

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

Guidelines for Use of County-Owned or Leased Properties for Physical Activity

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I. PURPOSE

An active lifestyle is vital to the health and well-being of all County employees. Physical activity has been shown to improve job performance, lower absenteeism and lower medical costs. More importantly, an active lifestyle, coupled with healthy eating, can help reduce the risk for many diseases and health conditions while improving overall quality of life. While working to achieve these goals, it is important to minimize personal injury exposures and insure that the benefits will outweigh the costs.

The purpose of this document is to identify the procedures and requirements for the authorized use of County owned and leased property for physical activity conducted by County employees. These procedures are based upon guidelines developed by The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) regarding personal injury exposures associated with physical activity and are designed to ensure that employee fitness activities are held in what is considered to be a relatively safe environment and are conducted in an appropriate manner.

II. POLICY

On October 16, 2009, the County Board of Supervisors adopted the County Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy. Under the policy, designated rooms where County employees work, whether County owned or leased facilities, may be made available at lunchtime and non-work time to encourage physical activities among employees. Usage will be subject to room availability and compliance with safety and procedural guidelines as set forth in this document.

In accordance with the policy, designated rooms will only be available during business hours. Employees may exercise before work, during lunchtime, and after work unless County alternative use of the room is required during those times.

III. AGENCY/DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Each County Agency/Department shall designate an individual to carry out the following:

1. Support and monitor facility use procedures as described herein at the request of department employees.
2. Sign the Facility Use Request Form submitted by employees and forward to RMU for authorization.
3. Facilitate and comply with site inspection.
4. Affix Facility Use Notice to walls in designated room (per GSA guidelines)
5. Notify employees when approval process is complete and physical activity can begin.
6. Insure required attendance documentation is maintained and forwarded to RMU on a quarterly basis.

IV. TYPES OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PERMITTED

A. Unsupervised / Non-Instructed Activities

These activities take place without a leader or are led by volunteer, non-paid employees. They may include the use of exercise videos, DVD's and/or CD's.

1. All activities must be non-contact and low to moderate intensity.
2. Activities may include, but are not limited to: Stretching, yoga, pilates, T'ai Chi, Qigong, walking, dancing, low impact aerobics, light weight-training, or other low to moderate intensity physical activity.

B. Activities Led by Paid Instructors

1. Agencies/Departments or individual employees who wish to contract with an outside instructor to lead any physical activities must obtain pre-approval from RMU.
2. A copy of a written contract or memorandum of understanding between the paid instructor and the Agency/Department will be required. Paid instructors must provide proof of professional certification, CPR certification and liability insurance at limits to be determined in the RMU approval process.

C. Group Sports

Group sports are not permitted and may not be conducted on County premises at any time.

Group sports include, but are not limited to: Softball, volleyball, soccer, basketball, lawn bowling, and other contact sports.

V. **INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS**

RMU will purchase and maintain a special liability insurance policy for permitted physical activities under the County Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy. The insurance policy will cover permitted activities that take place without a leader or are led by volunteer, non-paid employees. The insurance policy requires submittal of estimated and actual class attendance for each permitted physical activity. Every participant is required to sign-in at every class to demonstrate actual attendance.

Paid instructors that lead permitted physical activities will be required to provide proof of and maintain liability insurance. Insurance limits will be determined as part of the RMU approval process.

VI. **SAFETY REQUIREMENTS**

A. Buddy Policy

For mutual safety and assistance when exercising, employees must observe a “buddy policy,” insuring that a minimum of two or more employees are present at all times during physical activity.

B. Site Inspection

The following requirements will be evaluated by RMU safety personnel during a scheduled site inspection prior to approving the room for physical activity:

1. Room Capacity - Room where fitness activities are to be held should be large enough to accommodate the number of participants.
2. Floor Surface - Floor surfaces should be clean, properly maintained, and free of tripping hazards.
3. Exits - All exits are to be unlocked and free of obstructions.

C. Emergency Information

1. First Aid Kits - First Aid kits should be maintained by the Agency/Department Safety Coordinator. A kit should be kept in the room during all physical activity periods.
2. CPR - It is strongly recommended that one or more participants be CPR certified. Please contact the RMU to arrange for CPR Training and re-certification.
3. Telephones - There should be a telephone located in the room or nearby with the emergency telephone number posted on it.
4. Signs - Each designated room should have a Facility Use Notice posted in plain view.

D. Facility Use Notice

Upon approval of a facility location, RMU will provide a Facility Use Notice to be posted indicating to users that the room is approved for physical activity, the inherent risks in using the facility, and emergency procedures. These signs are to remain posted for the duration of the approved use time.

VII. FACILITY APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Employees find a buddy or assemble a group of co-workers who want to exercise together.
2. Employees select one person to be the Exercise Group Contact (this person or an alternate will need to be present at each exercise session to monitor attendance).
3. Required of all Employee Participants:
 - a) Read the Exercise Safety Guidelines
 - b) Complete the Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q)
 - c) Sign the Waiver of Liability Agreement
4. Required of Exercise Group Contact Person:
 - a) Complete Section A of the Facility Use Request form
 - b) Submit Facility Use Request form and signed Waiver of Liability Agreements for all participants to Dept. Wellness Liaison
 - c) After approval is received, attend exercise sessions, monitor attendance and forward completed sign-in sheets to Dept. Wellness Liaison
5. Required of Department Wellness Liaison:
 - a) Authorize facility use request and designate room location
 - b) Forward completed Facility Use Request Form to Risk Management Unit
 - c) Assist Risk Management Unit in conducting safety inspection of room location
 - d) Insure compliance with safety inspection report
 - e) Affix Facility Use Notice to walls in designated room (per GSA guidelines)
 - f) Notify Exercise Group Contact Person and participants when approval process is complete and physical activity can begin
 - g) Collect completed sign in sheets from Exercise Group Contact Person and forward to Risk Management Unit on a quarterly basis

VIII. FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

- A. Guidelines for Use of County-Owned or Leased Properties for Physical Activity
- B. Facility Use Request Form
- C. PAR-Q Questionnaire & Exercise Safety Guidelines
- D. Release and Waiver of Liability Agreement
- E. Participant Sign-Sheet
- F. Facility Use Notice