



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: _____

Program Title: _____

Program Category: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Title: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____ Website: _____

Email: _____

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: Mary M. Kelly

**2025 VACo Achievement Awards
Chesterfield County Program Nomination: Employee Wellness**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chesterfield County’s Employee Wellness Program takes a strategic approach to workplace wellness by integrating accessible fitness opportunities, enhanced physical environments and incentive-based engagement. Through targeted investments in the Employee Fitness Room, HitRefresh midday fitness classes and the Majestic National Parks Step Challenge, the county’s program creates a workplace culture that prioritizes movement, health, social connection and preventative medical care in support of a multifaceted approach to overall employee health.

Guided by public health behavior change strategies, the program aligns with the Socio-Ecological Model (SEM) by targeting change at the individual (personal health improvements), interpersonal (team-based support and motivation) and organizational (policy-driven infrastructure and incentives) levels.

By embedding evidence-based frameworks into its comprehensive wellness initiatives and offering a “no-barrier to wellness” approach, Chesterfield County ensures that these programs are not just effective and accessible, but sustainable for long-term employee well-being.

NEED AND CONTEXT

Employee health is a fundamental driver of workplace productivity, morale and overall job satisfaction. With a workforce of approximately 4,500 employees, Chesterfield County recognized that many employees faced barriers to physical activity, including limited time, inconsistent program engagement and environmental constraints that made year-round activity

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difficult. Without structured opportunities to engage in fitness, employees often defaulted to sedentary behaviors, increasing their risk of chronic conditions such as obesity and cardiovascular disease.

The county sought to address these challenges through an approach grounded in public health behavior change theory. By applying strategies that enhanced access, changed the physical environment and introduced social and incentive-driven support, the Employee Wellness Program created an environment where movement became a natural part of the workday.

Recognizing that health and wellness are shaped by multiple factors, the initiative was also designed to operate across three levels of the Socio-Ecological Model. At the individual level, the program encouraged employees to integrate fitness into their daily routines through structured classes and personal gym use. At the interpersonal level, the step challenge and group fitness classes fostered community and accountability, reinforcing participation through social connection. At the organizational level, the county made strategic investments in infrastructure and incentives, ensuring that wellness was embedded into the county's workplace culture for long-term sustainability.

By combining these approaches, the Employee Wellness Program transcended the limitations of traditional workplace fitness programs and, instead, created a comprehensive, adaptable model that supports employee health across all seasons and job functions.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The HitRefresh midday fitness program was launched following an employee interest survey that identified a desire for on-campus fitness classes during the workday. It has since become a cornerstone of the Employee Wellness Program. Classes are held twice weekly during the lunch hour and led by a certified trainer. Each session incorporates creative and fun formats

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to maintain engagement, such as Goat Yoga, Halloween-themed workouts in October and Gratitude Yoga in November. Over the past year, HitRefresh hosted 90 classes, drawing 584 participants.

Alongside these classes, the county made improvements to the Employee Fitness Room, recognizing that physical space is key to sustaining wellness behaviors. In 2022, a breakroom and storage room in a lightly staffed building were repurposed to create the facility. The county used \$24,500 of wellness funding to expand the space, purchase new equipment and upgrade the locker rooms. Much of the work was completed in-house by General Services staff. The upgraded facility significantly expanded its appeal, offering a convenient and cost-free alternative to commercial gym memberships for many employees. The results were immediate: participation increased by as high as 104% year over year.

To further support engagement with wellness programs, the county introduced the annual Majestic National Parks Step Challenge. In fall 2024, employees across 13 teams logged 27.8 million steps, covering nearly 14,000 miles. The challenge encouraged peer support and friendly competition, and participation counted toward the Wellness Incentive Program.

The county's annual Wellness Incentive Program encourages preventative care and physical activity by allowing employees to earn up to \$360 per year for tracking healthy behaviors such as physical activity and routine preventative care. To qualify for their annual wellness incentive, this program mandates employees to receive their annual wellness physical, which in turn strengthens the provider-patient relationship.

To reduce barriers to care, the county provides access to the Employee Medical Center, where staff can receive timely treatment for minor illnesses and injuries during the workday at no cost to those with county insurance and without using personal leave. Together, these offerings

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reflect Chesterfield County's commitment to a "no barrier to wellness" approach, integrating physical spaces, supportive policies, and social motivation into a comprehensive, sustainable strategy for employee well-being.

By integrating physical infrastructure, structured programming and social motivation, Chesterfield County created a comprehensive, research-backed approach to employee wellness that continues to sustain participation and engagement.

COST AND FUNDING

The Employee Wellness Program was redesigned with cost-effectiveness and long-term sustainability in mind. The county's wellness budget is funded by an allotment through the county's health insurance carrier and covers all costs for the program. The HitRefresh fitness classes operated at \$100 per class, totaling \$9,000 for 90 sessions, with no cost to participants.

The Employee Fitness Room expansion represented the largest investment, totaling \$24,500. This covered the costs of physical expansion, equipment purchases and locker room enhancements. In addition, the office building where the Employee Fitness Room resides was not being fully utilized due to more teleworking, creating the opportunity to repurpose existing space rather than building new.

The Majestic National Parks Step Challenge is a zero-cost initiative that leveraged existing wellness tracking tools and incentives to engage employees in a social setting. This allowed employees to engage in fitness without the county incurring additional expenses.

Lastly, the primary purpose of the Employee Medical Center is to treat workers' compensation injuries and conduct pre-employment and annual occupational physicals. No funding was required to support the offering of employee wellness visits, and there is no billing

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to the employee's health insurance. In FY24, the total cost avoidance (claims not submitted to the county's health insurance carrier) was \$341,360.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

The success of the Employee Wellness Program is best reflected in both quantifiable participation data and direct employee feedback. By February 2025, participation in the fitness room had increased by an average of 74% per month with consistent engagement throughout the year. Similarly, HitRefresh classes maintained strong attendance, particularly during creative seasonal events such as Goat Yoga and themed workout sessions. Employees reported feeling more energized, less stressed and more engaged at work as a direct result of participating in these activities. The investment yielded a significant return in participation and engagement, demonstrating that facility improvements are a sustainable way to encourage long-term wellness behaviors. Employee testimonials highlight the impact of these initiatives:

***Real Estate Appraiser:** "I greatly enjoy and look forward to the Tuesday lunch hour workout session as it helps boost my energy level so I'm not feeling sluggish in the afternoons. I feel more positive and less stressed after the workout. I've been able to meet colleagues I may not have met naturally as well. It's a wonderful opportunity to be outside and move your body!"*

***Inmate Records Technician:** "Since joining this workout I feel better, I am more energized, and I have lost a ton of weight. I enjoy meeting new people and getting a good 30-minute workout in."*

***Energy Management Administrator:** "HitRefresh is the best part of my workday! It's a worthwhile refreshing midday break that forces me to get away from my desk, boosts my energy, improves my attitude, and provides socialization with employees outside of my*

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department. I return back to the office with a clear mind and renewed motivation to tackle the afternoon workload.

These personal experiences, combined with measurable participation growth, underscore how Chesterfield County's Employee Wellness Program has not only improved physical health but also fostered a culture of connection and well-being. In recognition of these efforts, Chesterfield County was honored with the ActiveRVA Company of the Year award for its commitment to promoting physical activity among employees.

Lastly, the county saw no rate increase in the county sponsored healthcare plan because usage remained relatively flat, which is a result of employees taking better care of themselves and the county's overall approach to wellness. As the county's way of giving back to employees due to the favorable results for the healthcare fund, county employees received a Health Insurance Premium Holiday for January 2025.

INNOVATION

The Chesterfield County Employee Wellness Program's mission is to create a culture of wellness that empowers employees to be happy, healthy and productive in all aspects of their lives. To support this, the county implemented a multi-layered approach combining structured fitness programming, facility improvements, incentive-based engagement, and access to health services, which have proven to have a positive impact on employee morale and healthcare savings.

By combining midday fitness classes, facility upgrades and social motivation through step challenges, the county ensures that wellness is not just a program, but a core part of workplace culture that prioritizes movement, health, social connection and preventative medical care, in support of a multifaceted approach to overall employee health.

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A key innovation of this initiative is its integration of public health behavior change strategies to maximize accessibility, sustainability and participation. Unlike traditional before- or after-work fitness programs, HitRefresh eliminates time barriers by offering classes during the workday, ensuring that more employees can participate. Attendance data is used to adjust class frequency based on demand, making the program both efficient and responsive. Seasonal and novelty classes have successfully sustained engagement and broadened participation.

Beyond structured fitness programming, the Majestic National Parks Step Challenge provided a zero-cost engagement strategy that encouraged all employees to participate, even those who could not attend in-person classes. By linking participation to the county's Wellness Incentive, the challenge reinforced long-term behavior change and strengthened social motivation.

By prioritizing accessibility, engagement and data-driven decision-making, and partnering with the county's health insurance carrier for wellness funding, Chesterfield County has developed a replicable model for local governments seeking to implement sustainable initiatives in support of a comprehensive employee wellness program.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Email to County Employees: Health Insurance Premium Holiday (attached)

HitRefresh Flyer (attached)

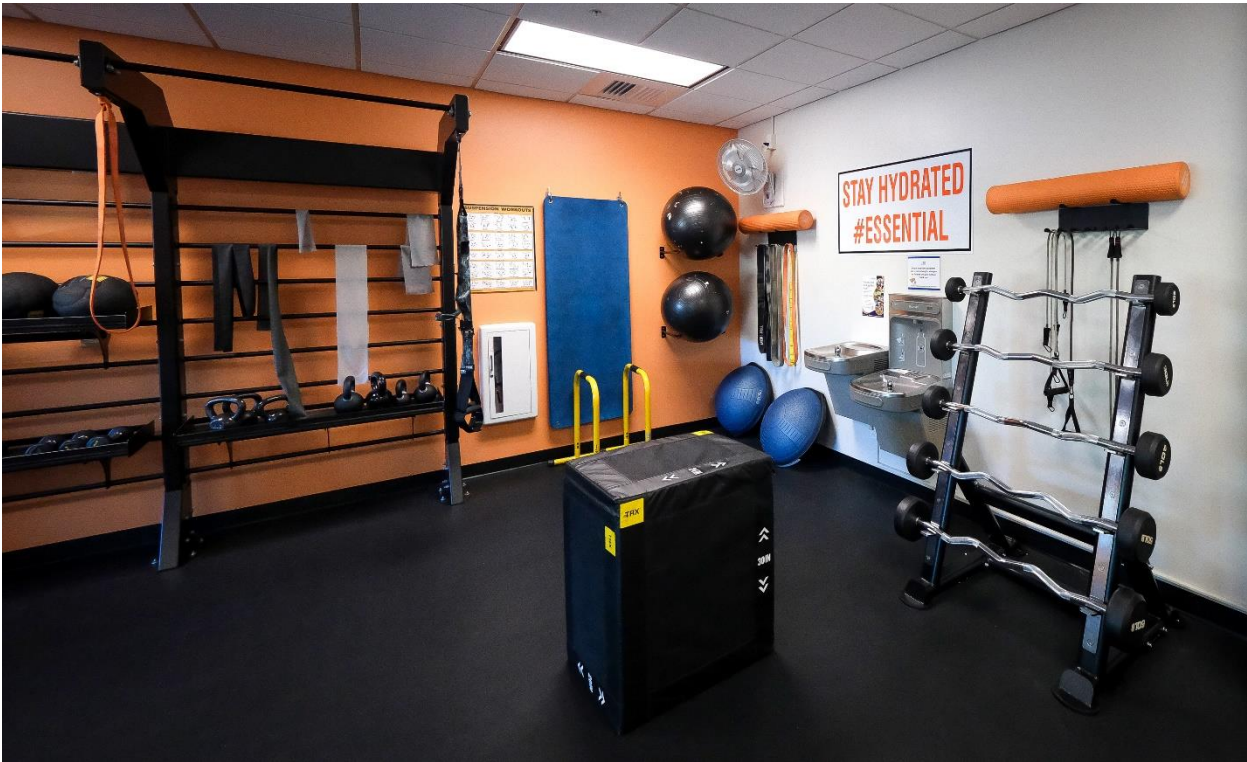
HitRefresh Program Pictures (below)

Employee Fitness Room Pictures (below)

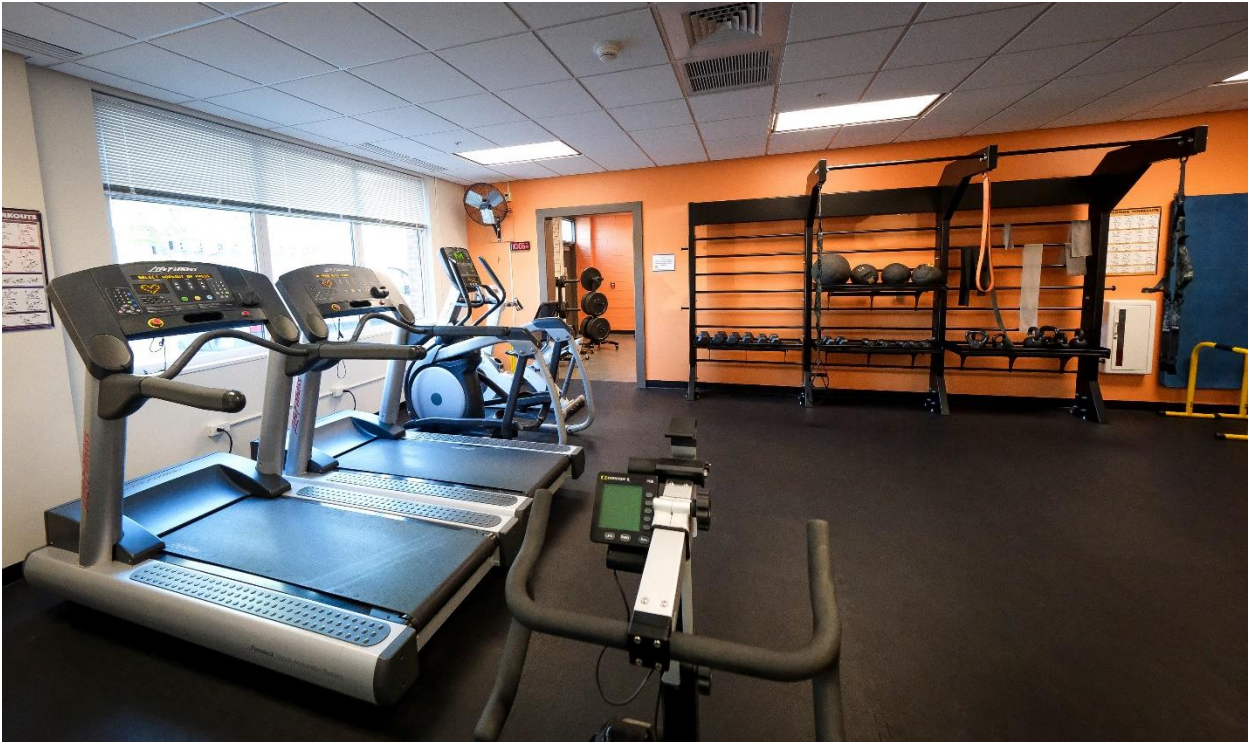
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GENERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE FITNESS ROOM A



GENERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE FITNESS ROOM A CONT.



GENERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE FITNESS ROOM B



GENERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE FITNESS ROOM B CONT.



From: [Marker, Elizabeth](#)
To: [County All](#)
Subject: Health Insurance Premium Holiday and Open Enrollment Changes
Date: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 12:11:27 PM

This message is being sent on behalf of Matt Harris, Deputy County Administrator, and Mary Martin Selby, Director of Human Resources.

As a token of appreciation for your hard work and dedication, and in recognition of the positive contributions employees have made to support their own health and well-being, and for making cost-effective decisions when using health care benefits, County Administration is pleased to announce a **Health Insurance Premium Holiday for January 10, 2025**.

What does this mean for you?

During this period, no deductions will be made from your paycheck for health insurance coverage on **January 10, 2025**. This is the county's way of giving back to our employees, as they have demonstrated good health practices overall, which have returned favorable results for the healthcare fund.

Key Details:

- **Premium Holiday Date:** January 10, 2025
- **Who is eligible:** All employees enrolled in a county health insurance plan.
- **What you need to do:** Nothing! The premium holiday will be applied automatically.
- **New 2025 Health Insurance Premiums:** These will be reflected on the paycheck of January 24, 2025.
- **Other Updates:** The January 10, 2025 paycheck will also reflect changes made during Open Enrollment and the new 2025 dental insurance premiums.

Your 2025 benefits can be viewed in [Employee Online](#). Please review your benefits to ensure your Open Enrollment changes are correct. You must notify Human Resources no later than January 31, 2025, if you feel there is an error in your 2025 benefits. Please contact Benefits@chesterfield.gov with any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your continued contributions to Chesterfield County. We are grateful to have such a dedicated and hardworking team, and we look forward to continuing to support your well-being in the future.

Matt Harris, DCA
Mary Martin Selby, Director of HR

Does your lunch break feel like a break?

Energize your day with **fun** and **free** midday fitness classes led by an expert instructor.

Tuesdays & Thursdays*

**check the schedule for changes*

12:15-12:45

- 30-minute group sessions
- Always on-site (indoor/outdoor locations)
- Self-paced to suit all abilities
- Yoga, strength, cardio, games, and more!
- Friendly faces and supportive community

Sign up on SharePoint

