Frequently Asked Questions - Exemplary Employer Recognition

What is the Exemplary Employer Recognition Award?

The WFACSA Exemplary Employer Recognition is a recognition program for employers who support employees in the workplace who are also performing caregiving tasks for a family member such as caring for a parent with dementia, an adult child or sibling with disabilities, a spouse with a long-term illness, or other family member.

Employers applied for the recognition between June 1 and August 31, 2025 through a free online application.

Who is eligible to apply for the Exemplary Employer Recognition Award?

Any Wisconsin employer of any size is eligible to apply. Winners were selected from small (less than 25 employees), medium, and large employers (250 or more employees). Any employee may nominate an employer but the application must include all employer contact information for verification and communication purposes.

What criteria are used to select Exemplary Employers?

Employers were expected to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of how many of their employees have family caregiving responsibilities.
2. Demonstrate how they offer employees connection to resources, financial support, personal assistance, and development.
3. Share examples of ways they are supporting family caregivers in the workplace.
4. Identify workplace resources available to employees such as Employee Resource Groups, caregiver-specific communication and retention efforts or caregiver-specific resources and educational programs within the workplace.

Who selected the finalists and winners?

A panel of advisors from the following Wisconsin agencies and organizations developed the criteria, reviewed the applications, and recommended the finalists and award winners, including: Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Wellness Council of Wisconsin, 2024 Exemplary Employer Recognition Winner: Promega, and AARP Wisconsin

What is the Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance?

The *Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance (WFACSA)* is made up of public and private sector disability and aging organizations and other allies to uplift the voices of family caregivers and improve resource coordination and increase access to the services and support available to them.

The WFACSA believes it is important to recognize employers who are models of success in addressing the financial and workforce security of employees who are family caregivers. Connect with WFACSA at http://wisconsincaregiver.org/alliance

Why focus on employers supporting their working caregivers important?

Approximately one in five adult Wisconsinites is a family caregiver. Another one in eight expects to assume caregiving responsibilities for a parent, child or sibling with disabilities, their spouse, a grandparent, or other family member in the next two years. As the state's population ages, more employees will be taking on caregiving responsibilities at home.

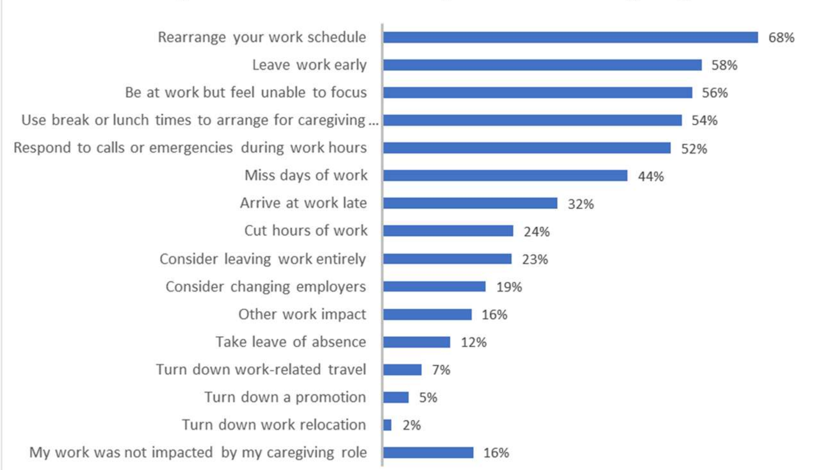
Employers are feeling the increasing impact on the workforce. 'Caregiver' is the fastest growing employee group. In fact, a recent SHRM survey of workers with caregiving responsibilities found that at least 80% of caregivers anticipate the primary care they provide to be long-term, yet only 35% of HR professionals say their organization is effective at addressing the long-term needs of employees with caregiving responsibilities. Furthermore, 1 in 3 HR professionals (33%) are unfamiliar with the caregiving needs of their organization's workforce.

In a Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance survey of more than 200 Wisconsin employers, nearly three-quarters indicated that caregiving responsibilities of their employees were causing increased stress for both employees and supervisors on the job.

Wisconsin's population of adults over the age of 65 is projected to grow 72% by 2040, while the pool of people in their prime caregiving years is shrinking. Family caregivers looking for paid help are already having a difficult time recruiting care providers due to the state's low unemployment rate and stagnant wages for the caregiving workforce. This care workforce shortage leaves family members to perform major caregiving responsibilities at a time when an estimated 56% still hold down a full-time job. Pew Research recently reported that 42% of Gen Xers are already "sandwich generation" caregivers supporting both young children and aging parents[1] while 33% of Baby Boomers are caregivers.

Caregiving responsibilities for a family member are diverse and complicated. From navigating support systems and doctor appointments to providing direct care and managing daily medications, family caregivers experience significant stress. The stress is often so much that their own health, and ultimately their work, may suffer if an employer doesn't take notice. In Wisconsin, data from a representative survey conducted in 2021 and 2022 indicates that 8 in 10 caregivers reported having their work life interrupted: experienced 33% more days with poor mental health each month than non-caregivers (5.6 vs 4.2 days and 29% more days with poor physical health (4.5 vs 3.5 days).

Figure 1. Work-life interruptions from caregiving



According to AARP and the National Family Caregiver Alliance, employee caregiving costs employers $33 billion annually from lost productivity and an additional $6.6 billion to replace employees who retire early or quit. Due to stress and neglect of their own health, caregiver employees are also estimated to cost an additional $13.4 billion more per year in health care than their co-workers without such responsibilities.

Questions?

Visit https://wisconsincaregiver.org/working-caregivers, or email wfacsa@gmail.com.

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