



Council Agenda Form

MOTION #		DRAFT #	
DATE SUBMITTED: 1/31/2023		DATE TO GO BEFORE COUNCIL:	
SUBMITTED BY: Daniel Peabody			
CO-SPONSORS: N/A – Budget Initiative			
DEPARTMENT: Legislative			

TITLE OF MOTION: Staff Mental Wellness Program

RECOMMENDATION:
I move that the FY2024 budget include 50,000 for opt-in staff mental health program, including a participation bonus for staff who reach identified benchmarks for participation.

SUMMARY BACKGROUND:

It is well documented that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a broad-scale impact effecting every segment of our population. The repercussions have changed how we interact with one another in ways that are undeniably visible now and that are no doubt yet to be seen.

Last year was incredibly challenging for many of us in the City of Hyattsville. Staff continued to work to serve this community while living through the evolving effects of coronavirus in addition to enduring the unexpected death of a beloved leader and friend. There are the seen and unseen challenges in our professional and personal lives that impact each of us every day. Last year's events made it clear mental health services and grief counseling were and still are needed for many members of our community. The City of Hyattsville had already taken bold steps to support the mental health of a select group in our community, and we continue to do more.

In 2021, the City of Hyattsville made groundbreaking efforts to support the metal wellness of our police department staff by requiring every officer and dispatcher to meet with mental health clinicians once a quarter. We now propose a larger effort to support all employees at the City of Hyattsville with a voluntary mental wellness program.

There are several apps that allow people to connect with mental health clinicians, learn about self care, stress and anxiety reduction techniques, practice guided meditation, and XXXX.... We are proposing a City-funded membership to one of these aps in an effort to make mental wellness part of the City of Hyattsville staff culture and ultimately promote the active and deliberate practice of self care in the larger HVL community. The use of this app is optional, but staff who opt in and participate in three events in the first 90 days and complete the year having participated in at least 12 events a year will be rewarded with a \$200 bonus*. Everyone will be encouraged to participate in group activities regardless if they are teleworking or simply taking a 15-minute break from their 10 or 12-hour shift. This is not a lunch break. These weekly, opt-in group activities are meant to be mental health breaks.

**Employees already receive bonuses for living in the City, speaking a second language, being certified in certain areas and other specifics that seem to benefit the City. Why not for this as well?*

We have examined several apps on the market. Purchasing a corporate membership that offers services including rang in cost from XXXX -XXXXX.

While it is easy to look at the services offered by these apps as individual opportunities to participate in mindfulness activities, the overall picture is one of good mental and physical health. We spend so much of our lives at work. Why not encourage employees to begin the habit of practicing self care that will benefit them throughout their life.

A mental wellness app will allow us, as the HVL family, to offer group meditation sessions...

Anyone can download a free mental wellness apps, but this initiative is about the collective action of a group that will be encouraged to participate in pre-scheduled activates like simultaneous 10 minute meditation sessions or 30 minute self care education classes.

While this program, similar to the HPD Mental Wellness Check-in Initiative is dedicated to programs for City staff, many of these apps provide free alternative versions that would allow us to coordinate community-wide events as well for those who choose to download the free version of the app.

We can once again establish a tone for a culture that we all believe in: self care to promote good mental health in the community. We have started this process with the Hyattsville Police Department and with the City's Community Services Department. This is yet another way to serve our staff and the larger community. The negative ripple effects from the pandemic and the evolving world in which we currently live can be combated with deliberate actions that result in positive ripple effects that move throughout Hyattsville.

The Council must consider that this initiative will require ongoing financial support if employee feedback indicates Year 1 was successful.

ANTICIPATED STAFF RESOURCES REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT: Mental Health Programs Manager to coordinate and contract services. HR Director to track eligibility for participation bonus.

NEXT STEPS:

Determine the most needed and desired MH resources and put out RFP for contractor to meet those needs.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR / DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR COMMENT:

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:

The CDC states that: "Workplace wellness programs can identify those at risk and connect them to treatment and put in place supports to help people reduce and manage stress. By addressing mental health issues in the workplace, employers can reduce health care costs for their businesses and employees." – [CDC, Mental Health in the Workplace](#)

FISCAL IMPACT: \$50,000

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIONS:

LEGAL REVIEW REQUIRED?: