

# Working with Cancer Conversation Guide



This content is being shared courtesy of the Working with Cancer Initiative.

Over 2,500 companies have taken the Working with Cancer pledge, thanks to advocates like you. This guide will help you initiate the conversation within your company.

## Get Started

Approval to take the pledge typically comes from the CEO, often based on recommendations given from senior leaders like a Chief Human Resources Officer or Chief Communications Officer. You can reach out directly to these individuals if you feel comfortable; or consider collaborating with a senior-level employee impacted by cancer.

## Initiate the Conversation

Whether you approach an approver directly or engage a senior-level employee as an executive sponsor, we recommend starting the process with a live conversation. Use the following conversation guide to help frame your discussion:



### 1. Introduce the Idea

You can start the conversation with, “I’d love to talk to you about the Working with Cancer pledge. It looks like our company hasn’t signed it yet, and I thought you might be interested in helping champion this initiative internally.”

### 2. Describe the Pledge

- **The Working with Cancer pledge** asks companies to formalize their commitment to creating a more supportive, recovery-forward work environment.
- **Companies agree to assess and communicate their current offerings** and consider new actions to enhance support.
- **The initiative provides free guidance**, resources and materials to help companies make a meaningful impact.

### 3. Provide Supporting Points

- **Cancer’s Impact:** One in two people will face a diagnosis at some point in their lifetime, affecting everyone directly or indirectly.<sup>1</sup>
- **Perception vs. Reality:** Over 50% of people worry about what a diagnosis will mean for them at work, but more than 90% of those who do disclose have a positive experience and believe workplace support positively impacted their health.<sup>2</sup>
- **Benefit Awareness:** Many employees are not familiar with the details of their benefits information -- 50% don’t read benefits information and 66% wish they understood it better.<sup>3</sup>
- **Taking the pledge and creating awareness** can make it more likely that an impacted employee is confident in workplace support from the moment of diagnosis.

# Common Questions

## **What is required to take the pledge/what am I signing up for?**

Every company has flexibility to determine what actions they want to take. All that is required is a commitment to taking a proactive look at their efforts to create a supportive and recovery-forward work environment.

[Find resources to activate your pledge here.](#)

## **What other companies/what kinds of companies are signing the pledge?**

Over 2,500 organizations across all sizes and industries have signed. See the full list here:

[Supporters - Working with Cancer Pledge.](#)

## **Why cancer? What about other serious conditions?**

Cancer is common and the reality of its treatment and impact is widely understood. The pledge is intended to create a supportive environment for employees with any serious, chronic condition.

## **What if our company is really small? Can we afford to take actions like introducing new benefits or guaranteeing job security?**

Our pledge doesn't require policy changes. Proactively talking about existing policies relevant to impacted employees is a powerful part of creating a supportive culture.

## **Is there any cost or fee to participate in this effort?**

No. Working with Cancer does not accept donations. The only costs are those related to internal programs and policies for our own employees.



# Common Questions

## Are there creative assets we can use to promote the pledge internally and/or externally?

Yes. You can find a link to Working with Cancer logos [here](#). Timely assets are shared throughout the year via email and will eventually be available on our website.

## What should our pledge commitment say?

Your pledge statement is a brief description of how your company plans to support employees working with cancer. Each pledge is unique, and there are no requirements for what your pledge must include. Here are some things that companies often include as some inspiration to get you started:

- **A high-level statement of your company's commitment.**  
Many companies choose to start their pledge with a sentence that describes their promise to support people working with cancer. For example, you might say something like, "At [company name,] we are committed to erasing the stigma of cancer in the workplace and creating a more supportive workplace culture for our employees impacted by cancer."
- **The specific reason(s) why your company has decided to take the pledge.**  
Your company may have a particular motivation for pledging. For example, if one of your executives has had a personal experience with cancer or if your company's mission is to help people live healthier lives, these are great things to mention in your pledge.



- **Any benefits, policies or programs you already have or changes you want to make.**  
You can include information about how you plan to support employees working with cancer, whether you already have robust policies and programs in place or you're just starting to think about what support could look like. For example, you might mention things like existing time-off policies or support groups that you host for caregivers. You could also describe any new policies or programs you plan to implement.
- **Your commitment to making sure your employees know they are supported.**  
By pledging, you are signaling to your employees that their well-being comes first. You don't need to have all the answers yet. Simply pledging to make sure your employees know you are committed to supporting them during challenging times can make a big difference for employee engagement, loyalty, and morale.



Ready to be a health and care changemaker?

Learn more at  
[transcarent.com/leadtheway](https://transcarent.com/leadtheway)



[workingwithcancerpledge.com](https://workingwithcancerpledge.com)