

CREATING A CAREGIVER-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE

A Caregiver-Friendly Workplace should consider the three (3) Es for employees and employers:

Entitlement

- ✔ Offer leave entitlements beyond statutory entitlements, both paid and unpaid such as Family Care Leave and unpaid Caregiving Leave (refer to overleaf for more information).
- ✔ Consider flexible work arrangements (work from home, flexible working hours) to help retain caregivers in the workforce as well as ease caregivers back into the workforce and also to provide them with the flexibility to continue to work and still meet their caregiving commitments (refer to overleaf for more information).

Environment

- ✔ Inculcate good workplace culture in accepting caregivers' requests for flexibility and empowering employees to request for what they need.
- ✔ Respect employees' privacy and caregiving needs
 - △ Provide guidelines for communication with employees while on leave.
 - △ Respect arrangements made by caregivers for their care recipients.
 - △ Respect the different caregiving challenges in individual families.

Enrichment

- ✔ Provide ample opportunities for re-training especially for caregivers who may have taken a long leave of absence from work to look after their loved ones.
- ✔ Support and train managers to be empathetic and to understand how they can mutually create or propose solutions that work for the employers and the employees.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR? STAY ABREAST AND VIGILANT

You can provide timely assistance by looking out for four (4) signs of caregivers' stress²:

- 1. Mood (Stress, Depression and Guilt)**
Provide a safe environment where caregivers can share their challenges and help them plan to better cope with stress or refer them for counselling or helplines
- 2. Health (Frequent illness, headaches and stomach discomfort)**
Facilitate regular health screenings for caregivers to ensure that they also look after their own health
- 3. Fatigue (Easily irritable, changes in sleep patterns and loss of interest in other activities)**
Recognise that fatigue is a common challenge of caregivers and provide encouragement to them to adopt a healthy lifestyle
- 4. Thinking (Inability to focus and difficulty in expressing thoughts clearly)**
Consider opportunities to allow caregivers to recharge, such as team lunches or company retreats

Refer to the South West Caregiver Care Guide for self-care tips, the caregiver stress checklist and useful resources.

A productive employee starts with a positive mind.

² Adapted from 5 signs your employee needs caregiver support...and what you can do about it by Home Instead Senior Care, Daughters in the Workplace Resource and Caregivers Guide, 4th edition - October 2011 by Institute of Mental Health

SOUTH WEST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (CDC)

The JTC Summit
8 Jurong Town Hall Road #26-06 Singapore 609434

Tel: 6316 1616
Email: southwest_cdc@pa.gov.sg

www.southwestcdc.org.sg



Supported by:



SOUTH WEST CAREGIVER-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE ADVISORY



An initiative by:



CAREGIVER-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE ADVISORY

The South West Caregiver-Friendly Workplace Advisory promotes a more caring and conducive environment for caregivers at their workplace.

- 1) It is expected an estimated 210,000 people aged 18 to 69 provide regular care to family and friends¹.
- 2) Based on the Singapore Survey on Informal Caregiving, three (3) in four (4) caregivers juggle between work commitments and caregiving responsibilities.
- 3) The more intense the caregiving the more adjustments caregivers would have to make, from cutting back on work hours to stopping work entirely.

This advisory aims to assist employers and HR managers to better attract and retain employees, by creating a Caregiver-Friendly Workplace through work-life strategies, unpaid leave for unexpected care needs and flexible work arrangements. (Refer to TAFEP website: Scan QR code).



BENEFITS TO EMPLOYERS²

1. Increase employee retention and reduce turnover
2. Increase productivity
3. Reduce absenteeism
4. Boost positive staff morale
5. Improve employee satisfaction
6. Enhance organisation's positive reputation

BENEFITS TO EMPLOYEES

- Better manage work and personal responsibilities
- Flexibility to continue working and not opt out of the workforce
- Greater flexibility to cope with other commitments, e.g. caring for elderly parents

¹ Who Cares Guide by NCSS

² Availability of caregiver-friendly workplace policies (CFWPs): an international scoping review, R.Ireson, B.Sethi and A. Williams, Health and Social Care in the Community (2018) 26 (1), e1-e24

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) (work from home, flexible working hours) contribute to a supportive and conducive work environment, providing caregivers the flexibility to continue to work and still meet their caregiving commitments.

FWAs refer to variations from usual work arrangements. These include:

- a) Flexi-load (e.g. part-time or job-sharing)
- b) Flexi-time (e.g. staggered hours and compressed work week)
- c) Flexi-place (e.g. telecommuting)

Under Tripartite Standards, it is recommended that an organisation formalises the processes, procedures and policies to support the success and continuity of FWAs. The Tripartite Standards include the following specifications:

- ✔ A member of the senior management is appointed to champion FWAs.
- ✔ Employers offer FWAs to employees.
- ✔ Employees can request FWAs offered by the company. They are informed about the types of FWAs offered, the process to request, and the expectations on the responsible use of FWAs (e.g. in company's staff website, HR policy, circular or memo).
- ✔ Outcomes of FWA applications are communicated to the employees in a timely manner and are documented. If a request for FWA cannot be granted, supervisors engage employees on the reasons and where possible, discuss suitable alternatives that better meet the needs of both employer and employee.
- ✔ Supervisors are trained to:
 - a. Objectively evaluate employees' applications for FWA based on the suitability of the FWA, considering the needs of the job and the employees in areas such as work performance, job requirements, compensation and safety; and
 - b. Set work expectations, manage and appraise employees on FWAs fairly based on work outcomes.

FUNDING FOR FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

The **WorkPro Work-Life Grant** aims to provide funding support to companies to sustain the use of FWAs for all employees to create work-life harmony at the workplace. The Grant consists of the FWA Incentive and Job Sharing Incentive. Companies may tap on either or both grants.

Eligible companies could receive funding, capped at \$105,000 per company for local employees (Singapore Citizens/Singapore Permanent Residents) who are regular users of FWAs, over two (2) years. Companies would also be subjected to caps within the respective grant component.

Interested companies can apply through the appointed WorkPro Programme Partners:

Programme Partners	NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute)	Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF)
Hotline	6474 0606	6290 7694
Email	followup@e2i.com.sg	workpro@snef.sg
Website	www.e2i.com.sg	www.snef.org.sg

You may also visit WSG's website at www.wsg.gov.sg/workpro for more information.

FAMILY CARE LEAVE AND/OR UNPAID CAREGIVING LEAVE FOR UNEXPECTED CARE NEEDS

Caregiving is an important responsibility and is no easy feat, especially for those who have to juggle between work and caregiving roles. At times, employees may have greater caregiving needs should their immediate family members have a medical episode and require more care.

While employees are encouraged to first utilise their statutory leave, employers can be more compassionate and provide additional unpaid leave to support employees during such stressful periods.

Tripartite Standard on Unpaid Leave for Unexpected Care Needs

According to the Tripartite Standard on Unpaid Leave for Unexpected Care Needs, employers should inform their employees about the types of unpaid leave offered, the application process, and the expectations of the responsible use of leave. The following are some recommended practices from this Tripartite Standard:

- (a) Up to 4 weeks of unpaid leave per year if their child is below the age of 2 and:
 - i. is born (a) preterm, or (b) with congenital conditions, or (c) as part of multiple births; or
 - ii. has any medical conditions, subject to discussion with the employer
- (b) Up to 2 weeks of unpaid leave per year for the caring of their immediate family members such as parents, parents-in-law, spouse, and children who are hospitalised, during or after hospitalisation.

In addition to this Tripartite Standard, employers can also consider offering paid leave for employees' family care needs.

Family Care Leave

Up to 4 days to take care of their parents, parents-in-law, grandparents, spouse, children (older than 12 years) and siblings

