

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Physical Fitness

And

Wellness Promotion Program

The National Weather Service Employees Organization Branch 9-10 and the NOAA Aircraft Operations Center, hereby enter into this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish a Physical Fitness and Wellness Promotion Program.

The purpose of this physical fitness and wellness program is to establish policy to authorize NOAA Aircraft Operations Center employee's time off for physical fitness and wellness. Supervisors may grant up to 3 hours of excused leave, in increments of 59 minutes or less per absence, to employees who choose to participate in the program. Excused leave for this purpose cannot interfere with work or impede progress of the mission. This fitness promotion program must be of a fixed duration, therefore, the program is offered for 2 years from the effective date of this MOU. At the conclusion of the 2 year period this MOU will lapse and an assessment of the program will be completed. In accordance with mission requirements and financial considerations, the following guidelines are established for the Physical Fitness and Wellness Promotion Program.

- a. Participation is voluntary and open to all Bargaining Unit Employees, hereafter referred to as Employees. The purpose, duration, and schedule of this program MUST be documented on enclosure (1). The goal is to encourage and motivate Employees to develop a healthy lifestyle and enhance the quality of work-life and productivity. A healthy and physically fit workforce will enhance the Agency's ability to complete missions with maximum efficiency and effectiveness and help meet the requirements of Medical Clearance for Flight Crew members and Aircrew members, as specified in NOAA AOC Policy 22-1-3.
- b. Employees may be granted a maximum of 59 minutes per day, to a maximum 3 hours per week, of excused leave to participate in fitness activities and wellness programs. Only 1 block of time per day is authorized. Unused time cannot be banked or carried over to the next week. Contingent upon Supervisor's preapproval, any periods of time over the approved time may be charged as annual leave, credit hours or compensatory time, and are subject to applicable leave and absence regulations. Approved time can be used in conjunction with lunch periods not to exceed 1.5 hours for that day. Failure to obtain the Supervisor's pre-approval is considered to be unauthorized absence and it may result in the Employee being placed in an absence without official leave.

- c. Employees may request to participate in this program and must account for all time during fitness and wellness activities. Supervisors may revoke participation in this program, along with taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with section "n" of this MOU, if any abuses are substantiated.
- d. Fitness and Wellness activities will begin and end at AOC, 3450 Flightline Drive Lakeland FL. Employees who choose to exercise at the beginning of their work schedule are required to report in to work before exercising. Employees that choose to exercise at the end of their work schedule are required to return to their work place and report out.
- e. Fitness activities suitable for excused leave should address cardiovascular/aerobic endurance, muscular strength, endurance, flexibility and body composition. Such activities include, but are not limited to, running, jogging, walking, cycling, and use of a fitness center. Wellness program activities include, but are not limited to, health and nutrition education, stress management, weight management, and tobacco cessation. Also included are services provided by the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to include counselling services provided by an EAP employee.
- f. Participation in wellness/fitness programs/activities is not an Employee entitlement; however supervisors are encouraged to allow Employee participation to the maximum extent practicable. Supervisors must carefully balance workload needs and availability of personnel when authorizing an Employee time for wellness/fitness programs/activities. Supervisors may temporarily suspend Employee wellness/fitness participation when time-critical work must be completed (supervisors will describe the specific mission reason for cancelling the wellness/fitness leave). Supervisors should try, whenever possible, to allow employees to reschedule the exercise time period (up to 59 minutes per day, 3 hours per week) for another time or day in the week.
- g. Responsibilities
  - (1) Supervisors will:
    - (a) Approve or disapprove employee participation and account for the Employee's time in the program.
    - (b) Maintain the signed/original version of each participant's Physical Fitness and Wellness Promotion Program Agreement (enclosure (1)).
    - (c) Review current fitness agreements at least every 2 years to revalidate the fitness arrangement.
    - (d) Strongly advise each participant to seek the approval of a physician prior to participating in the program.

(2) Participants will:

- (a) Complete enclosure (1) and obtain supervisor concurrence prior to participation.
  - (b) Establish exercise/wellness period to occur any time within the work day (with their supervisor's concurrence), provided it does not interfere with, or impede the mission. These periods may be temporarily shifted by the supervisor or the employee (with supervisory approval) for the employee's needs or to accomplish mission requirements.
  - (c) Complete and submit a new fitness agreement when assigned to a new supervisor, new position, or when a permanent change to the fitness/wellness arrangement is requested.
  - (d) Report in and out to one's supervisor if participating in either exercise or wellness activities at the beginning or end of the work day.
  - (e) Record all time spent in the program in Web TA by inputting short text "PF/WP" and the corresponding time(s) and date(s). Excused time for fitness/wellness must be charged in 15 minute increments.
  - (f) Scheduled for Temporary Duty (TDY) or training must suspend their civilian fitness/wellness program arrangements during applicable days. No excused absence shall be granted for wellness/fitness while on TDY.
  - (g) Maintain work performance at a fully successful level, in order to maintain eligibility to participate in the program.
- h. Employees will be excluded from participation of this program should they currently have a leave restriction letter on file, or be issued one during the lifetime of this MOU.
  - i. At the discretion of Management employees may be excluded from participation of this program for up to a 12 month period should they receive any formal disciplinary action (such as a Letter of Reprimand or Suspension). The exclusion period will be from the effective date of the formal disciplinary action. Management reserves the right to permanently exclude any employee from the program for abuse of the program.
  - j. Employees that have been given a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) will be excluded from participation during the duration of the PIP.
  - k. New employees must wait a minimum of 90 calendar days from their entry on duty date with AOC to begin participation for the purposes of orientation.

- i. Employees on light/limited duty or just returning to work from a medical condition will not be eligible to participate until they have been medically cleared for full duty.
- m. Activity participation injuries must be reported to the supervisor immediately. The supervisor should then immediately contact the NOAA Compensation Program Manager for instruction. All Federal Employees Compensation Action claims filed as a result of participation in this program is subject to final adjudication by the Office of Worker's Compensation Program at the Department of Labor.
- n. If management wishes to terminate or deny the request to participate in the Physical Fitness and Wellness Promotion Program, written notice is required. The termination or reason for denial must be included on enclosure (1) from the supervisor. If the employee decides to no longer participate in the program, he or she should notify their supervisor of their intentions to terminate the Physical Fitness and Wellness Promotion Program Agreement.

Wayne Pulla 2/7/17  
 MOC Steward  
 [Signature] 12/7/17  
 NWSEO Branch 9-10 Date

[Signature] XO 12/7/17  
 ACE  
 NOAA Aircraft Operations Center Date