

553. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

1. Purpose

The District cares about the health and well-being of its employees and recognizes that a variety of personal problems and other issues can disrupt their personal and work lives. While many employees solve their problems either on their own or with the help of family and friends, sometimes employees need professional evaluation and assistance. To meet this need, the District provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to all full-time employees.

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Employees with identifiable performance problems that are not the result of deficits in knowledge, skills, education, experience or working conditions, may find that personal difficulties are creating or contributing to job performance problems. The District recognizes that a wide range of issues, not directly associated with an employee's job, may have an adverse impact on an employee's job performance. When marital or family discord, financial or emotional crises, alcohol or drug problems, illness, or other personal and family difficulties interfere with or threaten job performance, the District provides for assistance through the EAP.

The EAP is available to all full-time employees and their immediate family members and offers confidential problem assessment, short-term counseling, and referral to appropriate community and private services. Employees and their dependents are encouraged to self-refer to the EAP.

2. Delegation of
Responsibility

An employee may be referred to the EAP by the District's supervisory personnel, as a condition of employment as part of the District's addressing any documented job performance on safety issues. In the case of deteriorating job performance, the supervisor, following established procedures, will work with the employee in an effort to clearly establish the performance deficiencies and provide guidance for improvement. As part of this process, the District may elect to make a formal referral to the EAP, in which case the employee will be required, as a condition of employment, to go to the EAP for an assessment of factors contributing to his or her performance problems.

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Date Revised:	

In the case of a formal referral, the supervisor or other District representative will:

1. Document, as part of a performance improvement plan, that the employee was referred to the EAP for an assessment.
2. Review the reasons for the referral to the EAP with the employee.
3. Notify the EAP that a referral has been made.
4. Provide the EAP with relevant documentation of the underlying performance or safety problem, and clearly specify, as per the agreement with the employee, what information is to be communicated back to the District.
5. Obtain the employee's written permission for information to be exchanged between the District and the EAP in regard to attendance at the first appointment.

3. Guidelines

Employees and their family members experiencing problems that may affect job performance of that employee are encouraged to voluntarily seek information, referral, and related services on a confidential basis by contacting the EAP. All records and information about referral, diagnosis and treatment are maintained by the EAP and treated as confidential. No information concerning an employee's personal problems will become a part of the employee's personnel record. In the case of a formal referral, the only information to be disclosed will be to advise the referring person whether the employee has attended the first appointment, unless otherwise agreed to with the employee. Except as presented here, in dangerous situations, or as may otherwise be required by law, no information, oral or written, will be disclosed without the express written permission of the employee. For purposes of this policy, "dangerous situations" are defined as those situations where the EAP provider has reason to believe that the employee or participating family member is likely to cause or suffer bodily harm or substantial damage to property.

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Employees participating in the EAP will not be given preferential treatment. EAP participation will not immunize an employee against discipline, including discharge. All employees will be evaluated on job performance criteria irrespective of their participation in the EAP. The EAP does not make decisions about employment status with the District. The District views the EAP as a means for retaining valued employees who are experiencing difficulties by providing assistance for problems that may be causing those difficulties. Therefore, an employee's job security or future career advancement will not be jeopardized as a result of his/her participation in the EAP.