

# Employee Benefits Wellness & Misc.



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When offered a full time job, you should be given an employee benefits package (if you're not, you need to ask for it!). Your total compensation is so much more than your salary, and it is important to evaluate this benefits package thoroughly. There are a ton of types of benefits to consider, and this handout will focus on those in the Wellness and Miscellaneous categories.

## Tuition Assistance or Reimbursement

Some companies will pay for you to go back to school, usually for an advanced degree in your field. If this is something you were exploring or planned on doing anyway, this can be a very valuable benefit (though do pay attention to tax implications, as the benefits may be considered taxable income!). How the assistance or reimbursement is paid out might vary - pay attention to that rate, and what the maximum might reimbursement total would be. That may influence your decisions about which degree to seek and where to seek it.

## Child/Dependent Care

Being a parent or guardian is an incredibly fulfilling role, but let's face it: it can be expensive, especially when your children are young and need daycare. Some organizations may have on-site childcare facilities, others may partner with local childcare facilities to offer discounted rates to their employees, or simply providing employees extra funding for their dependent's needs.

These benefits sometimes extend to other folks we may need to care for throughout our lives, including elderly parents, as well. Even if you're starting the job at 22, without kids, and with middle aged parents - excellent dependent benefits can pay off a lot if you stay with that company, and could be a great incentive to work there!

## Employee Assistance Programs

Beyond medical, dental, etc. insurance, there are other things that employees may need assistance with throughout the course of their employment. Employee Assistance Programs (EAP's) can include a variety of services, like crisis support, mental health counseling support, financial planning, and more.

## Commuting Cost & Parking Reimbursement

Getting to work isn't cheap - it's pricey to own a car in the first place, and depending on where you work, you have to pay for parking (which can be absolutely exorbitant). Public Transportation is more eco-friendly, but the costs add up there as well. Organizations may provide some reimbursements toward either your commuting cost, or the cost of your parking (also, count free parking as a huge benefit in the first place!). This could look like a monthly stipend, or them providing a pass for public transportation free of cost to encourage less individuals driving, or something else entirely. Even \$50 a month adds up to a hefty benefit. Make sure you add up the \$\$\$.

## Work From Home

Ahh, good ol' WFH. Thanks to the pandemic, what used to be a more uncommon practice has now become a much more common and, in fact, in demand practice. Organizations are starting to buy-in, as well, to save on the cost of real estate, maintenance, heating/cooling, etc. Orgs who thought it was "impossible" for them to be successful with their employees working from home are learning that's not the case!

A flexible work arrangement can be appealing for a lot of reasons, and it's very probable that many employees will WFH at least part of the time in the future. If it's an option that is especially appealing to you, review what the employer offers in terms of WFH arrangements and what sort of benefit/stipend they provide so you can ensure your home office is adequately set up.

## Reimbursements

Should you incur expenses that are related to your work (such as those related to travel while you are working, driving your own car to an off-site meeting that you're required to attend, purchasing an approved lunch at a client meeting), your employer should reimburse you for those expenses. Better yet, they should provide you with a company credit card that you can use to make most of those purchases, especially if you are approved and expected to do that sort of thing often.

In the case of driving your personal vehicle for business, you're usually reimbursed at a specific rate per mile. The US Government re-evaluates their rate yearly and many organizations will use the government rate - lately it's been hovering between \$.50 and \$.60 per mile, an amount intended not only to cover the cost of fuel, but the wear and tear on your vehicle.

## Health & Wellness Programs

If you think about it logically, it is in your employer's best interest to keep you happy and healthy, so many employers will have in-house wellness programs (which may include things like nutrition courses, smoking cessation assistance, exercise classes, meditation courses, etc.).

You may also be offered the opportunity to get a health club or gym membership (if your company doesn't have one on site - some do!) for a reduced rate. These memberships can be expensive with a capital E, and depending on the supplement it could end up saving you thousands of dollars a year if you usually have a membership!



## Professional Development

How much is the organization going to invest in your professional development? Will they pay for relevant trainings or conferences (if not tuition assistance)? Do they have in-house programming? Employees are an organization's biggest asset, they should want you to be well trained and up-to speed!

## Relocation Costs

If you take a job out of state, or fairly far away from where you are currently located, check to see if the employer offers any sort of reimbursement or assistance with relocation costs. They may offer a small stipend/ discount to pay for a moving truck or movers, or pay for it entirely.