



## GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

*Guiding the Kennebec Valley Forward*

Impact2032 unites community members in taking action and making change in the community. With the support of our partner organizations, we will create stronger, longer lives; supported, ready minds; and prepared, stable homes to generate lasting, meaningful impact in Kennebec County by 2032. This “Guide for Employers” offers several workplace policies and best practices that help to advance Impact2032 while benefiting your organization and employees.

### **POLICIES AND BEST PRACTICES AT-A-GLANCE:**

#### ***Stronger, longer lives***

- Promote a culture of health and wellness for employees.
- Help employees experience improved health outcomes.
- Limit barriers for employees to achieve optimum health.

#### ***Supported, ready minds***

- Offer employees family-friendly workplace policies and practices.

#### ***Prepared, stable homes***

- Support employees in life-long learning practices.
- Provide employees with the opportunity to become financially stable.
- Foster a culture of financial wellness for employees.

#### ***Lasting, meaningful impact***

- Consider diversity, equity, and inclusion within organizational policies and practices
- Encourage employees to actively participate in the community
- Educate about and celebrate participation in Impact2032

### **HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE**

The following pages contain concrete examples of policies and best practices that support the visions and desired outcomes of Impact2032. You may use this guide to:

- Identify strategies already in place within your business
  - Choose new policies and best practices you may want to implement
- Prepare for your business’ Impact2032 Advancement meeting

***Please note:*** This guide is not meant to provide an exhaustive list. There will be future iterations of this guide as the Impact2032 community learns from each other.

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## **VISION FOR HEALTH:**

### ***Stronger, longer lives.***

- Promote a culture of health and wellness for employees.

#### **Examples:**

- Create a wellness team focused on creating programming for employees.
  - Offer healthy, local food options to employees whenever possible (e.g., breakrooms, celebrations, events, training,).
  - Remove unhealthy food options from the premises whenever possible.
  - Develop opportunities for staff to exchange fresh fruits/vegetables from their gardens.
  - Create opportunities for employees to exchange healthy recipes.
  - Provide opportunities for movement breaks or walking meetings throughout the day.
  - Allow employees to come in later, have a longer lunch, or leave early for physical activity purposes.
  - Promote exercise or walking groups for employees.
  - Implement smoke- and tobacco-free policies at the workplace.
  - Inform employees of available resources to help them quit smoking, vaping, or other forms of tobacco (e.g., Maine QuitLink, MaineGeneral resources).
  - Provide drinking water for employees to remain hydrated throughout the day.
  - Create opportunities for employee socialization to support human connection, team building, and overall morale during appropriate times.
  - Place materials with current information and local resources for nutrition, physical activity, and overall health and wellness in employee newsletters and common areas.
  - Offer and/or promote health insurance discounts, incentives, and/or reimbursement as well as programs and resources related to health and wellness activities.
- Help employees experience improved health outcomes.

#### **Examples:**

- Place materials with information about physical and behavioral health as well as substance use recovery services in employee common areas (e.g., 211 Maine).
- Incorporate education around coping and critical thinking skills, physical and behavioral health, and/or substance use disorders during employee training days.
- Participate in marketing campaigns that reduce the stigma of mental health and/or substance use disorders at the workplace.
- Allow employees to access physical and behavioral health as well as substance use disorder services during the typical workday.



- Offer paid sick leave and an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to connect employees to confidential, professional assistance to help with personal, family, and work issues.
- Implement workplace policies and practices that are recovery friendly and preventive of drug misuse.
- Reduce work-related injury risk and other working conditions that may increase the risk of misuse of substances.
- Purchase NARCAN (over-the-counter opioid overdose treatment) and provide associated trainings to employees so they are prepared in the event of an emergency.
- Offer free or affordable comprehensive dental insurance to employees and their families so that they can access preventive care.
- Create opportunities for employees and their families to feel connected to your organization and the community.
- Support and engage with community organizations and activities that advance primary prevention activities and support individual behavior change.
- Limit barriers for employees to achieve optimum health.
  - **Examples:**
    - Identify employees struggling with food insecurity and link them to resources.
    - Create a discreet food pantry within your organization for employees facing food insecurity.
    - Offer free or affordable comprehensive health insurance to staff and their families.
    - Develop an emergency fund to support access for necessary prescriptions or unexpected medical expenses for employees and their families.
    - Place materials with information about food insecurity and health insurance options in employee common areas.
    - Partner with local organizations to support employees learning English as a second language, such as adult education and/or literacy programs in the community.

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## VISION FOR EDUCATION

### *Supported, ready minds*

- Offer employees family-friendly workplace policies and practices.
  - Examples:**
    - Erect a learning library at your organization for employees and their families.
    - Create opportunities for children's book, clothes, and/or toy exchanges for staff.
    - Offer flexible schedules or specified parental time for staff to attend and/or provide transportation for child preschool programs, activities, appointments, events, etc.
    - Offer employees paid and longer parental (maternity/paternity) leave.
    - Provide opportunities for employees to work remotely when possible.
    - Allow flexible schedules for employees to lessen the amount of childcare needed.
    - Offer on-site childcare or back-up care for your employees.
    - Partner with a local childcare center or in-home provider to provide sick-child options to employees.
    - Support pregnant individuals and new parents in attending medical appointments, working through pregnancy-related symptoms, and/or meeting breast/chestfeeding obligations.
    - Place materials with information about child development as well as child and family resources in employee common areas.

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## VISION FOR FINANCIAL STABILITY

### *Prepared, stable homes*

- Support employees in lifelong learning practices.  
**Examples:**
  - Support employees learning English as a second language (e.g., pay for classes, offer paid time to attend classes).
  - Offer internal mentoring programs and training opportunities for career education and advancement for employees.
  - Create opportunities for employees to develop and monitor both professional and personal goals over the course of the next several years.
  - Place materials with information about educational resources in employee common areas.
  - Help employees complete high school by offering free access to accredited programs at local institutions or online.
  - Offer tuition assistance programs and paid time to encourage employees to further their education and/or obtain a degree or certificate.
  - Send professionals into schools to present different career opportunities.
  - Offer job shadow days, internships, mentoring programs, etc. to students.
- Provide employees with the opportunity to become financially stable.  
**Examples:**
  - Offer livable wages and benefits to employees.
  - Support employee efforts in accessing a secondary source for household income.
  - Place materials with information about resources to become financially stable in employee common areas.
- Foster a culture of financial wellness for employees.  
**Examples:**
  - Subsidize childcare/offer a childcare stipend to employees and their families.
  - Create your own transportation system and/or facilitate ride-share opportunities.
  - Educate employees about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC).
  - Offer financial coaching, education, and other tools to employees.
  - Place information about resources for financial literacy and coaching, as well as soft skills training, in employee common areas.
  - Offer employees access to emergency funds and/or low-interest loans.



## OVERALL VISION

### *Lasting, meaningful impact*

- Consider diversity, equity, and inclusion within organizational policies and practices.  
**Examples:**
  - Develop an internal committee focused on accessibility and inclusivity.
  - Access external resources to guide best practices for your business.
  - Hire individuals facing barriers to employment (e.g., black, Indigenous and people of color, veterans, New Mainers, people re-entering the workforce, people in recovery, people with disabilities).
  - Prevent unconscious bias from impacting the hiring process.
  - Pursue equity in compensation and promotion decisions.
  - Consider inclusion in marketing and events.
- Encourage employees to actively participate in the community.  
**Examples:**
  - Promote employee volunteerism and activism through designated paid time off.
  - Hold a voter registration event and/or provide flexible scheduling on voting days.
  - Collect and donate items that support Impact2032 goals and strategies.
- Educate about and celebrate company participation in Impact2032.  
**Examples:**
  - Offer lunch-and-learn sessions on cross-goal topics, such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), social-emotional learning, and associated warning signs.
  - Educate employees about systemic issues that affect Impact2032 and train them to better address these issues.
  - Visibly display company's commitment to Impact2032 and actions taken to advance the visions and goals.

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