



Office of the
Director

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

May 1, 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS

FROM: Linda M. Springer,
Director

SUBJECT: *HealthierFeds: Promoting Wellness Among Federal Employees*
Employee Health and Fitness Month, May 2006

Each year in May employees all over the Nation celebrate Employee Health and Fitness Month, an event that cascades from National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. This year, in President George W. Bush's Proclamation for National Physical Fitness and Sports Month (attached), he urged children, teens, and all Americans to make time every day for exercise and to encourage family, friends, and neighbors to live healthier lives by participating in physical fitness activities. You may view the President's proclamation on the White House website at whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/04/20060420-9.html. The Office of Personnel Management has embraced physical activity as one of four pillars of the HealthierFeds Initiative (healthierfeds.gov), a campaign to encourage positive health decisions among Federal employees.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most Americans today do not engage in the recommended levels of physical activity. The CDC states that adults 18 and older need 30 minutes of physical activity on five or more days of the week to be healthy. Persons practicing moderate daily physical activity can reduce substantially the risk of developing or dying from cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers, such as colon cancer.

While many agencies have taken advantage of the opportunities provided under 5 U.S.C §7901 (uscode.house.gov/download/pls/5C79.txt) to establish and operate employee health and fitness programs and facilities, OPM recognizes the positive impact that workplaces can make with special promotional efforts at the workplace. Employee Health and Fitness Month provides an excellent opportunity for Federal agencies, through events such as health fairs, fitness challenges/walks, or lunch and learn seminars to reinforce employees with messages about the importance of being physically active.

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During Employee Health and Fitness Month, employees can benefit by learning about sensible ways to get started with an exercise program. An exceptional resource is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/recommendations/index.htm. Agencies may also wish to take advantage of creative opportunities for workplaces to get involved through The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (PCPFS), a leader in promoting exercise for the Nation at www.fitness.gov.

The benefits of physical activity are immeasurable and can enhance an individual's quality of life in countless ways. By calling attention to the importance of being physically active, we can help Federal employees to achieve a crucial step in enjoying greater health.