



WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

- IN THIS ISSUE -

2023 IN REVIEW. 1
See how we improved well-being by the numbers.

HOW WE DELIVER RESULTS. 2
Learn how our tools made a difference last year.

CELEBRATE NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH. 2
Find resources and learn healthy eating tips.

GET A HEAD START ON PREVENTIVE SCREENINGS. 3
Learn how to earn credit for your screening sooner.

THE NOURISH CHALLENGE 4
Join a fun, garden-themed nutrition challenge.

SAVE ON GROCERIES 5
Learn how to eat better and stay under your budget.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CARE KITS 6
Get help caring for loved ones during every stage of life.

CYBERSECURITY AND RETIREMENT READINESS 7
Learn online security practices for your retirement planning journey.

Looking Back on a Successful 2023

In the beginning of 2023 we knew that our employee’s health had room for improvement.

- **61.6 percent** of registered employees had an overall elevated health risk and qualified for our specialized health coaching programs.
- **41.8 percent** of registered employees noted having at least one major health problem or chronic condition.

By the end of the year, we helped countless employees find their personal path to better well-being.

- **90.3 percent** of incentive-eligible, registered users completed the healthy activities required to earn the program incentive.
- **93.8 percent** of incentive-eligible, registered users completed the Health Assessment and 89.28 percent of total registered users completed it.
- **92.1 percent** of our incentive-eligible population registered for Your Pathway to Wellness and 80.99 percent of everyone registered.



Building healthy habits on-site

We also offered wellness events, all throughout the year. In 2023 our employees learned about their health, participated in fun events and took steps toward a healthier lifestyle.

- **Onsite biometric screenings** – We held 49 events and gave screenings to 4,176 participants. 9,365 members were screened across all of our screening options, which include:
 1. Submit a Physician Results Form
 2. Attend an on-site screening
 3. Visit a Quest Lab
 4. Request and complete an At Home Test Kit.
- **Fitness classes** – We offered 126 classes and helped 859 employees practice yoga, Pilates, body sculpting, functional fitness and more.

- **Fun wellness events** – We held Bike and Blend smoothie-making events, outdoor sunset yoga, sound bath meditation sessions and more.
- **Wellness on Wheels** – Work outside of County Administration area? Wellness on Wheels is a new program that brings program offerings from our Wellness Center to your location, making it convenient to incorporate well-being into your daily life. Offerings include wellness presentations, sound baths, yoga classes, guided meditation sessions, fun crafting projects and more. For more info, contact countywellnesscenter@ocgov.com.



Learn more about our Wellness Center and discover even more resources on the Your Pathway to Wellness portal at webmdhealth.com/countyoforange.

Resources That Deliver Results

Our resources helped to make a difference when it comes to mental well-being. Employees at The County of Orange used our tools to find the path to greater resilience, better financial well-being and a more balanced lifestyle.

- **Enrich** – 3,364 employees used the financial well-being program and completed 6,926 sessions on topics related to how to pay off debt, planning for retirement, saving for a new home and much more.
- **meQuilibrium** – 3,807 employees used the stress-management program to build resilience and improve their emotional well-being. 41 percent of those users have continued to engage in meQuilibrium.
- **Daily Habits** – The goal-tracking tool helped employees improve their mental well-being with the Work-Life Balance Plan, Keep Stress in Check Plan and plenty more.

Our tools also helped employees achieve their physical well-being goals. With resources like health coaching, we gave employees professional support that measured up compared to WebMD's Book of Business (BoB).

- **Lower blood pressure risks** – High blood pressure in employees was measured at 52.2 percent in 2023 compared to 53.6 percent BoB.
- **Better weight management** – Obesity levels in employees were measured at 41.9 percent in 2023 compared to 43.5 percent BoB.

Learn more about our resources and find your path to well-being on the Your Pathway to Wellness portal at webmdhealth.com/countyoforange.

Join us in celebrating National Nutrition Month®

March is recognized as National Nutrition Month® by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. During National Nutrition Month®, work to build a healthy eating routine, eat with the environment in mind, and stay nourished on a budget.

- Focus on eating a variety of nutrient-dense foods from all food groups—fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein, dairy and oils. [Click here](#) to learn more about balancing your plate at myplate.gov.
- Challenge yourself to experiment with new foods and recipes, attend a cooking class, or try meal planning for you and your family.
- [Learn more about community resources](#) such as local farms and certified farmers' markets in Orange County.
- Join us at the Wellness Center for National Nutrition Month celebration events all month long. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Find expert support

Did you know Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) are nutrition experts? If you are looking for personalized nutrition information to meet your health goals, seek the help of an RDN. Check with your healthcare provider to see if a RDN could be helpful in supporting your health goals.

Find more information about National Nutrition Month® at eatright.org.

Preventive Screenings Can Save Lives

Get an early start on your 2025 Wellness Credit and check in for a health screening!

Health screenings are one more way Your Pathway to Wellness rewards you for supporting your well-being. With your results, you'll have the information you need to identify health risks and take steps to reduce them—helping to keep you happy, healthy and feeling your best for years to come.

Earn rewards early

New this year, you're able to work ahead on your 2025 Wellness Credit and Opportunity Drawings (launching in mid-May 2024). Keep reading to learn more.

Physicians Results Form through Quest

Visit the Your Pathway to Wellness portal and click on the "Quest" card to download the Physician Results Form and take it with you to your annual wellness check. Then, follow the instructions below:

- Have your physician complete and sign the form with your biometric results collected between August 19, 2023 and August 16, 2024.
- Sign and fax the form to Quest at the number listed on the form. Do NOT have your provider fax the form.
- Once received, you will get a confirmation email from Quest.
- Visit the Rewards page on the Your Pathway to Wellness portal after May 20, 2024 to confirm completion of this activity.



Dental and vision exam certifications

You can also download the Dental and Vision Certification forms to take with you to your exam. Exams must be dated between August 19, 2023 and August 16, 2024.

- Download the form today by clicking on the respective cards in the Your Pathway to Wellness portal.
- Have your provider complete and sign the form.
- Be sure to return to the Your Pathway to Wellness portal (not Quest) to upload your completed form(s).
- In order to receive credit for the exam (Dental/Vision), ensure you choose the correct exam for which you are uploading the form.
- Visit the Rewards page on the Your Pathway to Wellness portal after May 20, 2024 to confirm completion of this activity.

Questions?

Contact WebMD Customer Service at **800-492-9812**, Monday to Friday: 5:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. PST. Or email your Well-Being Program Manager at YourPathway@webmd.net.

Grow Healthy Habits During Nourish

A nutritious diet can help you prevent disease and live a longer, healthier and happier life. Need help eating better? Register for Nourish, a fun challenge that makes eating healthy a little easier. Don't miss out! Register soon on the Your Pathway to Wellness portal.

How the challenge works

Nourish is a fun, garden-themed challenge that helps you start healthy eating habits that are important to you. Each time you record a healthy activity during the challenge, your digital garden will grow with veggies, fruits and grains from around the world. Growing at least five plants completes a new garden and reveals delicious recipes for the week! You can prepare a healthy meal, eat more mindfully, swap sugary beverages for water and much more.

Completing two activities a day reveals a full plant, completing three activities reveals a prize plant and completing even more activities can earn you bonuses. The goal is to grow 30 plants during the 6-week program. You should aim to reveal at least five plants a week.

Completing the challenge will also earn you rewards – for every 10 plants nourished (max 30), you'll earn an entry into an opportunity drawing for a \$50 gift card. Registration starts March 18 and the challenge runs from April 1 to May 12.

Note: Prizes are provided courtesy of the County of Orange Employee Health Plans and may be subject to taxation.

Build on the basics

During the first week of Nourish, you'll focus on learning foundational activities that can help you start healthy eating habits and live a healthier lifestyle. Activities include:

- Food and beverage choices
- Eating habits
- Exercise
- Sleep
- Mindfulness

Each following week, you'll receive four new activities that will help keep you on track toward your personal goals. Just choose activities that are most meaningful and motivating to you.

Connect and compete with co-workers

We offer fun social features that help you find success during Nourish. You can see how you stack up against the competition with our Leaderboards, find support from co-workers with the Buddies tool, share recipes and experiences with Teams, and more!

Learn more and register for Nourish at webmdhealth.com/countyoforange.

See what others are saying

Last year, we offered Renew, a similar challenge that encouraged County employees to focus on self-care. Here's a few positive feedback:

“ I am now enjoying my life more that includes being outdoors more, spending more time with my girls and pets by putting down electronics devices and living a happier balanced life. THANK YOU RENEW.

Imelda C.

“ For me, Renew guided me towards a better lifestyle. It helped me connect with my family and do fun activities. It was such a reality check for me.

Genesis V.

“ Renew helped me to set my focus each morning.

Steven W.



Fire Up Your Savings Game: Saving on Groceries

With prices rapidly rising on everyday items, perhaps your savings plan has been put on hold. These tips will help you find more money in your budget – starting with saving at the grocery store.



1. Plan before you shop

Know what you have to spend: Set a budget or dollar limit for each trip to the store or each order, and keep a running tally as you shop so you don't go over your budget.

- Before you go to the store, take inventory of what you already have and make a list of what you need. Try meal-prepping and plan for meals, snacks and needs that will carry you through the week – or until the next time you shop. Remember to also check on things like cleaning supplies, personal toiletries or other household items.
- Eat before you shop! Shopping while hungry (or in the company of hungry children) could tempt you to stray from your list.
- Sticking to your list is probably the most important thing you can do to save money on groceries and hit your grocery budget. Your list is your plan. When you buy something else, you're spending your money on something you didn't plan for.

2. Compare prices from different stores

You have tons of grocery shopping options. Looking closely at them and finding the mix that works for you can help you balance your personal preferences, the kinds of things you need, and the price you're willing to pay. You may find out that splitting your grocery list up between a few options gets you the best deals.

- Check dollar stores for deals on household items.
- Traditional supermarkets and superstores are familiar and convenient choices where you can compare pricing between different brands and accomplish a lot in one store.
- Bulk retailers or wholesale clubs might be a good way to stock up on quantity for a lower per-use cost. But, only buy things in quantity when it makes sense.

3. Find the best deals on things you need

You know what you need to buy because you made an awesome list. But how can you get the best deal on each of those items?

- Compare apples-to-apples by using the unit price as your comparison number: calculate the price per pound, ounce, or use. Many items will have a unit price already calculated for you on the price tag.
- Know what things cost. Just because something is on sale doesn't mean it's a good deal.
- Take the time to compare your list with sales, coupons, and specials to see if you can win a few extra savings points! But, only shop the sales for what you need. If it's not urgent, wait for something to go on sale to buy it.
- Give the generic or store brand a try. They're often lower in price.
- When you check out, make sure you're being charged what you expected. If you think you're being overcharged, speak up. It never hurts to ask.

4. Use all of what you buy

Stretch those dollars even further by reducing or eliminating waste, so you can buy less often. And maximize your grocery purchases for the foods and supplies that meet your needs and make your life easier, happier and healthier.

- Process and store food to maximize shelf life. Store things in their ideal conditions to make them last if you need them to. If it's something you won't prepare for a week, freeze it to keep it fresh.
- Organize your storage so you can easily find things.
- Stick with your menu plan! Make the recipes you planned to and use the fresh ingredients you bought with your hard-earned money when they're at their peak flavor and quality.

What to do if you're struggling with your grocery bill?

Looking at your whole financial picture, learning about your different options, and making a plan for your finances can relieve a huge amount of stress and anxiety. It can also help you figure out how to get where you want to be.

Orange County's Credit Union offers Financial Wellness Coaching to help you manage debt, improve credit and lead a financially healthy life. To get started, [review your budget](#). Then, visit our [Financial Wellness page](#) to learn more about firing up your savings game!

Claim Your Care Kit

Get the resources you need to care for your loved ones. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Resources For Healthy LivingSM, offers free Care kits to help you through all of life's important stages.

Pregnancy care kit

Expecting? Let us help you prepare for your new arrival. Our kit includes practical and personal care items for parents-to-be. Or read through our educational materials to get ready for your baby.

New baby care kit

Now that your baby has arrived, you have lots of new responsibilities. Our kit includes educational materials and a variety of items to help you adjust to parenthood.

Child safety care kit

As children grow, they find unique ways of getting into trouble. This kit contains items to help you manage safety issues for toddlers and young children.

Active adult care kit

Do you want to make health and safety a priority? This kit provides you with basic items to help you get healthy and stay that way.

Elder care kit

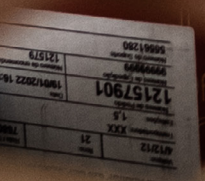
If you're caring (or expecting to provide care) for an elderly relative or friend, this kit can help. You'll get practical items and educational materials to help you in your caregiving role.

For more information or to request a care kit, contact Resources For Healthy LivingSM directly. In addition, the EAP can provide additional support needed and is here to help you and your family 365 days of the year, 24 hours a day.

1-800-221-0945 / TTY: 711

[Resourcesforliving.com](https://www.resourcesforliving.com)

Username: Orange County ca / Password: eap



Cybersecurity and Retirement Readiness

You already know that saving and investing are important parts of building retirement readiness. But have you ever considered how protecting your retirement account can be just as important? Scroll through the news, and sooner or later you'll come across a story on cybercrime or some sort of online security breach. But you don't have to be a passive victim. You can take steps today to protect your account and the sensitive information associated with it. Here are a few recommendations:



Register your account

It might seem counterintuitive, but registering your account can reduce the chance that someone else will try to gain access to it. If you haven't yet registered, go to your plan website at countyoforangedcplan.com and click *Register*; choose the *I do not have a PIN* tab; then follow the prompts to create your username and password.

Add a personal email address to your account

By updating your current contact information on file — including adding a personal email address in addition to your work email address — you can be contacted more quickly if there are unauthorized changes or transactions attempted on your account. You'll also continue to receive information on your account in the event you change jobs. To update your information, log in to your account at countyoforangedcplan.com, click on your initials in the top right corner, and under *Profile* and settings click *Edit* to update your personal contact information.

Sign up for e-delivery

While you are in *Profile* and settings, under *Settings*, in the *Account documents* section, you can update your communication preference for how you would like to receive statements and other important plan documents. When you select *E-delivery*, you will receive all available documents electronically as soon as they become available — instead of waiting for delivery via traditional mail. E-delivery provides a secure way to access the information you need, and it lessens the likelihood that you'll misplace a statement or other sensitive information.

Follow safe online practices

Creating complex passwords, keeping your antivirus and system software up to date, regularly logging in to check your account — there's a lot you can do to keep your account safe. And when you follow current and prudent online and mobile security practices, you're automatically eligible for the Empower Security Guarantee.¹ That means that Empower will restore losses to your account that occur as a result of unauthorized transactions through no fault of your own.

Protecting your identity and ensuring your privacy is an important part of building a secure financial future. Need some additional tips on security best practices? [Visit the Empower Security Center](#) for additional online security practices and make cybersecurity part of your retirement planning journey.

¹ For more information regarding account security, including the Empower Security Guarantee, visit countyoforangedcplan.com and, from the list of additional links at the bottom of the page, click Security center.

Investing involves risk, including possible loss of principal.

Securities, when presented, are offered and/or distributed by Empower Financial Services, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC. EFSI is an affiliate of Empower Retirement, LLC; Empower Funds, Inc.; and registered investment adviser Empower Advisory Group, LLC. This material is for informational purposes only and is not intended to provide investment, legal, or tax recommendations or advice.