



A Vermont School Workplace  
Health Promotion Program

# Application

Deadline: May 1, 2010



# VEHI PATHpoints Application

## STEP 1 – General information:

Supervisory Union/District: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Employees in SU/District: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Contact at Central Office:

\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP 2 – Signatures of Commitment:

Signatures indicate the Applicant's commitment to promoting the VEHI PATHpoints Initiative within your school communities, in collaboration with VEHI Staff.

### **Superintendent**

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### **School Board Chair**

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Local Association/Vermont-NEA Representative**

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Location/School: \_\_\_\_\_

STEP 3 – Mail your Application by May 1, 2010 (address below).

STEP 4 – VEHI will contact you to schedule a PATHpoints Application phone interview.

***Thank you for your interest in improving the health of your faculty, staff and school community.***

# VEHI PATHpoints

*We are now inviting applications for the 2010-2011 school year.*

## Introduction

When school faculty and staff are healthy they are better able to provide quality instruction, manage stress appropriately, experience less work-time lost and model healthy behaviors to their families, colleagues, the community and students. Healthy faculty and staff also save the local communities money because they have fewer health care costs and lower rates of absenteeism.

To assist school leaders, faculty and staff in reducing their incidence and prevalence of illness, promote and maintain positive health outcomes and establish cultures of wellness throughout Vermont's school facilities, the Vermont Education Health Initiative (VEHI) first implemented the year-round PATHpoints program four years ago.

## How PATHpoints works

Individual employees enroll in VEHI PATHpoints by creating a personal PATH account on the Web ([www.tomypath.com/vehi](http://www.tomypath.com/vehi)) and clicking on their supervisory union or school district. This account remains theirs throughout their employment in the same supervisory union or school district.

Individuals then have the opportunity to participate in a variety of VEHI PATH program activities and can earn up to 150 PATHpoints along the way. An individual in your SU/District can earn the following:

**\$50 for 50-99 PATHpoints**

**\$100 for 100-149 PATHpoints**

**\$150 for 150 or more PATH points**

PATHpoints are converted to dollars at the end of the school year and participants receive a check at their home address for dollars earned in early September of the following school year.

For every employee who participates in the program, your district or supervisory union has the opportunity to receive an equal contribution of dollars to be spent on goods and services to enhance your school community's culture. For example, if 100 employees in a district each earned 100 points, your district could earn \$10,000.

In order to receive these funds, your district or supervisory union must submit an action plan and list of projected expenditures for review to our health promotion consultants. Once your action plan has been approved, we will mail your check to the business manager in the central office. Our goal is to distribute these funds in September of the following year so the needed equipment, supplies and services can be purchased. To assist districts and supervisory unions in preparing these action plans, VEHI has

created a Best Practice Manual of Guidelines which is available on the [vehi.org](http://vehi.org) website. (See *expenditure requirements on pages 6 and 7*)

By offering individual financial incentives to PATHpoint participants and providing funds to the districts and supervisory unions for enhancing their culture of wellness, we are succeeding in our mission to significantly reduce the number of individuals who move from the low health risk to the high health risk category in a year's time and to create healthier and safer school environments.

## Additional VEHI Benefits

### Employee Assistance Programs

School districts and supervisory unions participating in VEHI PATHpoints will receive the full benefits of the employee assistance program, INVEST EAP (a public/private non-profit collaborative between the State of Vermont Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Vermont Association of Business, Industry and Rehabilitation.. VEHI picks up the cost of the EAP and offers the services to all your employees and members of their households.

### Data Reports/Recommendations

Once a year VEHI will provide districts and supervisory unions with a report illustrating the Healthy Life Survey data in aggregate form and a list of recommendations for decreasing your supervisory union/district's risk factors.

### Marketing materials

VEHI produces and provides marketing materials about the PATHpoints initiative to all participating supervisory unions and school districts.

### Training/Technical Assistance

The Vermont School Board Insurance Trust health promotion consultants provide regional and state-wide trainings, on-line courses and technical assistance about the PATHpoints program, health education and health promotion, appropriate expenditures of funds, how to become wellness champions and how to build and sustain a culture of wellness within your school facilities. They also design, create and provide a variety of guidance documents and audio-visual resources to support the PATHpoints initiative.

## VEHI PATHpoint Program Requirements

To participate in the PATHpoints program, VEHI will expect the following:

- The appointment of a VEHI School Health Champion responsible for promoting and managing the PATHPoints program across the district/SU;
- Responding to questions about the VEHI PATHpoints initiative;
- Establishing a group of building representatives from facility locations to complete the school base-line assessments;
- Reviewing the SU's health-related data;
- Determining the highest needs;
- Creating annual action plans and determining fund allocation;
- Monitoring implementation of the action plan and use of funds;
- Providing VSBIT with a one page end of the year evaluation report and a list of employees to verify employment prior to payment of all VEHI PATHpoints funds and;
- Communicating with the VSBIT health promotion consultants throughout the year.
  - ◆ We recommend that the VEHI Champion be an individual passionate about promoting employee wellness and one who has strong leadership skills.
  - ◆ We also recommend that a School Health Champion receive a stipend of not less than \$1000 for their time and investment in the program.
- Assurance that your VEHI Champion will participate in the fall and spring state-wide trainings and that they will be able to attend these events without taking personal or professional time.
- The appointment of individual building representatives to assist the VEHI Champion in promoting the PATHpoints program. These individuals will also serve as members of their individual wellness teams and will assist the district or supervisory union-wide team in prioritizing the greatest health and safety needs and in preparing the action plan and budget to meet these needs. We recommend these individuals be paid a stipend of no less than \$250 for the time they commit toward building a culture of wellness.
- The completion of individual facility base-line assessments and yearly or multiple year action plans with a budget outlining how you plan to address your greatest identified needs in accordance with VEHI's Best Practice Manual's services and products. The action plan and budget should be forwarded to your district/supervisory union's VSBIT health promotion consultant for their review. They will then work with the Champion to make revisions as necessary.

- A one page summary describing how the funds were expended by January of the following year.
- Assurance that the Vermont School Board Insurance Trust's health promotion consultants will be able to meet with you, other administrative leaders, facility managers and VEHI Champions at your location during the year.
- Assurance that all employees have equal opportunity to use up-to-date technology so they can partake in the PATHpoints program.
- The submission of Verification of Employment once a year in an electronic format upon request.
- Assurance that VEHI Champions, our health promotion consultants and the EAP counselors have opportunity to promote and market VEHI materials and services to employees throughout the school year.

## VEHI PATHpoints Supervisory Union/District Fund Requirements

### The Supervisory Union/School District's use of matching funds **MUST**:

- Be **HEALTH** related.
- Be **DATA** driven.
- Be **INCLUSIVE** of all employees in and preferably accessible across the **LIFESPAN**.
- Promote **ONGOING** attention to health initiatives that provide **LASTING CHANGE**:
  - Initiatives must be evidence-based.
  - Initiatives must involve more than one event and involve more than one individual.
  - Initiatives must pass the "**STRAIGHT FACE**" test: Can you look a taxpayer in the eye and say this was a good use of health care funds?

VSBIT has created a guidance document entitled, ***Best Practices for Employee Health Promotion Programs***, for your use in preparing your action plans and estimated budgets. This list provides industry standards that are research based and backed with evidence. In summary, the guidance document recommendations for expenditures are as follows:

- **To support an individual who is responsible for coordinating school health initiatives, building infrastructure and promoting faculty and staff wellness.** School health initiatives will be more effective if an individual is assigned this responsibility and provided with time and resources necessary to meet identified objectives.
- **To prepare and implement safety, health and wellness policies.** School health initiatives will have more impact when policies which reinforce healthy lifestyle efforts have been established.
- **To improve environmental conditions.** By identifying and correcting the school's physical environment, an individual's health is positively impacted.
- **To provide stress management trainings.** Ongoing stress management trainings provide individuals with strategies for identifying and reducing negative effects of specific stressors while restoring personal equilibrium.
- **To improve the nutritional value of food products** available to faculty and staff. Healthier food choices during the work day equal healthier adults.
- **To provide health and safety program trainings and consultation.** Such trainings arm individuals with new knowledge about their own health and safety.

**VEHI PATHPoints dollars should NOT fund the following:**

- Exercise classes
- Clothing, shoes, or other personal items
- Personal trainers
- Massages
- Individual gym memberships
- Weight management programs outside of the VEHI services provided
- Water coolers
- Health fairs
- Staff "get-togethers"
- Prizes and incentives
- Equipment ***without a long-term plan***

## PATHpoints FAQ'S (Frequently Asked Questions)

### 1) *Who will see our information and data?*

VEHI is HIPPA compliant and will not share individual data with anyone other than VEHI care management partner providers. Our partners (official HIPPA business associates) are:

- **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBS) & Blue Health Solutions:** providing nurse case management programs for our members with high-risk chronic conditions.
- **Healthways:** providing Lifestyle Management coaching to help employees lower their health-related risks.
- **Invest EAP:** providing a state-wide employee assistance program.

The PATH database of health information and points is held on a dedicated HIPPA compliant server protected by a software firewall and strict back-up measures. No one else sees the PATHpoints data unless it is in aggregate form and vetted for identifiable information.

### 2) *Will my SU's/District's participation influence our Health Care Premiums?*

While participation in the VEHI PATHpoint program will have no bearing on individual insurance premiums, the number of employees who participate in activities to decrease their level of health risks, positively impact the premium rates of the Vermont School Board Insurance Trust membership as a whole.

### 3) *How will I get the PATHpoints word out to faculty and staff?*

This is the responsibility of the VEHI School Health Champion and individual school building representatives. VEHI will continue to provide Champions with information throughout the school year and will ask them to share these resources with their faculty and staff.

### 4) *What if my district already has an EAP (employee Assistance Program)?*

You can continue to use your existing EAP but your staff will only get points for accessing INVEST EAP's services. Because VEHI has a Business Associates Agreement with INVEST EAP, all HIPPA protection is fully in place and strictly guarded. Because VEHI picks up the cost of the EAP, we recommend that you use your current EAP funds toward other stress management and crisis support services to avoid redundancies.