POLICY:

1. The Department encourages employees to participate in activities sponsored by the Worksite Wellness Program and/or the Strive for Wellness Program (Wellness Programs).

1.1 These activities include, but are not limited to, "Lunch and Learn" programs; health promotion and/or fitness activities; health screenings; and special events such as the National Employee Health and Fitness Day walk.

1.1.1 Activities that are sponsored by the Wellness Programs and covered under this policy will be clearly identified as such by Departmental e-mail or other official communication.

2.0 Employees may participate in Wellness Program sponsored Lunch and Learn programs for thirty (30) minutes.

2.1 Employees may participate in Wellness Program sponsored special events for up to one (1) hour.

2.1.1 Employees may participate in no more than one (1) sponsored activity per month without being charged leave.

2.1.2 Attendance beyond this must be during the employee's lunch break or charged to annual leave, compensatory time, or up to one (1) hour per month of sick leave.

2.1.3 Employees may not use the thirty (30) minutes to attend Wellness Program sponsored events to extend their morning or afternoon break.

2.1.4 Wellness Program sponsored classes, such as exercise classes, are not considered a Lunch and Learn program or special event.

3.0 Employees must receive supervisory approval prior to the employee using the allowed time so adequate staffing can be provided for the work unit.

3.1 When practicable, supervisors are encouraged to approve employees’ requests to attend Wellness Program sponsored events.

3.1.1 However, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to assure that all employees within the work unit are treated equitably and that the work unit is adequately staffed.

3.1.2 Supervisors are authorized to deny approval when necessary to meet this requirement.

3.1.3 For exercise classes and events not sponsored by the Wellness Programs, employees may request a flexible work schedule.

3.1.4 Flex time may be used to accommodate participation in personal health and fitness activities done on the employee's own time (i.e., walking, running, jogging, bicycling, or working out at a private fitness facility).

* For example, an employee may request a work schedule of 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. This would allow one and one-half (1 1/2) hours for the activity and lunch.

Prepared By: Approved By:

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Chief, Office of Human Resources DHSS Director (or designee)