The scope of worksite wellness initiatives today extends beyond individuals’ physical health to include dimensions of mental and emotional health, job satisfaction, social connectedness and financial well-being. Sometimes referred to as vital conditions or social factors, social determinants of health (SDOH) are the upstream factors impacting employees’ individual abilities to achieve optimal well-being. Through internal collaboration and external partnerships that address SDOH, employers can develop a healthy, high-performing workforce.

This article was written by members of the HERO Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Communities Study Committee, with support by HERO staff. While all social determinants may impact employee well-being, this article focuses on the following SDOH: location, financial instability, access and availability of healthy food, and social isolation.

The article addresses:

- definitions and terms
- the impact of social risk factors on employees and their communities
- relevance of SDOH for employers
- implications for health and well-being programming
- relationship to Corporate Social Responsibility
- actions that employers can take to address SDOH
- employer case studies

This article was published in the February 2020 issue of the American Journal of Health Promotion. It is a condensed version of the full white paper published in the HERO website.


[View article]