DanceWorks created the following *Caregiver Statement: Employee Handbook Clause* in 2024 as part of their Balancing Act Level UP! Pilot Project.

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If you have any questions or would like to discuss these materials, please contact Balancing Act at balancingact@theatredirect.ca.

DanceWorks

BALANCING ACT

DanceWorks
Caregiver Statement: Employee Handbook Clause

The following clause was drafted and included by DanceWorks as a dedicated section in their employee handbook, outlining caregiving support policies and procedures within the organization.

At **DanceWorks,** we recognize the importance of supporting our employees in balancing their professional responsibilities with their caregiving duties. We understand that childcare and caregiving responsibilities can significantly impact an individual's ability to fully engage in their work. Therefore, we are committed to providing comprehensive support to employees who are caregivers, whether for children, elderly parents, or other dependents.

We are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace where all employees feel valued, respected, and supported. We recognize that caregivers come from diverse backgrounds and may face unique challenges based on their individual circumstances. Therefore, we strive to create an inclusive environment that embraces the needs of caregivers from all walks of life and provides them with the support they need to thrive both personally and professionally.

DanceWorks offers the following support:*

- **Flexible Work Arrangements** – i.e., allowing employees to adjust their work schedules, work remotely, or utilize flexible hours to accommodate their caregiving responsibilities.
- **Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)** – i.e., establishing employee-led groups or networks focused on caregiving support. These groups can provide a platform for caregivers to connect, share resources, and offer each other support, all at little to no cost to the organization.
- **Information and Resource Sharing –** i.e., creating and maintaining a central repository of information and resources for caregivers, including articles, guides, and links to community resources.

- **Peer Mentoring Programs** – i.e., pairing experienced caregivers within the organization with newer caregivers to provide guidance, support, and advice.
- **Workshops and Lunch-and-Learns** – i.e., hosting educational workshops, lunch-and-learns, or webinars on topics relevant to caregivers, such as stress management techniques, time management strategies, or navigating healthcare systems. These events can be facilitated by internal experts or external partners, often at minimal or no cost.
- **Community Partnerships** – i.e., forging partnerships with local childcare providers, eldercare services, or community organizations to negotiate discounts or special rates for employees. These partnerships can provide valuable support to employees at no direct cost to the organization.
- **Cross-Training and Backup Support** – i.e., cross-training among employees to ensure coverage during absences due to caregiving responsibilities. By having multiple employees capable of performing essential tasks, we minimize disruptions to workflow without incurring significant expenses. This also helps relieve some of the pressure on the employee before and after their time off.

*While we endeavor to implement these initiatives promptly, we recognize that achieving them may require time, resources, and careful planning. Leadership is actively engaged in identifying and securing the necessary resources to support the realization of these aspirations.

To access our support for employees with caregiving responsibilities and/or to contribute to one of the above employee-led programs, please reach out to General Manager, Neetika Sharma, at neetika@danceworks.ca.