For state legislators looking for methods to combat the obesity epidemic among adults, there are many policy arenas to address, many possible actions to take and many roles to play.

**Help public and private sector employees fight obesity by:**

- working with state agencies to establish worksite wellness programs that focus on employee physical activity, nutrition and healthy weight maintenance;
- assisting businesses with limitations on liability for promoting physical activity by creating reasonable liability waivers to protect workplaces and other institutions that provide time, facilities, equipment or support for physical activity from frivolous lawsuits stemming from activity-related injuries;
- adopting nutrition standards in state workplaces and encouraging businesses to follow them;
- working with agencies responsible for food service—including cafeterias, food service and vending machines—to set standards that at least 50 percent of the food served meets guidelines for healthy food choices;
- establishing new standards for state construction that incorporate designs encouraging and facilitating physical activity;
- creating an award program for businesses and employers that meet or exceed efforts to promote good health and address obesity in the workplace or community;
- supporting private employer health promotion efforts by working with insurance companies to offer premium breaks for employers that enact preventive health and wellness initiatives; and
- offering pre-tax, flexible spending options to state employees and/or private sector employees to pay for eligible health and wellness related expenses.

**Give communities the support they need to encourage more active living by:**

- supporting or creating comprehensive community campaigns to promote healthy behaviors;
- considering the health consequences of legislative and regulatory decisions that affect community planning, land use and infrastructure;
- bringing together parks, recreation, education, transportation, public safety and public health experts to coordinate state policies affecting community health; and
- becoming a champion for improving community environments to promote health.
Encourage the health care system to fight obesity more effectively by:

- encouraging the use of technology and innovative tools for providers and consumers to maintain a healthy weight or support weight loss;
- providing incentives for health maintenance organizations and health care providers to take more active roles in making prevention a priority;
- examining and drawing attention to costs to state government and state economies from obesity-related illnesses and lost productivity;
- convening health care and government agencies to implement obesity prevention and management initiatives;
- working to establish worksite wellness programs for state and private employees; and
- considering including nutrition counseling and physical activity counseling in minimum insurance coverage requirement policies, in accordance with National Institutes of Health (NIH) guidelines.

Support broader access to healthier foods by:

- working with state agencies responsible for agriculture, education, health and economic development to educate consumers on healthy eating;
- providing resources and leadership to promote restaurants’ and grocery stores’ participation in voluntary food and menu labeling programs;
- implementing higher nutritional standards in government food programs; and
- supporting local agriculture by promoting partnerships between local growers and schools, and publicly-funded food programs to provide fruits and vegetables and information on healthy eating to improve consumers’ access to fresh and healthy foods.

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