣ A healthy work environment contributes to the organization's success by creating the conditions for continuous learning, innovation, skill development and business results.
- ▣ Workplace health is a shared responsibility among individual employees, their supervisors/managers and the organization as a whole.
- ▣ Leaders who practice effective coaching, recognition and management have a positive impact on the well-being of their staff.
- ▣ Healthy work environments recognize and strive to meet the needs of all employees.

ROLES:

Organization: Demonstrate leadership practices that integrate health into corporate values and business strategy. This includes responsibility for setting and communicating the strategic direction, goals/objectives and policies/practices, and making every effort to provide employees with safe working conditions, equipment and materials.

Manager/Supervisor: Responsible for modeling and operationalizing safe corporate and department practices, workplace health values and plans at the work unit level.

Employee: Personal responsibility for taking reasonable care to protect their health and safety and that of other workers present at the worksite, and for getting involved in healthy workplace programs or activities that meet their needs/interests.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- ▣ % of employees who feel valued.
- ▣ % of employees who agree they have the support they need from their organization to balance work and personal life.
- ▣ Every department demonstrates supports and strategies for workplace health.

* Key Determinants of a Quality Work Environment:

Opportunity for Input and Involvement	Recognition
Clear Expectations/Direction	Opportunity for Advancement
Job Fit/Interesting, Challenging and Meaningful Work	Quality of Co-worker Relationships/Communication
Learning/Development Opportunities	Quality of Service Provided
Quality of Management/Supervision	Work-Life Balance