



MHWC Workplace Partner Certification & Mayor's Workplace Awards – 2026 Updates

In response to feedback from our valued certified partners - and in alignment with our commitment to equity, programmatic growth, and evolving local and national workplace wellness trends - the MHWC has made key updates to both the Workplace Partner Certification and the Mayor's Healthiest Workplace Awards applications for 2026.

These updates aim to:

- Increase accessibility and recognition opportunities for small, local businesses by focusing on core elements such as policy, programming, communication, and evaluation
- Expand recognition pathways within the program
- Elevate **mental health** as a core pillar of wellness, reflecting its growing importance and relevance in supporting overall employee well-being

What's New in 2026

1. Adjusted Point Threshold for Small Organizations

- X-Small organizations (50 employees or fewer) now require a minimum of **8 points per wellness pillar** to qualify as a certified partner (previously 10 points).
- Point thresholds for all other organization sizes remain unchanged at **10 points per pillar**.

2. New Mental Health Pillar Added

- A dedicated **Mental Health** pillar has been introduced in the certification application.
- Includes **11 questions** totaling **16 points**, with select items previously housed under the Health Education & Preventative Services pillar.

3. Revised Health Education & Preventative Services Pillar

- Now includes **12 questions** for a maximum of **24 points**.
- Adjustments reflect the relocation of mental health-related questions and refinement of existing items.

4. Nutrition Pillar Update

- A new question on **farm-to-work initiatives** has been added.
- Total points for the Nutrition pillar remain at **20**.



5. Simplified Certification Application Format

- The **short response section** of the Workplace Partner Certification has been removed.
- The application now consists solely of **yes/no questions**, streamlining the process for applicants.

6. Expanded Award Eligibility Requirements

- To qualify for the **Mayor's Healthiest Workplace Awards**, applicants must now submit initiatives for **all 5 wellness pillars**:
 - Tobacco-Free Living
 - Nutrition
 - Physical Activity
 - Health Education & Preventative Services
 - Mental Health
- Organizations applying for the **Moving the Needle Award** may still submit initiatives in **one or more pillars**.

7. Updated Open-Ended Response Prompts

- Wording of narrative prompts for both the Mayor's Healthiest Workplace Awards and Moving the Needle Awards has been revised to better elicit details on program impact and implementation.