

CWRU Stress Management Resources for Faculty & Staff

Stress has been a daily experience for many individuals during the pandemic and has significantly affected the well-being of adults and children. The American Psychological Association and the National Institute of Mental Health describe numerous effects of stress on health, including physical health issues such as cardiovascular disease and mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression. While all stress is not bad, chronic stress may negatively affect overall health. Learning how to manage the stressors that one experiences is important for good health. Actively practicing stress management techniques will provide support and should positively affect our personal and professional lives. The university provides a variety of helpful resources for faculty and staff. Resources for managers/supervisors are also available to support teams during these challenging times.

Stress Management Resources

The Faculty and Staff Wellness Program offers numerous stress management resources throughout the year. At any given time, there are usually 3-5 different programs which provide evidence-based strategies and skill-building opportunities to decrease stress and enhance overall well-being. Program titles include: Meditation 1.0; Introduction to Mindfulness; S.M.A.R.T. (Stress Management & Resilience Training); Release, Relax and Reach; E.A.S.E. Into Peace of Mind; Mental Health Matters, etc. Many past participants report positive outcomes associated with participation in these programs. The [program website](#) is the best place to find resources on an ongoing basis. In addition, the program's newsletter (sent to Incentive participants and others' interested) is another great resource ([archived newsletters](#) are available).

Taking a few minutes throughout the day to relax and refresh is a powerful self-care method. This is especially important to promote healing and relaxation during and following traumatic events such as the pandemic. The University's Wellness Programs offers a number of brief online relaxation exercises, the [Take5 Program](#), to assist everyone in mindful relaxation. The Professional Development Center has a PowerPoint on [Making Self-Care a Priority](#).

Manager/Supervisor Resources & Best Practices

Encouraging excellent work is an important goal for all managers at CWRU. Incorporating self-care and wellness practices throughout the work day is an evidence-based strategy that facilitates greater productivity. The Wellness Program offers the [Supervisor's Guide to Wellness Programs](#) and additional [online](#) information to guide managers in supporting the well-being of their people. The Professional Development Center also has [Team Building Resources for Remote Teams](#), including [Best Practices for Supervisors](#) and information on the importance of [Employee Recognition and Appreciation](#).

Supervisors are encouraged to ensure that the lunch time period is left open - without scheduled Zoom meetings - as an important practice to encourage well-being. This is particularly true for non-exempt employees who cannot work over lunch without being paid overtime. Supervisors should encourage all employees to take a lunch break every day. Zoom has made it easy for one meeting to blend into another. Supervisors are also encouraged to schedule Zoom meetings for 45 minutes rather than an hour to leave time for employees to grab a drink, run to the restroom, or otherwise engage in self-care before their next meeting starts.

Mental Health & Bereavement Support

[Impact Solutions - Employee Assistance and Work/Life Program \(EAP\)](#)

- Free, voluntary, confidential counseling and referral program.

- Available to benefits-eligible employees and their family/household members
- The toll-free EAP line is available 24/7 to handle in-the-moment calls and is answered live by masters prepared clinicians.
- Covers a wide spectrum of personal and work related challenges and daily living matters— from stress/family issues to depression, anxiety, substance abuse, legal and financial pressures, child and elder-care needs, and other commonly experienced concerns

University Policies and Procedures

Supervisors should also be aware of and encourage employees to utilize the time away from work benefits and flexible schedule options:

- **Vacation**: Taking time off to relax and recharge is key to good mental and physical health. Encourage employees to take their vacation time - even if they aren't traveling, and remind them that they can only carry over one year of vacation time.
 - All employees (exempt and non-exempt) must take time off in half or full day increments.
- **Sick Pay**: If employees are not feeling well or stressed due to the personal or work issues, remind them they can take time off to take care of their health and well-being. Please remind staff that sick pay covers both physical and emotional needs.
 - Non-exempt employees can use paid sick time in one-hour increments. Exempt employees must use paid sick time in half or full day increments (unless on **intermittent FMLA leave**).
- **Bereavement**: All executive staff, senior staff, and staff can use up to a total of eight (8) days annually of their unused paid sick time for bereavement (minus any family sick days taken for family illness/family medical reasons). Staff are not required to provide documentation.
- **Personal Floating Holiday**: Active full-time and part-time employees are eligible to receive one (1) personal floating holiday each fiscal year after successful completion of their **Orientation period**.
- **Flexible Staffing Options** have been approved until June 30, 2021. Options include: Flex Schedule, Reduced Hours/Furlough, and Convenience Leave.

As a reminder, the university also has child care resources to assist employees.

- **Child Care Resources** The university launched three initiatives to assist families facing child care challenges: (1) support for child care costs; (2) workload flexibility for staff and faculty; and (3) limited campus child care by appointment. Also, Impact Solutions can offer information and referrals to community and nationwide services (day care centers, family day care home providers, in-home providers, summer programs, etc.). Just call 1-800-227-6007 and ask for a Work/Life specialist.

COVID-19 Resource

COVID-19 Information is also available online.

- Main University **webpage**.
- HR **webpage**.

- [**IMPACT Solutions Webinars**](#) (On-Demand). Topics include: Coping with Change in the Workplace, Living in Uncertainty, The 25-Hour Day: How to Manage Your Time for Improved Productivity and Efficiency, and more.