

# Workplace Wellness Programs Can Limit Workers' Comp Costs

The workers' compensation system ensures that employees injured on the job have access to medical care and financial support throughout the recovery process. This is an important and effective system, but ultimately it is an imperfect solution for a significant problem – workplace injuries.

From the perspective of everyone involved in the system, it is better to prevent workplace injuries in the first place. When workplace injuries can be avoided, workers don't have to worry about being injured, companies don't have to worry about losing productive work time, and workers' comp insurance companies reduce their costs.

Recent research has indicated that workplace wellness programs are one way to reduce [workplace injuries](#) and the affiliated costs. A review of more than 40 published studies indicates that on average, workplace wellness programs reduce workers' compensation costs by about 30 percent.

Wellness programs can take a variety of formats and can be tailored to meet the needs of employees. Such programs may seek to assess the health risks facing individual employees, encourage physical activity or raise awareness of health issues.

## **Rising Societal Costs of Obesity on the Workplace and Employees**

By supporting overall health and wellness, these programs can help to reduce injuries and recovery times for injured workers. Some workplace wellness programs focus on obesity among workers. In the workers' compensation context, obesity can be costly.

According to researchers at Duke University, obese employees filed twice as many workers' comp claims as non-obese employees, and lost significantly more time from work as a result of job-related injuries and illnesses. These researchers also found that the average cost of a workers' comp claim for an obese person is six times that of a person with a normal Body Mass Index.

By encouraging healthy habits, wellness programs can help to reduce obesity among workers, and in turn help to limit workers' comp claims. Other workplace wellness programs focus on mental health, work-life balance, and other issues facing workers.

For more information about [Pennsylvania workers' compensation](#), speak with a knowledgeable workers' compensation attorney.