

## BUILDING THRIVING WORKPLACE POLICIES

Thrive2027 is led by United Way of Greater Portland and **powered by community**. Partners are working together in new ways and focusing on strategies that are known to achieve the best results so that more lives are changed. Thrive2027 needs all of us to work together to:

- Give our kids a strong start,
- Empower our neighbors to thrive – not just survive,
- Help us all live longer, better.

We all have a role we can play, including Greater Portland’s employers. This toolkit provides several workplace policies and best practices that will not only help to advance Thrive2027, but benefit both your organization and your employees.

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

#### **Offer family-friendly workplace policies (Goals 1 & 2)**

- Offer flexible hours or parental leave so parents can attend school events
- Expand childcare options for employees
- Provide paid maternity/paternity leave

#### **Help employees develop peers and future employees (Goal 2)**

- Partner with organizations and schools to offer job shadow days, internships, mentoring programs
- Offer an internal employee mentoring program

#### **Offer employees access to educational opportunities (Goal 2)**

- Help employees complete high school by offering free access to accredited programs at local institutions or online
- Help employees gain skills and access additional credentials and education
- Offer support to employees learning English

#### **Offer inclusive hiring practices (Goal 2)**

- Hire individuals facing barriers to employment (such as veterans, New Mainers, people re-entering the workforce, people in recovery, and people with disabilities)

#### **Create a culture of financial wellness (Goal 2)**

- Offer financial coaching, education, and other tools to employees
- Educate employees about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

- Partner with other employers and/or financial institutions to offer employees access to emergency funds and/or low interest loans

#### **Provide comprehensive, affordable employee health benefits (including behavioral health) (Goals 2 & 3)**

- Offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)
- Offer paid sick leave

#### **Ensure a recovery-friendly workplace (Goals 2 & 3)**

- Implement drug-free workplace policies, reduce work-related injury risks and other working conditions which may increase the risk for substance misuse

#### **Help employees participate actively in the community (All Goals)**

- Offer an employee volunteer program
- Hold a voter registration event and/or provide flexible scheduling on voting days
- Collect and donate items which support Thrive2027 Goals and strategies

#### **Educate about Thrive2027 Goals & strategies & celebrate company participation in Thrive2027 work (All Goals)**

- Offer lunch and learn sessions on cross-goal topics such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), social-emotional learning, and warning signs
- Visibly display company’s commitment to Thrive2027 and actions taken to advance the Goal(s)

For more information, please contact Kerrie Keller ([kkeller@unitedwaygp.org](mailto:kkeller@unitedwaygp.org)) at United Way of Greater Portland.

# OFFER FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE POLICIES

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE  | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS  | EMPLOYER BENEFITS  | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT   | EXAMPLES   |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| Offer flexible hours or parental leave so parents can attend school events | Positively impacts employee well-being<br>Decreases stress<br>Assists in meeting work & family responsibilities  | Increases employee retention<br>Reduces un-scheduled absences<br>Increases employee productivity and concentration   | Increases parent engagement, which supports children's early learning experiences<br>   | <b>1</b><br><a href="#">Massachusetts' Advisory</a> provides an additional 24 hours of unpaid leave (beyond FMLA) for employees to attend school activities or child's or elderly relative's medical appointments.<br><b>School/Parental Leave:</b> Some states provide for a limited number of hours annually for parents to attend school-related events and activities for their children.<br><a href="#">Read more</a> about laws that allow parents and caregivers to attend kids' school events.   |
| Expand childcare options for employees                                     | Positively impacts employee well-being<br>Decreases stress<br>Assists in meeting work & family responsibilities  | Increases employee retention<br>Increases employee productivity & concentration                                      | Ensures children receive quality early care & parents have the support they need to remain in the workforce<br><b>1</b><br><b>2</b>  | <a href="#">Offer on-site child care or back-up care</a><br><b>Local Example:</b> Bank of America  |
| Provide paid maternity/paternity leave                                     | Increases familial bonding<br>Supports parental mental health<br>Increases probability that mothers return to employment later, and then work more hours and earn higher wages | Reduces employee turnover<br>Creates neutral or positive effects on productivity, profitability, turnover and morale | Decreases infant mortality and maternal deaths, which impact years of premature death<br><b>1</b><br><b>2</b><br><b>3</b><br> | <b>Bank of America</b> offers 16 weeks of paid parental leave (maternity, paternity, and adoption) along with a new parent kit and other resources.<br><b>Bernstein Shur</b> offers 16 weeks of paid leave to all new parents regardless of gender and time may be taken flexibly throughout the child's first year.<br>Several of Maine's largest employers offer some form of paid leave for mothers and fathers following the birth or adoption of a child, including <a href="#">MaineHealth</a> , <a href="#">Hannaford</a> , Walmart, L.L.Bean, Unum, <a href="#">WEX</a> , and IDEXX.<br><a href="#">Leaves That Pay: Employer and Worker Experiences With Paid Family Leave in California</a><br><a href="#">Rutgers Study Finds Paid Family Leave Leads to Positive Economic Outcomes</a> |

## HELP EMPLOYEES DEVELOP PEERS AND FUTURE EMPLOYEES

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE   | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS   | EMPLOYER BENEFITS  | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT  | EXAMPLES  |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Partner with organizations and schools to offer job shadow days, internships, mentoring programs</p> | <p>Increases job satisfaction through participation<br/>Builds and strengthens sense of community</p> | <p>Achieves CSR goals<br/>Identifies future employees and assists with recruitment</p> | <p>Develops and strengthens employable skills for future workers regardless of employer<br/>Creates career pathways</p>  | <p><b>Jobs for Maine Graduates (JMG)</b> partners with 500+ businesses whose employees visit classrooms, host job shadows and internships, and volunteer at student enrichment events</p> <p><b>Local Examples:</b> Unum, Dead River Company, Baker Newman Noyes, and many more.</p>  |
| <p>Offer an internal employee mentoring program</p>   | <p>Increases skills</p>   | <p>Strengthens employees</p>   | <p>Increases job retention</p>  | <p>Employees can learn in-demand skills from other employees.</p> <p><a href="#">Intel's</a> program focuses on matching people not by job title or by years of service but by specific skills that are in demand. The voluntary program is open to everyone – from workers on the factory floor to senior-level engineers.</p> |

42% of employees say learning and development is the most important benefit when deciding where to work followed by health insurance (48%) (Udemy)

Offering career training and development would keep 86% of millennials from leaving their current position (Bridge)

## OFFER EMPLOYEES ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE   | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS  | EMPLOYER BENEFITS   | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT  | EXAMPLES  |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Help employees complete high school by offering free access to accredited programs at local institutions or online</p>  | <p>Increases access to advancement opportunities and additional income</p> | <p>Increases employee retention and advancement</p> <p>Reduces time and money spent on training and recruitment</p> <p>Builds talent and improves effectiveness of existing employees</p> <p>Improves company's ability to promote from within, reducing turnover costs</p> <p>Unlocks tax breaks for corporate education reimbursement costs</p> | <p>Impacts high school graduation rate <span style="background-color: #f4a460; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">2</span></p> <p>Increases opportunity/ income over lifetime</p>  | <p><a href="#">Benefiting Both Corporations and Employee By Building Better-Educated Workforce</a></p> <p>Cengage, Goodwill, University College, Local Audlt Educations</p> <p><a href="#">Ed2Go</a> combines Career Online High School courses and training programs. Example combinations: High School Diploma with Food/Hospitality Training, High School Diploma with Commercial Driving Training, High School Diploma with Child Care Training, High School Diploma with Retail Customer Service Skills Training, etc.</p> <p>McDonald's and Walmart offer Career Online High School as a benefit for their employees. (McDonald's also extends the benefit to family members of the employee at no cost). Any employee who meets certain eligibility requirements can earn their accredited high school diploma at no cost to them. The credential takes 1-2 years.</p> |

## RESULTS

McDonald's and Walmart have each graduated over 300 employees from Career Online High School since partnering in 2015.

# OFFER EMPLOYEES ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE   | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS   | EMPLOYER BENEFITS   | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT   | EXAMPLES  |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Help employees gain skills and access additional credentials and education</p> | <p>Attains credentials and skills, which may help them access advancement opportunities</p> | <p>Increases skills of employees<br/>Strengthens existing workforce</p> | <p>Increases post-secondary completion rate <span style="float: right;">2</span><br/>Increases stability and advancement of employees</p>  | <p>SMCC can deliver on-site credit classes at the workplace, during or after business hours, to a minimum of 10 employees.</p> <p>Offer employees customized training through the resources below:<br/> <a href="#">Maine Quality Centers</a> (MQC)<br/> <a href="#">Competitive Skills Scholarship Program for Business</a> (CSSP-B)<br/> <a href="#">Workforce Solutions</a> (WIOA)</p> <p><b>Local Examples:</b> BIW, Disability RMS, Goodwill, HP Hood, Long Creek Youth Development Center, Maine Medical Center, WEX (SMCC on-site classes)</p> <p>BIW- Customized Advanced Manufacturing and Welding Trainings (MQC/WIOA)</p> <p>Nichols- Machine Operator Training (CSSP-B)</p> <p>American Roots- Sewing Machine Operator/ Stitcher training (MQC, CSSP-B, WIOA)</p> |
| <p>Offer support to employees learning English</p>                                | <p>Increases skills and helps employees advance</p>   | <p>Increases communication and efficiency</p>                           | <p>Increases financial stability and advancement of employees <span style="float: right;">2</span></p>  | <p>Local Adult Education providers, SMCC, and USM all have customizable solutions that either integrate learning of the English language into skills training or can offer on-site English language support at the work site.</p> <p>In addition, several additional service providers offer resources around language attainment including: Learning Works, Hope Acts, the Salvation Army, Immigrant Welcome Center, In Her Presence, the Casco Bay Branch of the YMCA, etc.</p>   |

## OFFER INCLUSIVE HIRING PRACTICES

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE   | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS   | EMPLOYER BENEFITS              | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT   | EXAMPLES  |
|---|---|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <p>Hire individuals facing barriers to employment (such as veterans, New Mainers, people re-entering the workforce, people in recovery, and people with disabilities)</p> | <p>Accesses employment, which increases financial stability</p> | <p>Accesses tax incentives</p> | <p>Strengthens the workforce and increases employment rates and financial stability of jobseekers</p> <p>2</p>  | <p><a href="#">Understanding Policies that Impact Employment Opportunities for People Who Have Criminal Records</a></p> <p>The <a href="#">National HIRE Network</a> helps individuals with criminal records reenter through employment.</p> <p><a href="#">Work Opportunity Tax Credit</a> (WOTC) is a federal tax credit that offers a tax incentive for private sector businesses to hire individuals from targeted groups that have consistently faced significant barriers to employment.</p> <p><b>Local Examples:</b> Greater Portland Workforce Initiative Southern Maine Reentry Resource and Job Fair, Maine DOC Federal Probation and Parole, Goodwill Workforce Solutions, Preble Street, MDOL Career Centers</p> |

# CREATE A CULTURE OF FINANCIAL WELLNESS

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE  | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS  | EMPLOYER BENEFITS  | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT  | EXAMPLES   |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <p>Offer financial coaching, education, and other tools to employees</p> | <p>Increases productivity, decreases stress</p> <p>Impacts health (employees who are struggling financially tend to be in poorer health)</p> | <p>Increases productivity, decreases stress</p> <p>Reduces absenteeism</p> <p>Reduces distraction</p> <p>Increases employee engagement and organizational commitment</p> | <p>Increases financial stability of employees</p> <p>2</p>  | <p><a href="#">Enrich Financial Wellness</a> and <a href="#">Prudential</a> can help companies assess their employees needs and identify the right tools/programs to offer</p> <p><a href="#">Why Workplace Financial Wellness Programs Are Hot - Forbes</a></p> <p>Employers could integrate general financial education or coaching with 401K enrollment sessions.</p> <p><b>Local Example:</b> Goodwill</p> |
| <p>Educate employees about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)</p>       | <p>Accesses tax refunds, which can increase income</p>   | <p>Ensures employees have access to resources that help them become more financially stable</p>  | <p>Increases individual and family income and assets, which leads to greater financial stability and ability to afford housing</p> <p>2</p>  | <p>Toolkit for employers with promotion and outreach ideas: <a href="#">EITC Information for Employers</a></p> <p><a href="#">Philadelphia employee notification flyer</a></p>   |

## CREATE A CULTURE OF FINANCIAL WELLNESS

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE  | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS   | EMPLOYER BENEFITS   | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT   | EXAMPLES   |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <p>Partner with other employers and/or financial institutions to offer employees access to emergency funds and/or low interest loans</p> | <p>Helps employees meet emergency needs</p> <p>Allows employees to begin saving and building credit</p> | <p>Helps address issues that cause people to be late, chronically late, or stressed and therefore less productive at work</p> | <p>Increases financial stability when individuals and families have access to a resources during emergency situations</p> <p>Ensures employees remain in the workforce</p>  | <p>An employer partners with a bank or credit union to provide employees <a href="#">Income Advance loans</a>. As long as an employee is in good standing with their employer, the bank approves them for a small loan (usually \$1000 - \$2500) as soon as the same day. Loans are repaid through automatic payroll deduction. After the loan is repaid, employees may establish or improve their credit and can continue the automatic payroll deductions to build savings. There is <a href="#">a guide for employers interested in establishing a similar program</a>.</p> <p><a href="#">Salary Finance</a> (currently available to companies with 500+ employees) helps employees by replacing high-interest debt with a low-interest employee loan. Loan payments are deducted directly from payroll, reducing loan servicing costs and risk.</p> |

## RESULTS

Rhino Foods, a Vermont-based specialty ice cream novelty and ice cream ingredient manufacturer, pioneered Income Advance in 2007. Over 10 years, \$355,000 has been loaned to employees, 267 employees have taken advantage of the program, and the company has experienced a 38% increase in employee retention, beating the national manufacturing average.

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On average, employees with Salary Finance loans save \$1,000 in interest over the life of the loan, so they can erase debt more quickly, and start saving sooner.

## PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE, AFFORDABLE EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS (INCLUDING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH)

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE                          | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS   | EMPLOYER BENEFITS   | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT  | EXAMPLES   |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| <p>Offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)</p> | <p>Increases ability to access mental health care and address mental health concerns</p>  | <p>Lowers company's medical costs<br/>Reduces absenteeism<br/>Improves productivity</p>   | <p>Ensures employees live longer, healthier lives</p> <p>2<br/>3</p>  | <p>EAPs offer employees confidential 24-hour access to resources via telephone consultations, face-to-face meetings, and educational materials.</p> <p><a href="#">Mental health and the workplace: How employers can help</a></p> <p><b>Local Example:</b> UWGP offers an EAP plan through Unum</p>   |
| <p>Offer paid sick leave</p>                     | <p>Decreases spread of infectious diseases<br/>Increases access to screenings and preventive measures, diagnoses, and treatment<br/>Shortens hospital stays and reduces emergency room visits<br/>Ensures economic security of families</p> | <p>Reduces spread of infection within the workplace<br/>Reduces job-related injuries<br/>Enhances productivity<br/>Reduces turnover</p> | <p>Ensures employees live longer, healthier lives</p> <p>2<br/>3</p>  | <p>UWGP provides a sick leave benefit to cover regular full and part-time employees. Regular full time employees earn one day of sick leave upon completion of each calendar month of service. Regular part-time employees earn equivalent time on a pro-rated basis. Sick time may be accumulated to a maximum of 45 working days (360 hours).</p> <p><a href="#">AMA Recognizes Public Health Benefits of Paid Sick Leave</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Economic Benefits of Paid Leave: Fact Sheet</a></p> <p><a href="#">Health and Productivity Among U.S. Workers</a></p> <p><a href="#">Health, Absence, Disability, and Presenteeism Cost Estimates of Certain Physical and Mental Health Conditions Affecting U.S. Employers</a></p> <p><b>Local Examples:</b> Many local organizations offer paid sick leave, including Chipotle &amp; UWGP</p> |

# ENSURE THE WORKPLACE IS RECOVERY-FRIENDLY

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE   | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS                                    | EMPLOYER BENEFITS   | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT   | EXAMPLES  |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <p>Implement drug-free workplace policies, reduce work-related injury risks and other working conditions which may increase the risk for substance misuse</p> | <p>Receives needed help to address substance use</p> | <p>Retains a healthier, more productive, and more motivated workforce</p> <p>Reduces costs related to impaired productivity and absenteeism</p> | <p>Ensures employees live longer, healthier lives</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> | <p>Human Resources staff can ensure workplace policies are reviewed with new hires and existing employees, discuss ways to submit referrals and get help, explain how employee performance issues are evaluated, and provide information about substance misuse and its symptoms and effects.</p> <p>Recovery Friendly Workplaces (RFW's) support their communities by recognizing recovery from substance use disorder as a strength and by being willing to hire and work intentionally with people in recovery. RFW's encourage a healthy and safe environment where employers, employees, and communities can collaborate to create positive change and eliminate barriers for those impacted by addiction.</p> <p><a href="#">How to Have a Recovery-Friendly Workplace</a></p> <p><i>Facing Addiction in America: <a href="#">The Surgeon General's Spotlight on Opioids</a></i></p> <p>Drug Free Workplace <a href="#">Toolkit</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative</a> (NH)</p> <p><b>Local Examples:</b> Early adopters include Walmart, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, and more.</p> |

# HELP EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THE COMMUNITY

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE  | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS   | EMPLOYER BENEFITS  | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT  | EXAMPLES  |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Offer an employee volunteer program</p>   | <p>Increases team building and social connections<br/>Builds skills<br/>Increases connection to community</p> | <p>Demonstrates company values in action<br/>Recruits passionate employees<br/>Increases employee morale, retention, and company loyalty</p> | <p>Advances progress toward all Goals when employees take part in volunteer opportunities which support Thrive2027</p>                                 | <p>Depending on the workplace, the amount of time and program structure may vary. Workplaces may encourage team projects (episodic or regularly-scheduled) and/or empower individual employees to volunteer on their own.</p> <p><b>Local Examples:</b> Baker Newman Noyes, Dead River Company, IDEXX, TD Bank, Unum, and many more.</p> <p><b>References:</b> <a href="#">Points of Light</a> Volunteer Program and <a href="#">Employee Volunteer Program at a Glance</a></p>   |
| <p>Hold a voter registration event and/or provide flexible scheduling on voting days</p> | <p>Empowers employees to participate in democracy</p>   | <p>Demonstrates a commitment to civic engagement</p>   | <p>Increases likelihood that policies and laws which support Thrive2027 Goals are advocated for, voted for, or otherwise supported by employees</p>  | <p>The Time to Vote Campaign is led by 230+ CEOs of various companies across the country.</p> <p><a href="#">Time to Vote</a> is a way to spread awareness about the steps employers can take to give employees the time they need to vote. The companies joining this campaign are committed to driving voter participation through programs, such as paid time off, a no meetings workday, and resources for mail-in ballots and early voting.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b> Companies that have signed on to the Time to Vote Campaign include Allagash Brewing, DICK'S Sporting Goods, EILEEN FISHER Inc., Farmers Insurance, GAP Inc., Levi Strauss &amp; Co., Nordstrom, Southwest Airlines, Toad &amp; Co, Tyson Foods, Walmart, and more.</p> |

## HELP EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THE COMMUNITY

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE  | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS                              | EMPLOYER BENEFITS   | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT   | EXAMPLES  |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Collect and donate items which support Thrive2027 Goals and strategies | Feels that they are making a tangible donation | Offers the opportunity to talk about Thrive2027<br><br>Engages employees at all levels and helps to fill identified needs of community partners | Ensures necessary materials are in place to support strategies connected to the Goals<br><br>1<br>2<br>3 | Book drives, snack bag assemblies, school supply collections, backpack programs, etc.<br><br><b>Local Examples:</b> Prudential, MaineHealth, TD Bank<br><br> |

“ [Volunteering] has been an excellent way to engage with colleagues in the community in a concerted and mutually beneficial way. We’re learning at the same time that we’re giving, and I think that’s the best form of volunteerism that one can hope for. ”

– Ari Solotoff, Attorney, Bernstein Shur

# EDUCATE EMPLOYEES ABOUT THRIVE2027 GOALS & STRATEGIES & CELEBRATE COMPANY PARTICIPATION IN THRIVE2027 WORK

| POLICY OR BEST PRACTICE   | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS  | EMPLOYER BENEFITS   | THRIVE2027 ADVANCEMENT  | EXAMPLES  |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Educate employees about cross-goal topics such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), social emotional learning, and warning signs</p> | <p>Opportunity to build personal skills</p>                                | <p>Contributes to an informed and responsive workforce</p>                                | <p>Increases individuals' understanding of the Goals and how they can support them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1</li> <li>2</li> <li>3</li> </ul>                                      | <p>Offer lunch and learns or other presentations<br/>Brick &amp; Beam Society (ACEs presentation)</p> |
| <p>Visibly display company's commitment to Thrive2027 and actions taken to advance the Goal(s)</p>  | <p>Employees are recognized for their efforts in support of Thrive2027</p> | <p>Opportunity to celebrate collaborative efforts of employees toward community goals</p> | <p>Advances company progress up the engagement continuum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1</li> <li>2</li> <li>3</li> </ul> <p>Encourages other companies to increase their engagement</p> | <p>Bulletin boards, displays, social media, website, etc.</p>   |