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## Employee Assistance Program Management Training



# **TRAINING OUTLINE**

- I. Introduction
- II. Overview of EAP
- III. Providing Guidance and Support
- IV. Q & A / Discussion

# **EAP REFERRAL GUIDELINES**

The following shall constitute the categories for referrals to the EAP and the corresponding guidelines for confidentiality.

## **SELF REFERRALS**

Employees and their family members can make an appointment to obtain information, an evaluation, crisis intervention, short term counseling or referral services. These appointments are generally in person, but in some cases, a telephone or virtual appointment may be scheduled (these referrals tend to be informational in nature.) All information concerning employees who are self-referred to the EAP will be kept confidential, unless the employee gives written consent to divulge information, or is believed to be a danger to themselves or others. While managers and executive staff may encourage an employee to use the program, they will not be able to verify attendance unless the employee gives his/her permission.

## **MANAGEMENT/SUPERVISORY REFERRALS**

Management/Supervisory suggestions are divided into two categories:

- A) When a manager/supervisor has an employee share a personal problem, the manager or supervisor may suggest the EAP as a confidential resource.
- B) In the event an employee has performance difficulties and gives personal problems as the reason; the supervisor may suggest the Employee Assistance Program. Should the employee offer no personal explanation, the supervisor may still suggest the program. The goal of the latter discussion is not to determine or address personal problems, but to offer a resource that may help resolve a performance problem. Their focus should remain on job performance and their expectations for improvement.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE/SUPERVISORY REFERRAL**

A supervisory referral provides a structure for communications between the employee, their supervisors, and the EAP. It sets a serious tone and sends the message that the agency is concerned for, and invested in, the employee. A supervisory referral is not a punitive measure with negative consequences, if the employee refuses to cooperate, they may not be terminated based on their refusal to accept the referral to the EAP. Employees should be disciplined on job performance criteria alone.

The administrative referral is an intervention by the County to get help for the employee whose job performance is failing, due to personal problems. If this intervention fails, either because the

employee refuses to follow up on an EAP referral and exhibits no improvement in job performance, or their job performance continues to decline despite their involvement with the EAP the worker can be terminated based on his/her inadequate job performance only, not on the refusal of EAP services.

Administrative referrals should be made by the Human Resources or Personnel Department. To initiate an administrative referral, the manager/supervisor, should contact the Director of Human Resources/Personnel and provide them with information about the employee's job performance problems including lateness, absenteeism, on the job absenteeism, changes in personal appearance, etc., and the steps already taken to address the problem, i.e., confrontation, documentation, corrective interviews, supervisory suggestions regarding the EAP, etc.

If an administrative referral is indicated, a meeting is set up with the employee, their manager/supervisor and the Director of Human Resources/Personnel to discuss the employee's performance problems, and the organization's concern and intent to refer the employee to the EAP. It should be made clear to the employee, (verbally and in writing,) that the decision to retain or terminate their employment would be based on their job performance.

If the employee agrees to follow-up on the administrative referral, the Human Resources/Personnel Director will call/email the EAP and provide all pertinent information in writing to the Center. After seeing the employee, the EAP will make recommendations. With the written consent of the employee, the EAP will provide information only concerning the employee's attendance and cooperation with recommendations. The purpose of this feedback is to foster a sense of accountability in the employee.

Regardless of the employees' cooperation with the administrative referral to the EAP, they should continue to be evaluated on their job performance alone.

## **BEHAVIOR CHECKLIST FOR IDENTIFICATION OF THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE**

### **I. CURRENT BEHAVIOR PATTERNS**

**(Check those that best describe the current situation)**

#### **EMPLOYEE'S APPEARANCE**

- ☐ sloppy
- ☐ inappropriate clothing

#### **MOOD**

- ☐ withdrawn
- ☐ sad
- ☐ mood swings, high and low
- ☐ suspiciousness
- ☐ extreme sensitivity
- ☐ nervousness
- ☐ frequent irritability with others
- ☐ preoccupation with illness and death (morbidity)

#### **ACTIONS**

- ☐ physically menacing
- ☐ unduly talkative
- ☐ exaggerated self-importance
- ☐ rigidity-inability to change plans with reasonable ease
- ☐ making incoherent or irrelevant statements on the job
- ☐ over-compliance with any routine (making it a ritual)
- ☐ frequent argumentativeness
- ☐ frequent outbursts of crying
- ☐ excessive amount of personal telephone time

## **WORK PATTERNS & PRODUCTION**

- ☐ display of disinterest in work
- ☐ increased difficulty in handling complex assignments
- ☐ difficulty in recalling previous mistakes (although these have been brought to the employee's attention.)
- ☐ general absentmindedness, forgetfulness
- ☐ alternate periods of high and low productivity
- ☐ coming to work in an intoxicated condition
- ☐ missed deadlines
- ☐ mistakes due to poor judgment
- ☐ outside complaints about the employee's work
- ☐ improbable excuses for these poor patterns
- ☐ carelessness

## **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS ON THE JOB**

- ☐ over-reaction to real or imagined criticism
- ☐ wide swings in job morale
- ☐ borrowing money from co-workers
- ☐ unreasonable resentments against co-workers
- ☐ repeated and compulsive criticism of the company
- ☐ persistent requests for job transfer
- ☐ unrealistic expectation for promotion
- ☐ abrasiveness with others (manager and/or co-workers)

## **WORK-RELATED RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COMMUNITY**

- ☐ inappropriate behavior at company business meetings
- ☐ complaints from the community concerning the employee

## **II. JOB PERFORMANCE**

### **ABSENTEEISM**

- ☐ multiple instances of improper reporting of time off
- ☐ excessive sick leave
- ☐ repeated absences following a pattern
- ☐ excessive lateness in the morning, or upon returning from lunch
- ☐ peculiar and increasingly improbable excuses for absences
- ☐ frequent unscheduled short-term absences (with or without medical explanation)
- ☐ frequent use of unscheduled vacation time

### **ON THE JOB-ABSENTEEISM**

- ☐ continued absence from job location more than job requires
- ☐ frequent trips to water fountain or restroom
- ☐ long coffee breaks

### **WORK PATTERNS AND PRODUCTION**

- ☐ current work assignment requires more effort than previously taken
- ☐ work takes more time to produce
- ☐ difficulty in recalling instructions, understanding office procedures, etc.

## **STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN DEALING WITH A TROUBLED EMPLOYEE**

1. **RECOGNITION-** Identify that a performance problem exists and that the employee's work is below standard. If you are considering a referral to the EAP, arrange a private meeting with the employee. It is appropriate to be sympathetic or empathetic to an employee's problem, but the focus of this meeting is a referral for counseling and/or establishing expectations with regard to job performance.
2. **DOCUMENTATION-** Keep an accurate up-to-date record of the employee's performance. Having proof makes it easier to deal with this problem when discussing the situation with the employee. Describe observable behavior. Prepare documentation of job performance difficulties, (see Behavior Checklist) in advance of the meeting.
3. **ACTION-** Discuss your documentation findings with the employee. Be clear that you expect improvement within an agreed upon time frame. Express an optimistic view with regard to the referral and improving job performance. Make sure the employee is aware of the existence of the EAP. Stress the confidentiality of the EAP and that contacting the EAP will not adversely affect the individual's job. This constitutes a management suggestion. You will receive no confirmation that the employee has contact EAP unless they choose to tell you.
4. **REFERRAL-** When performance does not improve within agreed time, show the employee your continuing documentation and again remind employee of the EAP. If problems persist, contact the Human Resource Manager and/or EAP representative for consultation. Inform the employee that you are making a formal administrative supervisory referral to the EAP. The consultation will be held in strict confidence.
5. **FOLLOW-UP-** Continued monitoring of the employee's performance with positive and negative feedback is necessary. Your support and encouragement may be all that is needed to guide an employee back to a more productive, personal and professional life. Remember whether or not an employee accepts a referral to the EAP, it is the individual's responsibility to correct the job performance problem and your responsibility to follow your supervisory guidelines.



## **DO'S AND DON'TS**

### **DO's**

1. Do realize that the first step for dealing with a problem is recognizing it.
2. Do keep focus on the job performance of the employee.
3. Do be aware that it is not your job to solve an employee's problem.
4. Do let the employee know that help is available at the EAP on a confidential basis.
5. Do contact the EAP at any point in the process to decide how to proceed.

### **DON'TS**

Postpone action, or cover up for an employee. The problem will only continue to progress.

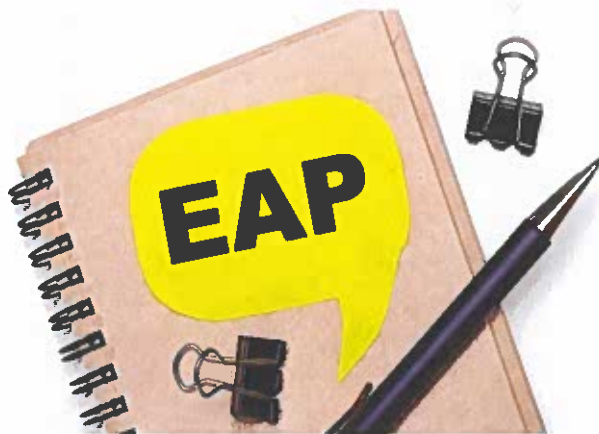
Don't try to diagnose problems. Stay away from labeling.

Don't try to counsel the employee beyond suggesting that they go to the EAP.

Don't moralize about the nature of a person's problem.

Don't blame yourself as a manager, these situations are difficult to address.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



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