

Workplace Health in America Survey

Glossary of Terms

Key terms, concepts, and definitions used in the Workplace Health in America Survey help to provide clarity and a better understanding of the questions for respondents.

Culture of health: A work environment where employee health and safety is valued, supported, and promoted through workplace health programs, policies, benefits, and environmental supports.

Disease or risk management information or programs: Programs offered for employees who already have a particular disease or health condition, and can include specific information, education and/or services to better manage the condition. These programs may be offered to employees through a health plan, a third-party vendor, or directly by the employer.

Employee Assistance Program: A benefit program or set of services offering assistance to employees, their family members, and employers for workplace and personal problems.

Engineering or administrative controls: Engineering controls protect workers by removing hazardous conditions or by placing a barrier between the worker and the hazard. Administrative controls are designed to protect workers through work practices and management policies (e.g., scheduled breaks).

Environmental supports: Elements of the physical workplace such as facilities and settings where employees work, as well as access and opportunities for health promotion that are provided by the surrounding community where employees live.

Ergonomic hazards: Job equipment, job design, and work practices that may lead to stress, injuries, and disorders that are associated with the overuse of muscles, bad posture, and repeated tasks.

Health education programs: Any educational opportunity that seeks to improve knowledge, skills, and/or change behaviors in ways that promote employee health or prevent disease using any of a variety of methods including print or online materials, contests, classes, and/or other activities.

Health risk assessment (HRA): An assessment tool used to evaluate an individual's health. An HRA could include a health survey or questionnaire; physical examination; or laboratory tests resulting in a profile of individual health risks often with accompanying advice or strategies to reduce the risks.

Health screenings: Tests or examinations to help detect health problems to get employees referred to a health professional for proper treatment.

Incentives: Rewards designed to influence the behavior of an individual or group. Incentives may be awarded by employee participation in an activity and/or on achieving a health standard such as sustaining cholesterol levels or blood pressure within a target range. These rewards can be monetary (e.g., cash, gift cards, health insurance premium discounts) or non-monetary (e.g., recognition, merchandise).

Lifestyle self-management program: Education, counseling, or other support provided to help individuals develop skills (e.g., decision making, self-monitoring) to improve their quality of life with one or more chronic conditions.

Policy: Formal or informal written statement designed to promote employee health.

Presenteeism: The measurable extent to which health symptoms, conditions, and diseases adversely affect the work productivity of an employee who chooses to remain at work.

Program evaluation: The systematic investigation of the quality, worth, and importance of a health promotion program or program component.

Program implementation: The process used to put selected health promotion programs, policies, practices, and environmental supports into place and make them available to employees.

Reasonable accommodations: Adjustments or modifications made to enable employees with physical or mental impairments to perform work tasks more easily.

Total worker health: Policies, programs, and practices that integrate protection from work-related safety and health hazards with promotion of injury and illness prevention efforts to advance worker well-being.

Well-being: A broad concept of an employee's overall health and satisfaction with life that includes physical and mental health, and potentially social, intellectual, financial, or other quality of life issues.

Worksite: A building, unique location, or business unit within the organization where work occurs, or that serves as the primary work address for field-based or telecommuting employees. A worksite can include a group of buildings as long as all the buildings are in close proximity (walking distance) and defined as part of the organization.

Worksite health promotion and wellness program: Any educational materials, activities, classes, health screenings, services, environmental supports, or policies that encourage employees to be healthy.