

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

1-800-222-0364

What is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?

EAP began in the early 1950's and 1960's when alcoholism programs began to appear in a small number of Federal agencies. The Comprehensive Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Acts of the early 1970's officially authorized agencies to establish counseling and treatment programs for employees with substance abuse problems. Over time, the scope of the EAP has been expanded to include emotional and mental health, marital, family, dependent care, legal and financial issues, workplace violence incidents, and other problems that may affect employee job performance and conduct. GIPSA established an EAP to provide professional, confidential counseling services for its employees who are experiencing personal problems which may be affecting their ability to perform on the job. The program offers assessment, short-term counseling, referral, and follow-up for employees confronted with family and marital problems, substance abuse, stress, depression, legal and financial issues and any other emotional challenges. Employees are offered six (6) confidential EAP visits with a qualified counselor. The EAP service is available 24 hours a day seven days a week.

Who is the EAP Provider?

GIPSA has a national contract with Federal Occupational Health. FOH uses Magellan Behavioral Health to provide the EAP counseling services.

Who May Use the Program?

All GIPSA employees may use the program at any time. Employees are encouraged to contact a counselor whenever they are experiencing problems. Family members, whose problems are related to the employee's problem, may also receive service regardless of whether or not the employee is a client of the EAP. Supervisors and managers may also seek the guidance of a counselor to determine the appropriateness of referring employees who might be experiencing work performance and conduct changes due to personal problems.

What does it cost?

There is no cost to the employee for the services of the EAP because GIPSA has prepaid the services. If a referral is necessary to an outside facility, the cost of covering that service is the responsibility of the employee. The EAP counselor works closely with the employee to choose a referral that is covered by health insurance or that is within the employee's financial means.

What typically happens when you call the EAP?

When an employee contacts the program, an appointment will be made to see an EAP counselor. Appointments are typically available during normal working hours and, in some locations, on evenings and weekends. The counselor will meet with the employee one or more times to determine the nature and extent of the problem and to decide on the best course of action. In

many cases, an employee is experiencing personal problems that can be resolved in a few short-term counseling sessions with the EAP counselor. In other cases, a longer term intervention is indicated and a referral to the appropriate resource will be made. The EAP counselor will then follow-up with the employee to check on his/her progress and satisfaction with the services he/she has received

Do I get Administrative Leave to keep my appointments?

Yes, employees are authorized official time (Administrative Leave) to meet with EAP counselors either via telephone contact or for face-to-face appointments when the sessions occur during official working hours.

Orientation and Training

Supervisors, managers, labor representatives and others as deemed appropriate by management will be provided consistent, on-going information about the range of services available through the EAP. Their roles and responsibilities in the successful implementation and use of the EAP will be explained. Training for supervisors, managers, employee and labor relations specialist, union officials and human resources officers will include procedures and techniques for referring employees to the EAP, crisis management, appropriate documentation, privacy and confidentiality issues, and techniques for integrating employees back into the work environment. Employees will receive an orientation about the range of services provided by the EAP, privacy and confidentiality standards and how to access the program. Video presentations or other methods of presentation may be used in geographically remote areas.

Health Promotion and Education of Employees

The EAP conducts an on-going program of health promotion and education with emphasis on job performance issues and problems. Programs that emphasize prevention, early intervention, and treatment of alcohol and drug abuse will be emphasized. In addition, other workshops on such topics as conflict resolution, balancing work and family, critical incident stress management; eldercare: preparing for the sunset years, controlling the pressures in your life; managing employees with performance problems, and sexual harassment can be provided.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a critical element of the EAP. Employees seeking help must feel confident that using the program will not jeopardize their jobs. The program is guided by the laws and regulations that protect client information. Counselors maintain records in accordance with these laws and regulations.

a. The employee written, informed consent is required to release confidential information except in situations authorized under the Privacy Act, other applicable law and certain other limited circumstances described in the Statement of Understanding signed by the employee. Examples of when disclosure, without written consent, may occur are when there is a danger to self, others, or property.

b. All counseling records are the property of FOH and are maintained in the strictest confidence. All information contained within the counseling records is considered privileged, and under the protection of the previously cited laws, the Privacy Act of 1974, and the Confidentiality Regulations.

c. Counseling records are used as documentation of the services rendered and/or as a source document for obtaining statistical data for management use. No record will be released except as permitted by the Confidentiality Regulations, the Privacy Act, and as otherwise authorized by law.

Who can I contact if I encounter problems while using the EAP?

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How do I access the EAP?

1-800-222-0364
1-888-262-7848 (TTY)
www.Foh4You.com