

# ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



## STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** 10/8/2025

**Staff Report No.** 25-291

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**TO:** AC Transit Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Salvador Llamas, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer  
**SUBJECT:** Wellness Program Update

### BRIEFING ITEM

**AGENDA PLANNING REQUEST:** ☒

**RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Consider receiving a presentation on the effectiveness of the District's Wellness Program. [Requested by director Walsh - 11/13/2024]

Staff Contact:  
James Arcellana, Executive Director of Human Resources

**STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:**

Goal - High-Performing Workforce  
Initiative - Employee Recruitment, Training and Retention

AC Transit's Wellness Program is a cornerstone of the District's commitment to a healthy, engaged, and resilient workforce. By addressing physical, mental, and behavioral health, the program supports employee well-being, reduces preventable health risks, and fosters a workplace culture where employees can thrive.

**BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:**

This report is informational only. There is no direct fiscal impact.

**BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:**

The District's Wellness Program promotes employee well-being and productivity by offering resources, education, and activities across three core pillars:

**1. Injury Prevention**

- Daily on-site stretching exercises designed to reduce common injuries among operations staff.
  - Workers' Compensation data shows that over the past three years, the most common source of claims was sprain/strain injuries, accounting for over 35% of claims. Stretching has proven to be an effective way of helping employees prevent such injuries. The Wellness program currently averages an attendance of 10 employees per location for its on-site stretching program.

- One-on-one sessions with new operators and employees returning to work, emphasizing safe sitting, lifting, and body mechanics.
  - Preventing the re-occurrence of injuries is pivotal to ensuring long term leave numbers stay low and the workforce remains healthy.
- Reinforcement through handouts, posters, and other visual reminders across work sites.
  - Though personalized training is ideal, the Wellness program is led by one person, so educating the workforce through literature is a pivotal strategy to ensure all employees are being educated on good injury prevention practices.

## 2. Behavioral Health Resources

- Partnership with Claremont EAP to provide confidential counseling, legal and financial consultations, and referrals.
- In 2024, employees used these services **382 times**, with a utilization rate of **15.1% - above the industry standard**.
- Expansion of services to include on-site counseling at the Emeryville and East Oakland divisions, grief support, and districtwide Mental Health Fairs.
- Launch of an employee well-being website with resources on nutrition, housing, and financial assistance.

## 3. Managing Chronic Health Risks

- On-site gyms, quarterly fitness challenges, District created healthy eating cookbooks and monthly fresh fruit offerings to encourage healthier lifestyles.
- One on one coaching for employees to help support nutrition, fitness, stress management, and chronic condition care. The Wellness coordinator currently works one on one regularly with 16 District employees.

## SUCCESS STORIES

- Kaiser utilization reports (2021-2024) for District employees enrolled in Kaiser demonstrate measurable results. Currently, approximately 85% of AC Transit employees are Kaiser members, representing a significant portion of the workforce. Findings include:
  - Blood pressure prevalence declined from **21.6% to 16.8%**.
  - Smoking prevalence declined from **10.7% to 8.4%**.
- The Wellness program has been recognized with awards from the American Heart Association

two years in a row.

- The Wellness program has created resources in house to help all District employees obtain their health goals, including multiple healthy eating cookbooks and a website dedicated to mental health and well-being resources.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

The District's Wellness Program will continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of our workforce. Key areas of focus include:

- **Stronger Safety Partnerships:** The Wellness Program collaborates with Safety and Workers' Compensation to align wellness activities with injury prevention strategies, thereby supporting efforts to reduce claims. Strengthening these partnerships enhances the program's effectiveness and ensures it is positioned to achieve its full potential.
- **Union Engagement:** The Wellness Program is working with Union leadership to develop joint initiatives that broaden program reach and increase employee participation across all divisions. While the program already provides a wide range of resources, a key next step is to expand employee engagement, and Union partnership will be critical to achieving this goal.
- **Enhanced Data & Outcomes Tracking:** The Wellness Program is expanding its measurement tools to capture long-term health outcomes, participation rates, and potential cost savings to the District. Data collection and review will serve as a guiding principle for program development. The program has already begun gathering data from the District's third-party Workers' Compensation administrator and will use this information to shape future strategies.
- **Program Expansion:** The Wellness Program is exploring new offerings that support holistic wellness, including nutrition, financial well-being, and resiliency training. One idea being explored by staff is getting the Wellness coordinator certified as an ergonomist. While there is a cost associated with obtaining this certification, there is also the potential for savings by limiting the need for the District to seek these services from third party contractors. By continually seeking innovative opportunities, the program aims to help District employees achieve improved health and overall well-being.

## **ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:**

The advantage of this report is that it provides the Board with a clear update on the effectiveness of the District's Wellness Program, demonstrates measurable outcomes, and highlights alignment with strategic workforce goals.

There are no identified disadvantages to receiving the report. The program is already integrated into existing operations, there are no additional costs or operational impacts associated with this report.

## **ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:**

No alternatives are recommended. This report is informational only and does not propose changes to policy, budget, or operations.

**PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:**

Staff Report 19-337 - Wellness Program Update

Staff Report 17-006 - Wellness Program Update

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Att.1. Wellness Program Board Presentation

Att.2. Agenda Planning Request - Director Walsh (Wellness Program Update)

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**Approved/Reviewed by:**

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