



**EL PASO COUNTY
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA**

REGULAR MEETING

ADDENDUM ITEM

DATE: MARCH 4, 2003

TIME: 2:00 P.M.

**PLACE: COMMISSIONERS COURT CHAMBERS
ROOM 303, 3RD FLOOR, COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

POSTED: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2003

OPEN MEETING:

ITEM #9 Discuss and take appropriate action to approve the Employee Assistance Program policy and to include as Appendix K in the Civil Service Rules and Regulations. (Robert M. Almanzán, Human Resources Director)

ACTION:

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Summary

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) helps employees identify and resolve concerns or problems (personal or job related), which may adversely affect personal or professional well-being or job performance. The County provides professional short-term counseling to its employees and their immediate families for consultation, treatment, and rehabilitation. Participation in the EAP does not jeopardize job security or promotional opportunities. This Policy describes the Employee Assistance Program services and procedures for obtaining Program services.

Definition

EAP – A Program designed to offer confidential and appropriate assessment services for employees to help identify and resolve personal difficulties before they seriously affect their personal well being or employee job performance.

I. Participation in the Employee Assistance Program

A. Voluntary Contact -- Employees or their dependents may call the EAP directly, without having to notify the chain of command for help with a variety of personal issues:

1. Marriage/family
2. Child/adolescent
3. Mood and stress
4. Drug/alcohol
5. Anger management
6. Loss/grief
7. Budget/financial resources
8. Crisis
9. Critical incidents and Critical incident follow-up
10. Workplace concerns
11. Referrals to Legal resources
12. Illness or loss of a family member
13. Emotional worries
14. Referrals to Childcare resources

B. Supervisor Referral – The supervisor who becomes aware that an employee has problems adversely affecting job performance or behavior related to the job may initiate a Supervisory Referral to the EAP.

C. Access – The EAP's telephone number and location are posted throughout County facilities. The Human Resources Office, 546-2218, shall have the telephone number and location. A crisis line is available 24-hours, 7 days per week, 365 days per year.

II. Eligibility and Coverage

A. The EAP is available to all employees of the County, their spouses, and dependent

children (as determined by the El Paso County Health Plan document).

- B. Coverage includes up to eight (8) sessions per covered person, per problem, per year. There is no limit to the number of problems a covered person may present each year.
- C. Clinically necessary sessions exceeding eight (8) sessions per problem per year may be granted, if the EAP professional determines it is necessary.
- D. Assessments for homebound covered persons are available.
- E. When needed services do not fall within the scope of EAP services or when longer-term care is needed, the EAP may refer the employee to another professional care provider.

III. Employees' Responsibilities

- A. Employees who wish to visit the EAP on a volunteer basis may do so on their own time. If an employee wishes to visit the EAP during regular working hours the employee shall request sick or vacation leave from their supervisor.
- B. The employee shall continue to follow County policies and procedures, while using the EAP, and meet required standards for satisfactory job performance except where specific accommodations are required by law.
- C. It is strongly recommended that the employee follow through with a supervisor referral.
- D. Continued employment at the County may be contingent upon the employee's compliance with any supervisor-referred counseling.
- E. Failure to comply with a supervisor initiated referral is one factor that may be considered in determining progressive discipline or continued employment with the County.

IV. Managers' and Supervisors' Roles and Responsibilities

Unlimited expert consultations are available to managers, supervisors, and human resource representatives for issues related to work site concerns and employee performance issues.

- A. Managers and supervisors shall become familiar with the Employee Assistance Program.
- B. Managers and supervisors shall recommend to employees that they seek help through the EAP, when appropriate. Example of such may include:
 - 1. Danger to self.
 - 2. Danger to others.
 - 3. Alcohol abuse.
 - 4. Child abuse, etc.

C. If an employee is unable or unwilling to correct unacceptable job-related behavior or performance after appropriate County policy has been implemented, the supervisor will refer the employee to the EAP to assist in resolving the problem behavior or performance. A report will be made to the Human Resources Office referencing the referral.

V. Confidentiality

A. All counseling is confidential within the limits prescribed by law. Examples of such limits may include:

1. Implied or intent to harm self or others.
2. Suspected or confirmed abuse or neglect of a child or elderly person.
3. Court-ordered subpoena.

B. In cases of Supervisory Referrals, the EAP counselor may verify whether the employee has contacted the EAP, if ongoing treatment is necessary and if the employee is compliant with the EAP recommendations. The Supervisor and the EAP counselor will work together to explain the steps involved in this process and establishing information consent on the part of the participants.

VI. Employee Assistance Program Scope of Service

A. Services include assessments, short-term counseling, orientation, training, and educational seminars.

B. Telephone consultations may be provided as needed.

C. The EAP counselors may suggest a referral to an outside resource or service such as a therapist, agency, physician, treatment facility, or other professional for appropriate diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.

VII. Employee Assistance Program Training

A. Services provided to the County by the Employee Assistance Program will include orientation, training, and educational seminars.

B. Supervisory personnel will receive training in

1. Program services;
2. Supervisor's role and responsibility; and
3. Identification of employee behaviors, which would indicate the existence of employee concerns, problems, and/or issues that could impact employee job performance.