



Employee Assistance Program

Supervisor's Manual

**EAP Coordinator: 655-6046
EAP Specialist: 655-6047
ASAP, Bldg. 2091, Schofield Barracks, HI**



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What is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?

Being an effective supervisor in today's workplace can be a challenge, especially when there are problems that even the most prepared and trained supervisor cannot overcome with the usual workplace interventions. The impact on individuals and the organization can be compounded when a supervisor has even one troubled employee.

For these supervisors, there is help in the form of the **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**. EAP is designed to help and assist civilian employees struggling with personal and job performance problems. EAP is available to provide advice and support on how to best handle employees in a caring and confidential manner. Although the EAP may be involved with employees in a variety of ways, it is not a substitute for the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC). The EAP may collaborate with Human Resources (HR) professionals in helping employees, if it becomes necessary.

This manual is not only designed to inform you about the EAP, but also to provide you with helpful tools and resources. Please remember the EAP coordinator is a phone call away, and ready to assist you with personal issues or employee matters.

Why Do We Have an EAP?

Employees can face many life challenges such as substance abuse, parenting problems, stress disorders, or caring for a family member, just to name a few. Over time these problems may manifest as lower productivity, increased use of sick leave, or other aspects of impaired job performance. As a result, a distracted and troubled worker is not efficient or effective.

It is also possible for groups of employees to be affected by work and life issues that impact the group's ability to function as an efficient team. For supervisors, maintaining a productive work group can be essential to achieving organization goals. It is imperative to direct employees to the help they need so productivity is maintained.

The **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** serves your organization in two ways:

- Promotes the well being of the employees.
- Supports supervisors and managers in dealing with distressed employees.

As a result, there will be a reduction in use of sick leave, fewer workplace accidents, reduction in worker's compensation claims, reduction in employee turnover, and increase in employee productivity.

The EAP offers a wide array of services available to supervisors seeking help with employees who are presenting or developing problems in the workplace.

How Does the Employee Access the EAP?

Self-Referral:

In a *self-referral*, the employee contacts the program on his/her own. The employee is taking a pro-active approach to manage his/her problems. Time must be arranged with the supervisor. The supervisor is not contacted unless the employee makes the request and signs a specific written release. The EAP can also provide assistance to the employee's dependent family members, since home life can drastically affect work performance.

Time with EAP can be charged as administrative time under AR 600-85, if the EAP appointment is coordinated with the supervisor and the employee gives EAP permission to confirm their attendance with EAP.

Informal Referral:

With an *informal referral*, the employee and supervisor may have met regarding performance issues that are becoming noticeable, but may not merit serious action at this time. The supervisor can tell the employee about the EAP. Informal referrals are usually verbal and originate from the working relationship between an employee and the supervisor. The supervisor is not contacted unless the employee makes a request and signs a specific written release.

Formal Referral:

A *formal referral* is one where the supervisor meets with the employee over a serious work problem which has been carefully documented. The supervisor describes the problem fully and reviews his or her concerns with the employee using the **Formal Referral Form and Confidential Formal Offer of Assistance** (see attachments, pages 15-16). If the employee is in a bargaining unit, read and follow any requirements in the negotiated labor agreement. If you ask questions that the employee reasonably believes could lead to discipline, the employee has the right to request union representation at your meeting. Contact your CPAC servicing representative for guidance on this "Weingarten Right." The supervisor then contacts the EAP and makes the initial appointment preferably, with the employee present. The supervisor faxes the forms to the EAP, so the coordinator will have all the pertinent information about the problem, prior to the employee's visit. The formal referral is the only referral where EAP will contact the referring supervisor. The only information shared with the supervisor is the employee's attendance and compliance with EAP recommendations. All other information is kept confidential for the benefit of the employee and to maintain program integrity.

What Does the EAP Provide?

EAP provides the following:

- Privacy and confidentiality
- A strong network of providers in the community
- Coordination with mental health benefits, when appropriate
- Management consultations
- Supervisor training
- Educational seminars and training in the workplace

Supervisors can contact the EAP anytime to seek support regarding:

- Identifying troubled employees
- The best way to refer a particular employee to the program
- How to approach a difficult or resistant employee
- Answer any general questions about the program services

What Does a Problem Look Like?

When an employee is having a problem, the problem will begin to show up at work as a change in his/her work performance. Below is a list of some of the typical behavioral changes a supervisor may see in a troubled employee. If an employee begins to show some of these signs, we strongly recommend you consider using the EAP to help the employee.

Absenteeism

- ❖ Absent without permission
- ❖ Excessive use of sick leave
- ❖ Lengthy absences over several weeks time
- ❖ Excessive tardiness
- ❖ Leaving work early
- ❖ Using improbable or unusual excuses

On-the-Job Absenteeism

- ❖ Away from worksite more than the job requires
- ❖ Frequent and lengthy breaks
- ❖ Shows up too sick to work effectively
- ❖ Inattentive to job tasks

Changes in Emotional State

- ❖ Inappropriately angry
- ❖ Mood swings
- ❖ Outbursts of anger or tears
- ❖ Anxiety and nervousness
- ❖ Irritability
- ❖ Excessive negativity
- ❖ Confused and preoccupied

Changes in Physical State

- ❖ Appearance of poor hygiene
- ❖ Inappropriate dress
- ❖ Fatigue or sleepiness at work
- ❖ Poor balance and coordination

Accidents

- ❖ Takes unnecessary risks
- ❖ Increase in rate of accidents or equipment damage
- ❖ Unconcerned with safety, self, or others

Work Habits/Patterns

- ❖ Alternates between high and low productivity/accuracy
- ❖ Misses deadlines and work is incomplete
- ❖ Work seems to take more effort, more time than usual
- ❖ Distracted from task at hand
- ❖ Has trouble handling more complex work
- ❖ Rigidly resists changing problem behavior
- ❖ Uses questionable judgment

Problems with other Employees

- ❖ Co-workers complain or report difficulty working effectively with the employee
- ❖ Overly sensitive to criticism or feedback from others
- ❖ Avoids or withdraws from co-workers
- ❖ Argues with others
- ❖ Files excessive grievances

The scope of problems addressed by the EAP is broad. Here's an overview of the types of problems we deal with:

Substance Abuse

- ❖ Alcohol Dependency
- ❖ Drug Dependency
- ❖ Prescription Drug Abuse
- ❖ Co-dependency and concerns for family members

Family and Relationship Problems

- ❖ Marital problems
- ❖ Communication issues
- ❖ Parenting concerns and parent-child conflict
- ❖ Adjustment to separation and divorce
- ❖ Single parenting concerns
- ❖ Blended families
- ❖ Step-parenting
- ❖ Domestic violence and abuse
- ❖ Caring for an aging parent

Personal and Emotional Problems

- ❖ Stress and Anxiety
- ❖ Depression
- ❖ Anger
- ❖ Grief and loss

Work and Life Issues

- ❖ Job-related stress
- ❖ Adjusting to job changes
- ❖ Financial problems
- ❖ Legal problems
- ❖ Communication problems
- ❖ Balancing work and family demands

How the EAP Can Help Supervisors

The EAP can be a very useful tool for supervisors in managing their employees. It is important to understand that the EAP is not a punishment for an employee. It is an opportunity to help a struggling employee return to productivity. Using the EAP is not a sign of failure for a supervisor. Supervisors are there to manage, **not diagnose or solve their employee's problems**. Managing employees can be very challenging and the EAP is available to support supervisors every step of the way. We recommend the following steps:

1. Evaluate the workplace problem

Look for changes in performance and behavior. Indicators of a problem may include: the prompt employee who begins to be late or the accurate employee who begins to make errors. A sustained and noticeable change is often a sign of a personal problem. Make the employee aware of their performance problems when you are first aware of them.

2. Document the problems

Many things can happen to cloud a supervisor's ability to recall all the problems they may have with an employee in their workforce. Documenting problems as soon as they arise can help with establishing those important patterns of behaviors and events with facts that back up your concerns about a given employee. Documentation can also be a tool to direct your interaction with the employee about the problem. It allows you to stick to the facts and remain objective. Be sure to include dates, times and places the problem occurred.

3. Consider a Management Consultation

Once you've gotten your documentation in order, you may want to consider a call to the EAP for a consultation. EAP can suggest ways to approach the employee to refer him to the EAP program. The **EAP is not a replacement for CPAC**, but works with established policies to help employees and managers solve workplace problems in a quick and confidential manner.

4. Approaching the Employee Successfully

Preparation is the key for success in talking to the employee. It can greatly reduce any anxiety you may have in handling this interaction. Some things to consider are:

- **Choose a private place and an appropriate time.**
Respect the need for privacy in talking about sensitive matters.

- **Get to the point.** Documentation will help you focus on the reason you are meeting with the employee. Listening is important, but stay focused on the real issue- job performance.
- **Don't get distracted.** Employees often go into detail about their personal problems. Don't get sidetracked with excessive details about anything other than the job performance.

Remember you are showing your concern for your employee by offering to help. It is important to maintain a positive outlook and not to apologize for referring the employee. In showing concern, you want to refrain from moralizing or judging the employee in any way.

Things to emphasize about the EAP:

- It is a **free benefit** provided for the employee and his/her dependent family members. There are no out-of-pocket costs for EAP non-medical services.
- It is **confidential**. The content of the sessions with EAP will not be communicated to the workplace or the supervisor unless a written consent form is signed by the employee.
- It is **effective**. It has helped other employees with many various types of problems.

In the case of a formal referral, we also recommend explaining that EAP will let the supervisor know if the appointment was kept or not. We also recommend that you make the EAP appointment with the employee present. If the employee should become angry or upset, remain calm, listen to their concerns, but don't back down from your actions. Often when a worker sees you're serious about the referral, they become more cooperative. Although a formal referral can be made for an employee, the employee is not obligated to participate with EAP.

5. Ending the Meeting

It is very important to have closure with employees after referring them to EAP. This closure helps ensure that the employee understands the reasons for the referral. Once again, good documentation of workplace problems can assist you in effective closure.

Some suggested steps:

- Briefly review the work problem and reason for the referral with the employee.

- Define what you expect to see in the way of work performance improvement and give them a time frame for demonstrating the improvement.
- Set a time to meet with the employee again to review their progress to improve work performance. Use whatever time frame is provided by your workplace policies.

Supervisors often hold back on discipline when referring to give the employee a chance to self correct. You are to use your own judgment. It's important that both you and the employee understand that the EAP isn't used in the place of discipline or as a substitute for discipline. EAP is not intended to replace your organization's policies and procedures.

Other Considerations:

It is also helpful to follow-up with employees who appear to be working on the problem. This is a good time to recognize improvement and provide encouragement to the employee. In addition, it would be beneficial to review what work needs to be done in the future and to clarify expectations.

Time:

Army Regulation 600-85 Personnel – General, Army Substance Abuse Program
14 January 2009

There will be no direct charge for outpatient civilian services provided by the EAP. Time with EAP is charged as administrative time, if the appointment is coordinated with the employee's supervisor.

Helpful Do's and Don'ts for Effective Supervision

As a supervisor, your focus should be on maintaining the productivity and efficiency of your work group. When there is a problem, your efforts should be on improving work performance. Other supports, such as the EAP, address the underlying personal concerns of your workers. Using some of these suggestions can help you stay on track when you talk to your workers about problems with their job performance.

DO- Make it clear that your concerns are about job performance.

DO- Describe clearly how the problem behaviors impact the work area and the other employees in work related terms. Address important areas like morale, safety, productivity, and quality.

DO- Inform the employee that the EAP is a **free** and **confidential** benefit that handles a wide range of problems.

DO- Develop a plan for improvement with timelines.

DON'T- Lose your focus by trying to figure out the employee's personal problems.

DON'T- Be judgmental or try to diagnose or counsel the employee.

DON'T- Use judgmental language like "never" or "always", "should" or "ought"

DON'T- Be overly sympathetic or swayed by a personal problem or relationship with employee. Remain objective.

DON'T- Threaten the employee about the outcome of your meeting or mention treatment.

DON'T- Address matters not backed up with documentation.

Tips on Handling Defensive and Angry Employees

Employees are often uncomfortable talking to their supervisors about problems at work. This unease can make employees feel threatened or defensive and add to the discomfort a supervisor may already be feeling about the meeting. Here are some examples of defensive communication you may get from an employee and some recommended responses.

Defense	What is said to you	Suggested Response
Excuses and sympathy	You'd have problems if you were married to my wife.	I'm sorry to hear about your home problems, but our meeting is about your job performance.
Apology and Promises	Oh I'm so sorry. I'll never do that again!	I accept your apology, but what you did is very serious and we need to talk.
Deflecting	Oh, that one, well, look how well I did on the contract!	Yes, you did a great job on that project, but had significant problems on others.
Anger	What are you talking about? After all the work I've done for this place!	I understand you're upset, but getting angry won't help anyone. I'd like you to listen to what I have to say.
Tears and Helplessness	(Crying) I don't know what to do about this. Things will never get better.	I can see how overwhelmed you are. That happens to all of us at times. Have you thought about the EAP?
Self-Pity	I've been expecting this. Nothing ever works out for me.	You have been a good worker in the past. I know you get through this. Have you thought about EAP?
Blaming	It's not my fault. It's the job. It's too stressful.	Well, let's take a look at the record and figure out exactly where the problems are.
Hopelessness	I might as well quit right now.	You've been doing well up until just now. Have you thought about the EAP?

FAX TRANSMISSION

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Army Substance Abuse Program
Bldg. 2091, Kolekole Ave.
Schofield Barracks, HI 96857

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTE

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Date: _____

Total Number of Pages: _____ (Including Cover Sheet)

To: Employee Assistance Program

From: _____

Organization: _____

Formal Referral Procedure:

1. The supervisor reviews the EAP Formal Referral Form and Formal Offer of Assistance with the employee. Once the forms are reviewed, the employee and supervisor will both sign.
2. The supervisor, with the employee present, calls the EAP office at 655-6046 and explains that this is a formal referral and schedules an initial appointment.
3. The supervisor faxes the ***completed and signed EAP Formal Referral Form and Confidential Formal Offer of Assistance*** to the EAP office at 655-6045.

EAP Formal Referral Form

Please check patterns of behavior which apply to this employee.

- Positive test result for drugs
Date of Test: _____
Substance: _____
- Positive test result for alcohol
Date of Test: _____
Substance: _____
- Unauthorized leave
- Excessive sick leave
- Monday absences, Friday absences, or Monday & Friday absences
- Repeated absences of 2-4 days
- Repeated absences of 1-2 weeks
- Excessive tardiness, especially on Monday morning or returning from lunch
- Leaving work early
- Peculiar and increasingly improbable excuses for absences
- Higher absenteeism rate than other employees with colds, flu, etc.
- Frequent unscheduled short absences (with or without medical explanation)
- Continued absences from post more than job requires
- Frequent trips to water fountain or bathroom
- Long breaks
- Physical illness on the job
- Accidents on the job
- Accidents off the job (but affecting job performance)
- Work requires unusual amount of effort
- Job takes more time than normally required
- Difficulty in recalling instructions, details, etc.
- Increasing difficulty in recalling/recognizing own mistakes
- Alternate periods of very high and very low productivity
- Missing deadlines
- Makes mistakes due to inattention or poor judgment
- Complaints from co-workers
- Complaints from the public
- Improbable excuses for job performance
- Overreacts to criticism
- Unreasonable resentments
- Avoids co-workers
- Verbally threatening
- Physically threatening gestures or actions
- Other Concerns:

I have read the above and have reviewed it with my supervisor. My signature does not necessarily mean that I agree with this statement.

Employee's Signature _____ Date _____

Supervisor's Signature _____ Date _____

**Employee Assistance Program
Confidential Formal Offer of Assistance**

To: _____

Date: _____

On _____ (date), we discussed your job performance and the opportunities available with the Employee Assistance Program.

An appointment with an EAP coordinator has been scheduled for _____ (time) on _____ (date) at _____ (place).

This is not a mandatory referral and the employee is not obligated to attend.

Employee's Signature _____ Date _____

Supervisor's Signature _____ Date _____