



## Knox County Health Department

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### **KCHD partners with East Tennessee Wellness Roundtable to recognize healthy worksites**

*Knoxville, Tenn.* – County and regional leaders recognized several local employers this month for their efforts to make workplaces healthier: eight with platinum status and three with gold status.

The recognition is granted annually by the Knox County Health Department and the East Tennessee Wellness Roundtable. The program awards bronze, gold or platinum status to employers who meet a series of criteria that includes: the promotion of physical activity, nutrition, breastfeeding, mental health, as well as the prevention of substance misuse and tobacco use.

“Wellness and productivity go hand in hand because a healthy employee is a productive one,” said KCHD Registered Dietitian and ETWR Chair Kaela McIver. “Research has also proven again and again that wellness programs decrease health insurance costs for the employer.”

A Harvard study concluded that every \$1 spent on wellness programs saves about \$3 in health care costs and \$3 in reduced absenteeism.

The 2020 ETWR Platinum worksites are:

- Knoxville’s Community Development Corporation, the public housing authority for Knoxville and Knox County
- City of Knoxville, the home of the city government, with 1,500 employees in the Knoxville area
- University of Tennessee Medical Center, East Tennessee’s top-ranked hospital and the region’s only Level I Trauma Center
- University of Tennessee, Knoxville, a public research institution and the flagship campus for the state school
- Pilot Flying J, the largest operator of Travel Centers in North America
- DWK Life Sciences, a manufacturer of glassware, laboratory consumables and specialty products for life sciences
- TeamHealth, a corporation that offers careers for physicians plus hospital management and staffing services for facilities across the country
- Radio Systems Corporation, a global supplier of pet products headquartered in Knoxville

The 2020 ETWR Gold worksites include:

- The Trust Company, an independent firm that specializes in helping individuals, families, business owners and nonprofits reach their financial goals
- Tennessee Urology Associates, a regional urology practice with 18 urologists serving patients at 11 locations in Knoxville and surrounding counties



- LHP Capital, a real estate development firm and a national leader in the development and management of affordable housing

Worksites can apply for equipment that support wellness initiatives, such as blood pressure monitoring cuffs, exercise equipment and lactation room supplies. These resources are provided by the Tennessee Department of Health through the Project Diabetes grant, of which KCHD is a recipient. The Project Diabetes grant is focused on reducing the number of Tennesseans who are considered overweight or obese.

According to the KCHD 2019 Community Health Assessment, about 32 percent of Knox County adults are considered obese, 35 percent have hypertension and 11 percent have diabetes.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say employees who miss work due to obesity-related issues costs employers \$11.2 billion annually. Hypertension costs \$10.3 billion; physical inactivity, \$9.1 billion; smoking, \$3.6 billion; and diabetes, \$2.2 billion.

ETWR is a member-based collaboration of wellness professionals whose common goal is to cultivate healthier worksites. Local worksites interested in workplace well-being are encouraged to attend meetings. For more information, call 865-215-5180.

**About Knox County Health Department:**

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. As a chief health strategist for the community and with more than 240 team members, KCHD's broad scope of work includes convening partners to improve community health, identifying community health threats, investigating disease outbreaks, conducting extensive outreach and education, preparing for public health emergencies, providing and connecting the public with medical care, enforcing food safety and air quality laws, and more. For more information, visit [www.knoxcounty.org/health](http://www.knoxcounty.org/health).

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