

AUG
2020

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CITY OF TACOMA

HealthVine



The Tacoma Employee Wellness (TEW) program won a Happy Heart Award

The Tacoma-Pierce County Chambers of Commerce recognized the City of Tacoma for continuing a broad and long term commitment to employee health and wellbeing during their latest WorkWell Award luncheon.

Our program is still young and we are committed to continually enhancing the TEW program to ensure that it remains exciting and enjoyable to all. We sincerely value your wellbeing and are delighted to offer such a simple, social and fun wellness program. Whether you're already living a healthy lifestyle or beginning to make some changes, the TEW program is designed to help empower you to reach (and get credit for) your health and wellness goals.

Exciting Wellness Program Changes (Coming Soon)

These enhancements will come into effect Oct. 1, 2020. Stay tuned for more information soon!



There are 49 days remaining for you to earn your 2021 wellness incentive!

Please note that nothing has changed this year. The requirements and timeframe are they same as the previous incentive period. You need to earn 1,000 points between **Oct. 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020**. Your Rewards Wheel should be all **GREEN** and say 1,000 points earned in order for you to save as much as \$480 in 2021. Learn more about the [incentive](#) and visit the [FAQs page](#) for helpful tips!

Deadline for your wellness incentive: Sept. 30, 2020

NO INCENTIVE



YOU'VE EARNED THE INCENTIVE



Activity	Reward Val-	Frequency
Complete the Compass Health Assessment (REQUIRED)	400 points	1x / Plan Year
Complete a Stage in a Journey	10 points	3x / Monthly
Complete a Journey	200 points	3x / Plan Year
Track your Activities (>300 Wellness Meter)	5 points	120x / Plan Year
Sync your Device or App	10 points	1x / Plan Year
Participate in a RedBrick Challenge	50 points	2x / Plan Year
Attend a City of Tacoma Webinar or Onsite Event	25 points	4x / Plan Year
Complete Your Annual Physical	200 points	1x / Plan Year
Certified Weight Management Program	200 points	2x / Plan Year

Telehealth Benefits

Did you know? There are virtual options for care with the City's benefit plans. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the Kaiser Permanente and Regence BlueShield medical plans offer the choice of utilizing services in person or virtually. The telehealth benefits allow for the convenience of visiting with a physician or counselor from your home, office, or on-the-go allowing for no travel time and shorter wait times at either no cost or a lower co-pay expense if you are on the Regence PPO plan.

See below for a general summary of the care options available. You can also visit the City of Tacoma Employee Benefits webpage under Plan Information for more details.



	Kaiser Permanente	Regence BlueShield	FirstChoice EAP
Program	Kaiser	MDLive	BetterHelp
Services	Kaiser Permanente offers several ways for members to receive care from anywhere via phone, online and mobile app, online visits, Care Chat, video visits, or by emailing your care team.	Provides members access to board-certified doctors, pediatricians, and licensed therapists via online video, phone, or mobile app for behavioral health and primary care.	Speak to an EAP counselor to get advice, guidance, and counseling for depression, anxiety, relationships, etc. via live chat, phone, messaging, or live video.
Availability	<u>Online Visit</u> : Start any time, responses from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; 7 days a week, including holidays <u>Care Chat</u> : 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.; 7 days a week, including holidays <u>Video Visits</u> : by appointment	Available any time, anywhere, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. (Average wait is 15 minutes)	Available any time, anywhere, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. (May take up to 24 hours to be matched with a counselor)
Member Cost	No cost to the member	PPO Plan \$10 copay / HDHP Plan 20%	No cost to member 3 employer-paid EAP sessions per issue = 3 weeks of sessions through BetterHelp. After the 3 weeks, employee would be responsible for the cost of future sessions and it would be unlimited after that time.

* Both medical providers offer a free consulting nurse service that is available 24/7, 365 days a year.

Tobacco Use and COVID-19

Tobacco kills more than 8 million people globally every year and is a known risk factor for many respiratory infections and increases the severity of respiratory diseases. A review of studies by public health experts convened by WHO in April 2020 found that smokers are more likely to develop severe disease with COVID-19, compared to non-smokers.

Smoking impairs lung function making it harder for the body to fight off coronaviruses and other diseases. Tobacco is also a major risk factor for noncommunicable diseases like cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory disease and diabetes which put people with these conditions at higher risk for developing severe illness when affected by COVID-19. Available research suggests that smokers are at higher risk of developing severe disease and death.

Source: [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](https://www.who.int)

Tobacco Cessation Programs and Resources

Kaiser Permanente (KPWA): If you smoke or use other forms of tobacco and are thinking about quitting, Kaiser Permanente highly recommends the [Quit for Life® Program](#). This program is FREE to members and has been carefully developed and tested to provide the tools you need to be successful. [Learn more](#).

Regence: Although Regence does not offer a free tobacco cessation program, members can take advantage of provider counseling and prescribed medications for tobacco use cessation at no cost if they visit a preferred provider. Please visit [Regence.com](https://www.regence.com) for more information.

Employee Assistance Program: Your First Choice Health EAP has a variety of resources to assist with tobacco cessation as well. [Visit here](#) with the username 'cityoftacoma'.



2020 Puget Sound Heart and Stroke Walk Experience

It is a value of the City of Tacoma to be involved in the communities we live and work in. One of the ways we do this is walking and raising funds for a healthier Puget Sound through the American Heart Association's Heart and Stroke Walk. This year let us show we are **#TACOMASTRONGER** than COVID-19 and rally in support of this important cause.

Those with heart disease or other underlying health conditions are at increased risk from COVID-19. No matter how you choose to "walk" this year, your virtual participation will help the AHA to continue its core programs, as well as help to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. [Here are highlights](#) of how AHA is making an impact during this pandemic.

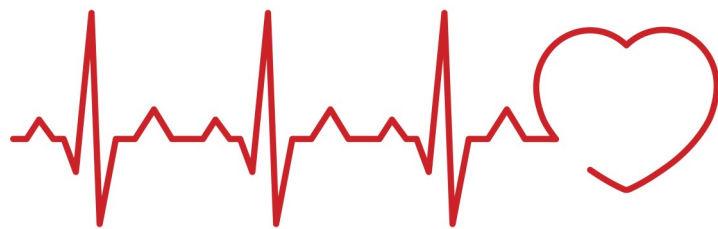

- ⇒ Helping communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, heart disease, and stroke access affordable quality health care
- ⇒ Supporting front line health care workers
- ⇒ Empowering our community with education to take control of their health and prevent or manage chronic illness
- ⇒ Funding research that may lead to the next major breakthrough
- ⇒ Training thousands in lifesaving CPR
- ⇒ Getting nutritious food to those in need
- ⇒ And so much more!

Save the date for walk day: Saturday, Oct. 10, 2020

[The 2020 Heart and Stroke Walk](#) will be completely virtual on Saturday, October 10 so choose any activity (cycling, walking, running, etc.) and participate from the comfort of your own home, neighborhood or local park!

The City of Tacoma is looking for at least 40 enthusiastic and competitive Coaches from our organization. To achieve that goal, I would like your help to identify a coach from each Department. Would you volunteer personally or identify someone to represent your department? **A big Thank You to those of you who have already registered!** Get started by registering here pugetsoundheartwalk.org/tacoma and create a team or register as an individual.

It is important that we lead by example and take steps together towards a healthier future for all.



Heart Healthy Journey Recommendations

Journeys are a behavioral change option in RedBrick where you can earn 10 points per stage AND 200 points for the entire Journey. [Visit our FAQs page](#) to help make Journeys a simple, fun and effective experience for you.

Blood Pressure and Diabetes

DASH Your Way Healthier (4 stages). The DASH (dietary approaches to stop hypertension) eating plan can dramatically affect your blood pressure — but it can be challenging to dash into the plan. Start with one small step, and then another and another. Before you know it, you'll be eating the DASH way!

Cholesterol

Good Fat, Bad Fat (3 stages). Knowing which fats and how much of them to eat can help you avoid heart disease and lose weight. Discover new, tasty, healthy-fat foods, learn how much is enough and practice easy tricks for recognizing and replacing bad fats in your diet.

Nutrition

Fuel Up: Eat For Energy (3 stages). Build the skills to eat for energy all day. You'll learn how to power up at breakfast and pick some smart snacks to keep you fueled up between meals. Before you know it, you'll be eating for energy every day of the week.

Physical Activity

Use What You Have (2 stages). You don't need special equipment or a pricey gym membership to get in shape. Learn how to use everyday items around your home—and office—for a full workout. The payoff: more money in your pocket, less clutter in your home, and a stronger, fitter body to boot!

Tobacco

Make Your Date to Quit (2 stages). You can quit! Just take it one small step at a time, such as setting a date. Then you'll start practicing what it's like to be smoke-free by starting to say goodbye to those triggers. It's all about being ready when your quit date comes.

Weight Loss

Move it and Lose it (2 stages). Work your way up to 30 minutes of healthy activity a day by simply moving a little more every hour. You don't even have to get out of your seat to get the benefits.

Understanding the Complexities of Eldercare

While so much attention has been paid to families juggling their responsibilities of childcare during the COVID-19 pandemic, very little attention has been paid to the over 40 million unpaid caregivers of adults ages 65 and older in the United States. Among these caregivers almost half are supporting their own children while caring for their aging parents and nearly half of all caregivers who provide help for older adults do so for someone with Alzheimer's or other dementias.

Managing the day to day caregiving tasks, financial decisions, and legal requirements can be overwhelming and result in caregiver burnout, insomnia, anxiety, isolation, and depression. First Choice Health EAP program is here to help provide support and ease the burden to its members navigating their work, home, and caregiving responsibilities during this time of limited resources. [Read more here.](#)

Cultivating Joy in Difficult Times

During times of stress and panic, we often hear recommendations for self-care, finding calm, and taking care of our mind and our spirit. While the effects of these activities can be extremely beneficial, you are encouraged to take a step back to adjust your perspective.

Rather than simply finding ways to avoid feeling anxious or depressed, push yourself a little further to find moments of JOY throughout your day. Happiness is not found, but rather created. Here are some ideas for bringing JOY into your everyday life:

Help someone. One thing that has been missing greatly while in quarantine is the opportunity to connect with and help others.

Create your own dance party. Find a place where you can turn the music up, pick a song that feels nostalgic or just plain fun, and get in a good 3-4 minutes of dancing! The effects of dancing range from reducing depression and stress to boosting energy and mood to improving cognitive flexibility (the ability to adapt to new and changing situation).

Find something to laugh about. I know you've heard the phrase, 'laughter is the best medicine,' but it really is more than that. Laughter brings with it a vast amount of health benefits, such as staving off illnesses, strengthening the immune system, and releasing endorphins (the feel-good hormone). Laughter can bring you out of a funk and remind you of the lighter parts of your life.

[Read more tips here.](#)

The Stress-Health Connection

Stress exists in your mind — but it's also evident in your stomach, heart, muscles, and even your toes. "In fact, stress may affect every cell in your body," says Ronald Glaser, Ph.D., a researcher at Ohio State University Medical School. During stressful times, your body produces various chemicals, including cortisol, an immune-suppressing hormone. The more cortisol produced, the weaker your immune cells become and the more susceptible you are to illness.

By gaining a better understanding of the stress/disease connection, you can reduce your stress and, in turn, improve your health and well-being. [Read more here.](#)

2020-2021 Flu Season

Plan on getting your flu shot early to protect yourself against this serious respiratory illness.

Flu season doesn't typically begin until October and peaks between December and February; but due to changes created by COVID-19, now is the time to start thinking about when, how and where you'll get immunized against the flu this year. Flu shots should be in stock at doctors' offices and pharmacies by early September.

While there's no way to determine how bad a flu season will be, many are concerned that the overlap between the flu season and the coronavirus pandemic could cause issues.

We are currently in the process of planning onsite flu shots at City sites; but **these will ONLY be for those that are essential workers.** Everyone telecommuting should make plans to go to an in-network pharmacy or doctor's office to receive a flu shot at no cost.

Stay tuned for more information!

