

### What about work-related problems?

The EAP program deals primarily with personal problems and can also help you in *handling* problems experienced at the job. However the EAP does not affect the employer's internal policies and procedures which are in place to deal with workplace problems.

#### Remember, your Employee Assistance Programs is

- *Confidential*: All information is kept strictly between you and your counselor.
- *Informal*: A simple phone call starts the process, and there's no red tape.

**Confidential assistance is available.**



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# Questions and Answers about the Employee Assistance Program

Confidential Assistance Is Available.

## Questions And Answers About The Employee Assistance Program

### What is an Employee Assistance Program?

An EAP is just what it sounds like—assistance to employees. The program provides voluntary, confidential, and professional assistance to help employees and their families resolve problems that affect their personal lives or performance on the job.

### How does an Employee Assistance Program work?

An EAP is an employer-sponsored program. The employer retains the service of a qualified counseling service that specializes in the assessment of personal problems.

*Here's how the program works:*

- You or members of your family initiate a request for help by calling the counseling source and setting up an appointment. *Confidentiality is assured.* Neither your employer nor co-workers will have any knowledge of your request for help. Discussion of your problem is kept strictly between you and your counselor. If needed, your counselor may encourage other members of your family to take part in the program. Your EAP counselor will help you assess the problem and provide appropriate referrals.
- Alternately, should a performance problem arise, your supervisor might be the one to encourage you to use the Employee Assistance Program to determine whether a personal problem might be affecting your performance on the job. (Supervisors, of course, do not attempt to diagnose or counsel employees on personal issues.)

While participation in the program is voluntary, corrective procedures will be taken should performance problems continue.

### Why is this kind of program needed?

Organizations are providing Employee Assistance Programs for their employees because it's good business and because they care about their employees. Each of us, regardless of our position in the organization, faces a variety of problems in our daily lives. Usually we work them out. But sometimes they become too much for us to handle and affect our personal happiness, our family relations, our work, and even our health. When this occurs, we need professional help to resolve the problems. Without proper attention, these problems tend to get worse; their consequences are often painful and expensive.

### What kind of problems does an Employee Assistance Program deal with?

The program deals with human problems—the kinds that affect personal well-being and job performance. Examples include marital difficulties, financial or legal problems, emotional problems, or problems caused by alcohol or other drug abuse.

### But aren't these private problems? What right does the employer have to interfere with an employee's personal life?

The employer does not interfere. Certainly these are personal problems—but they can have an effect on job performance. Often they can affect the morale of fellow workers and sometimes overall productivity. The Employee Assistance Program is intended to prevent that from happening. It's an offer of a helping hand—not an attempt to pry or punish.

Remember that the program is strictly confidential and voluntary. The employer sponsors the program but stays out of the evaluation and treatment process.

### What about family problems? Does the Employee Assistance Program help the spouse or other family members?

Yes! Since an employee's personal well-being and work performance are naturally affected by the problems of a spouse or child, the program is also available to the family. The hope is to work out family problems *before* they affect the employee's performance at work.

### Who pays for the cost of this counseling or other professional services?

There is no cost to the employee for contact with the EAP. Once a referral is made the employee's regular health insurance and/or other benefits pay for these services. Services that are not covered by insurance become the employee's responsibility to pay (although services are often charged according to the individual's ability to pay). If needed, sick leave, vacation time, or a leave of absence may be used.

### Does an EAP mean that our organization has an unusual number of employees with problems?

Not at all! An EAP means that your organization cares about its employees. An organization is more than the building its employees work in or the equipment people use. When an employee has problems, it is simply good business for the employer to offer help in resolving them as promptly as possible.