



Celebrate "Walktober" with the State Employee Health Benefit Committee

Walking is a simple way to improve your health and you can do it virtually anywhere or anytime! With our busy and hectic lives, it is hard to fit in a workout or activity every day. But it only takes 15-20 minutes to get in a mile of walking. Nationally, the month of October is referred to as "Walktober" in the wellness community because the temperatures are cooler, fall foliage is in full swing, and it is a great time to get into a walking routine.

In New Hampshire, we are fortunate to have a year-round initiative supported by the Foundation for Healthy Communities called *Walk NH*. The State Employee Health Benefit Committee wants all employees to participate in Walk NH during "Walktober" and try to achieve any of the following Walk NH goals:

- 1. Individual - Walk 70 miles
(Equivalent to the width of NH)**
- 2. Individual (For the Really Ambitious) - Walk 190 miles
(Equivalent to the length of NH)**
- 3. In a Team of 2-6* - Walk 190 miles
(Equivalent to the length of NH)**

***Each person in the team must walk at least 30 miles.**

Make sure you choose a team name!

"Walktober" runs from October 1st - October 31st, so start up a daily routine at home, work, or both! If you do not achieve a Walk NH goal, DON'T WORRY! Every mile of walking greatly benefits your mind and your health!

We almost forgot! We encourage some friendly competition among state agencies to get employees motivated and walking! In November, we'll send out information on how to report "Walktober" miles to contribute to your agency total! The Health Benefit Committee will develop recognition awards for agencies grouped according to their total number of employees for awards ranging from most miles walked and most miles per employee.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do employees participate?

1. Just start walking! We have a Walk NH Log Sheet you can print out and use to track your daily walking toward your Walk NH goal. Aim for at least 30-45 minutes of walking per day or 2-3 miles. Break up the walking if you have to such as 3 sessions of walking for 15 minutes each.
2. If you create a team of 2-6 employees, we have provided a Walk NH Team Poster to track your team's miles.
3. In November, we'll send out information on how to report your "Walktober" miles to contribute to your agency total! The Health Benefit Committee will develop recognition awards for agencies grouped according to number of employees for awards ranging from most miles walked and most miles per employee.

How can I track my miles if I do not know how far I walk?

If you do not know the exact miles you walk, you can use these simple conversions:

- 15 minutes of brisk walking equals 1 mile
- If tracking with a pedometer, approximately 2,000 steps equals 1 mile

If I am unable to walk due to a health condition or disability, can I still participate?

Yes, individuals with a disability or health condition preventing them from walking may participate by doing any type of physical activity that they are able to safely and comfortably perform. Fifteen minutes of activity will equal a mile.

Safe Walking Tips (Courtesy of Walk NH)

- Cross streets at the corner, or at traffic signals or crosswalks. Stop at the curb or the edge of the road before crossing the street.
- Look LEFT, RIGHT, and LEFT for cars, before crossing the street, even when crossing at a light or a crosswalk. Keep looking for cars while you are

crossing the street because cars that are turning or backing up may not see you.

- If you are on a road with no sidewalks, walk facing traffic, as far to the left as possible.
- If you are walking at sunset, use a flashlight. Wear bright/reflective clothing so that cars can see you. Wear sneakers or other clothes with reflective materials on them.
- Being safe is the most important part of walking!

Some other ways to earn "Walktober" miles:

- **Hike or take a nature walk on the dozens of trails available in our state.** Check out the list of [state and local trails and maps](#).
- **Register to participate in a walk-a-thon.** Groups like the American Cancer Society, March of Dimes, and many other national and local organizations hold fundraising walks every year. You can earn several miles in one day while raising money for a good cause!
- **Find ways to exercise indoors in gloomy weather.** Walk the corridors or up and down stairways between floors in your worksite during breaks, lunch, before or after work.
- **Walk outside during the workday.** The NH Department of Transportation has graciously developed walking routes around many state employee worksites. For the latest list, visit the [State Employee Walking Routes website](#).