

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §5-1E-3

§5-1E-3. Powers and duties of the Office.

The Office of Healthy Lifestyles shall:

(1) Establish a Healthy Lifestyle Coalition to assure consistency of the public health and private sector approach to dealing with programs that address the problems that affect overweight and obese individuals; to provide a forum for discussing the issues that affect healthy lifestyles and to identify best practices that can be replicated. By July 1, 2005, the Governor shall appoint thirteen members of the Coalition whose terms shall be for a period of four years, and the members may be reappointed to a second term. The terms may be staggered by the Governor to assure continuity of experience on the coalition. Members shall represent state agencies, community organizations and other entities which have an interest and expertise in obesity. Members may not be compensated but shall receive reimbursement for expenses incurred while performing the business of the coalition. The Coalition shall meet monthly for at least the first eighteen months of the Coalition to develop and implement an action plan to meet the goals established by the Coalition;

(2) Establish a clinical advisory committee to assure a unified approach using the latest research to assure consistency in program development;

(3) Establish a statewide voluntary private sector partnership and recognition program for employers, merchants, restaurants and other private sector businesses to encourage the development or further advance current programs that encourage healthy lifestyles;

(4) Coordinate higher education training programs for dietary and exercise physiology students with rural health care providers;

(5) Coordinate existing health promotion initiatives to assure clear, concise and consistent communication;

(6) Solicit, accept and expend grants, gifts, bequests, donations and other funds from any source for programs that will enable the state to accomplish the goals of this program;

(7) Develop a cross-agency series of goals to ensure consistency throughout the system of providers and agencies working in the area of improving lifestyles;

(8) Establish as a goal to increase the prevalence of healthy weight among all people in the state because obesity leads to diabetes, heart disease, strokes and kidney failure. These diseases, often arising in older age as a result of unhealthy lifestyles that began during a person's youth, place an undue financial burden on individuals, the health care industry and state health care programs;

(9) Consider the resources of the local health departments and recommend ongoing

relationships, as appropriate, between local health departments, family resource networks, faith-based organizations, cooperative extension services, farm bureaus and other health care providers;

(10) Encourage the development of incentives for participation in employee wellness programs. Incentives may be based upon, but should not be limited to, the employee's completion of health questionnaires or participating in healthy lifestyles initiatives, and may use experiences of successful initiatives that have occurred in this state. The action plan should include among its targets, state government employees in this incentive program;

(11) Build upon existing initiatives that focus on any of the coalition's goals, soliciting input from these initiatives and eliminating duplication of efforts;

(12) Report its progress annually by the first of December to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Health and Human Resource Accountability.