Supervisor Handbook for Department of Corrections

Employee Assistance Services

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24-Hour Helpline
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What is an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?

A worksite-based program to assist

1. Organizations in addressing productivity issues.
2. Employees in identifying and resolving personal concerns that may affect job performance.

What services does OneLife Employee Assistance offer Department of Corrections?

- Short-term problem resolution counseling
- Management consultation
- Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)
- EAP overview seminars on a variety of topics

Counseling Services

- **24-hour helpline:** Call toll free 800-559-9544
- **Free:** A benefit for employees and eligible family members living in the home.
- **Confidential:** To protect the employee’s privacy within state and federal guidelines.
- **Professional:** All providers are Master’s level licensed.
- **Convenient:** Locations and appointment times make it easy for employees.
- **Problem Resolution:** A total of up to six sessions per year for the employee or employee’s eligible family members. All sessions include assessment, brief counseling, referral, and follow-up services.
- **Types of Access:** Employees and their family members have three choices:
  - Schedule a face-to-face session with a counselor.
  - Schedule a phone or video session with a counselor.
  - After-hours crisis helpline 24hours/7 days a week.

What types of problems do people bring to the EAP to address?

Some common personal and work related issues include the following:

- Stress
- Family and relationship issues
- Chemical dependency and co-dependency
- Financial and legal issues
- Emotional and psychiatric difficulties
- Grief and loss issues
- Workplace conflicts
- Child/Elder care concerns
How Employees Access the EAP

1. Self-Referral
   a. An employee or immediate family member calls EAP.
   b. A co-worker encourages an employee to call.
   c. An employee discloses having personal issues.

2. Informal Supervisor Referral (Recommendation)
   a. Observed employee work performance and/or
   b. Personal issues that are interfering with employee’s work performance

3. Formal Referral
   Referrals to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for treatment or counseling, in addition to a disciplinary response, may be appropriate under certain conditions and employee participation in treatment or counseling may serve to mitigate a disciplinary response. Agency EAP or facility HR staff should be contacted for assistance with this type of referral.

Benefits of EAP

**For the Company:**
- Reduces employee turnover.
- Reduces absenteeism.
- Reduces other behavioral problems.
- Reduces workers’ compensation and unemployment insurance costs.
- Reduces healthcare costs.
- Improves job productivity.
- Increases employee morale.

**For the Supervisor:**
- Provides a supplemental tool when addressing performance issues or taking unfavorable actions.
- Provides assistance in addressing an employee’s personal problems.
- Reduces the risk of potential legal action, grievances, and/or complaints.
- Allows you to focus on employee work performance.

*The earlier an employee problem is dealt with, the better chance of achieving a successful outcome.*
EAP Services specifically available to leaders:

- Unlimited consultation regarding
  - Productivity assistance and general guidance.
  - Management of troubled employees whose personal problems adversely affect job performance.
  - Review of the referral process.
  - Employee events, including threat of violence.
- Support for traumatic/critical events in the workplace
  - (Critical Incident Stress Management – CISM)
- Education and Training

Referral Process

When should you consider Supervisory Assisted Referral to the EAP?

2. When you observe an employee’s work performance decline.
3. When work performance does not improve despite efforts made by the supervisor to correct it.
4. When unacceptable behavior occurs at any time.
5. When an employee is in a safety-sensitive position and is acting out in a way that leads to concern about his or her safety and the safety of others. EAP is available to consult further about whether our services are appropriate for the employee. If other options are more appropriate based on ODOC policies and procedures, the EAP can play a supportive role.

Identifying and Addressing Job Performance Issues

(See Appendix A for identifying patterns of behavior that can lead to job performance issues.)

- Job performance includes attendance and availability, quality of work, and attitude that may lead to problematic behavior/conduct.
- Be alert to a decline or changes in job performance, especially of those who have histories of good performance.
Supervisor’s Responsibilities

1. Observe Job Performance

Look for a decline in the employee’s job performance:
- Absenteeism
- Tardiness
- Accidents
- Low Productivity
- Mood Swings

(Refer to Appendix A: Job Deficiency Checklist)

2. Document

This is essential. Employees tend to deny or minimize the severity of past incidents over time. Document discussions, encounters, actions or steps taken, verbal warnings, or conferences with the employee. Do not use subjective or emotive language.

Keep an accurate file of the employee’s specific job performance:
- Be specific.
- Be objective.
- Be confidential.
- Make documentation open and available for the employee to see.
- Pass documentation on to future supervisors if reassigned.
- Record positive as well as negative information.
- Do not apologize to an employee for documenting performance.
- List all facts: who, what, where, when, and how.

Sample Documentation
(Notice the specific and objective language)

The employee was late today (date, time). He/She appeared to fall asleep during our staff meeting. When confronted, the employee became belligerent, saying (statements of acts). He/She interrupted while being corrected and appeared unwilling to accept feedback, saying (statements made). He/She then left the room slamming doors. The noise was loud enough to be heard by others who came to investigate. Two employees reported feeling fearful of this worker’s behavior stating (statements).

Follow your work organizations policies and procedure. It is important to be consistent with all employees. Contact Human Resources to determine whether a referral is appropriate and/or other methods of addressing the issue, such as drug/alcohol testing, need to occur.
SUPERVISOR DON'Ts:

- Don’t make meaningless threats.
- Don’t accept hopelessness.
- Don’t allow the employee’s emotions to interfere.
- Don’t use words that imply something about the character of the person.
- Don’t diagnose, even if you think you know what the problem is.
- Don’t be distracted by excuses.

**Note:** The employee might disclose that he/she is already in counseling (once you explain that you are referring him/her to the EAP). Explain that your intention is not to duplicate efforts, and it is important to tell this to the EAP counselor. Let the employee know that the EAP’s focus will be on supporting the employee as much as possible in order to meet work expectations, and this may include the EAP ensuring that the employee is getting the appropriate treatment and care.

- Don’t ignore the problem or put off calling the EAP.
- Don’t withdraw from the employee.
- Don’t moralize – stick to job performance issues.
- Don’t discuss the employee’s problems with anyone except your supervisor, Human Resources, and/or an EAP professional.
- Don’t be swayed or misled.

SUPERVISOR DOs:

- Do establish a clear standard of work performance.
- Do document all absenteeism and poor work performance.
- Do performance-oriented statements.

**Note:** It is not enough to refer to EAP for ATTITUDE. Be specific regarding the behaviors you are seeing in the workplace that are impacting performance.

- Do explain all consequences if performance expectations are not met.
- Do be honest.
- Do listen to the employee’s explanation.
- Do establish a plan for improvement with deadline and specifics.
- Do explain that using the EAP does not exclude the employee from standard disciplinary procedures, nor does it include special privileges.
- Do emphasize confidentiality.
3. Follow-Up

- Have weekly or periodic “check-in” meetings with your employee.
- Review performance after an EAP referral.
- Consult with the EAP if the problem re-emerges.
- If progress is not occurring, make sure to follow through on next steps.
- **Pay attention to performance** in order to determine your next step – NOT how well treatment or counseling is going.

**Note:** Whether or not EAP recommendations are completed, the supervisor should continue documentation of job performance problems. If job performance fails to improve satisfactorily, the decision to implement further personnel action is strictly a managerial decision.

4. Confidentiality

- Contract providers will maintain confidential files and will provide only statistical information to the agency.
- Contract providers may disclose confidential information relating to a participant when:
  - The participant consents in writing to the release of information;
  - The appointing authority requests verification of an employee’s appointment with the contract provider for the purpose of granting authorized absence. In such case, the disclosure will be limited to the date and time of the appointment;
  - The contract provider determines the participant poses a threat to deliberately harm the participant or others;
  - There is reason to believe that a minor has had physical injuries inflicted upon them where the injury appears to have been caused as a result of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect;
  - There is reason to believe that an elderly person or incapacitated adult is suffering from abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation; or
• There is reason to believe offender sexual assault or abuse in accordance with OP-030601, “Oklahoma Prison Rape Elimination Act” has occurred.

Reasons Supervisors May Be Hesitant to Refer

❖ “The employee is getting help someplace else.”
❖ “His/Her career will be harmed.”
❖ “We are friends, socialize, drink together, etc.”
❖ “The employee will be offended.”
❖ “If I refer, it will only delay termination.”
❖ “It’s none of my business.”
❖ “It is not my responsibility to worry about his/her personal problems.”
❖ “Referring would show that I can’t fix problems.”
❖ “The employee would be stigmatized.”
❖ “I believed the problem was a temporary thing.”
❖ “This problem is not ‘bad enough’ for the EAP.”
❖ “The employee will tell the EAP about ME.”
❖ “I fear the EAP will see our work unit’s dirty laundry.”
❖ “I feared the employee might sue or file a grievance.”
❖ “I was afraid I would make a procedural mistake.”
❖ “I feared the employee’s emotional reaction.”
❖ “I feared the EAP would learn I was protecting the employee for so long.”
❖ “The employee insists that the personal problem is already being addressed.”
❖ “Even though the employee’s performance is substandard, he/she is reporting evidence of treatment and medical problems to explain away the problem.”

How to respond to…..

Substance Abuse Concerns in the Workplace

Follow ODOC policies and procedures if an employee appears under the influence of a substance based on reasonable suspicion factors.

a. The most common symptom is the smell of alcohol on the breath (medication explanations do not rule out reasonable suspicion).
b. Remember not to diagnose, but focus on the behaviors and facts that you observe in the workplace.
c. If a reasonable suspicion exists, a supervisor or manager will provide transportation to an authorized drug testing facility. The supervisor or manager must have attended a Drug Free Workplace training and complete a For-cause Report Form (attachment B. of OP-110602).
d. Never send an employee who is suspected of being under the influence of
alcohol or drugs away from the facility alone. Ensure that a suspected impaired person has a driver.

**Substance Abuse Concerns Outside the Workplace**

If a supervisor or manager suspects an employee of substance abuse problems outside of the workplace that interferes with an employee’s work performance or behavior, the supervisor or manager may refer the employee for EAP assistance.

**How to Respond to Concerns about Suicide:**

1. Take threats seriously.
2. Get help – professional help. Call the EAP immediately! *(If the employee refuses to speak to a counselor after expressing threats or plans to take action immediately, call the police. You can always follow-up with the EAP, but you want to protect yourself, the workplace, and ALL employees in a dangerous situation, and calling the police is most appropriate).*
3. Stay close – help the person avoid isolation.
5. Trust yourself when you suspect a person is suicidal.
6. Be direct and share your concern with the individual.
7. If the person is not a family member, share your concern with his/her family or friends.

**How NOT to Respond to Concerns about Suicide:**

1. Leave him/her alone.
2. Argue with the individual about suicide.
3. Brush it off as a tantrum or attempt to manipulate.
4. Minimize or dismiss his/her feelings of pain or loss.
5. Avoid out of fear to discuss the issue.

Note: You are never going to give people the idea of suicide by asking them directly if they have thought about suicide.
Appendix A

Job Deficiency Checklist

Isolating a single behavior is not suggested in the following information. Instead, looking for patterns and combinations of behaviors constitute reasonable concern.

This checklist is simply a guide for identifying possible performance problems. Just because some of these conditions may exist, does not necessarily mean that job problems exist. Use the following as a worksheet, and discuss concerns about employee performance with the EAP and/or your Human Resources staff in order to set the stage for addressing performance issues with your employee.

**ABSENTEEISM AND THE TIME ABUSE**

1. Excessive unauthorized leave.
2. Excessive sick leave.
3. Monday/Friday (or both) absences or other pattern.
4. Excessive unauthorized absences- # in the last 12 months ________.
5. Excessive authorized absences- # in the last 12 months ________.
6. Excessive use of sick leave- # in the last 12 months ________.
7. Excessive tardiness.
8. Frequent and unacceptable excuses for absences from work area.
9. Longer than usual work breaks.
10. Calling in late or having someone call for employee.
11. Frequent unexplained disappearances.
12. Frequently leaves work early- # of days per week or month ________.

**QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF WORK**

1. Clear refusal to do assigned tasks.
2. Significant increase in errors.
3. Repeated errors in spite of increased guidance.
4. Reduced quantity of work.
5. Inconsistent “up and down” quantity or quality of work.
6. Behavior that disrupts work flow.
7. Procrastination on significant decisions or tasks.
8. More than usual supervision necessary.
10. Noticeable change in written or verbal communication.
PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOR

1. Increased isolation from fellow employees or significant change in relations with co-workers, supervisor, and/or others.
2. Verbal denial of the existence of any job problem.
3. Loss of temper; frequent or intense arguments.
4. Verbal abusiveness.
5. Physical abusiveness.
6. Intentional avoidance of supervisor.
7. Expressions of frustrations or discontent.
8. Changes in frequency or nature of complaints.
9. Complaints by co-workers or subordinates.
11. Unusual sensitivity to advice or critique of work.
12. Unpredictable response to supervision.
13. Passive-aggressive attitude leading to similar behavior, doing things behind your back.
14. Visits to or from employees in other work areas.
15. Changes in mood.
16. Changes in or unusual appearance (dress, hygiene).
17. Unexplained memory lapses.
18. Degeneration of personal grooming habits.
19. Coming or returning to work in an obviously aggravated condition.
20. Borrowing money from fellow employees.
21. Changes in or unusual speech (incoherent, stuttering, loud).
22. Changes in or unusual physical mannerisms (gestures, postures).
23. Changes in or unusual facial expressions.
24. Changes in or unusual level of activity, much reduced or increased.
25. Changes in or unusual topics of conversation.
26. Increasingly irritable or tearful.
27. Persistently boisterous or rambunctious.
28. Unpredictable or out of context displays of emotion.
29. Sensitivity to real or imagined criticism.

PERSONAL MATTERS

2. Has received professional help for emotional or physical problems.
3. Makes unfounded accusations, i.e., feelings of persecution.
4. Makes unreliable or false statements.
5. Unrealistic self-appraisal or grandiose statements.
6. Temper tantrums or angry outbursts.
7. Demanding, rigid, inflexible.
8. Major change in physical health.
9. Concerns about sexual behavior or sexual harassment.
**OTHER JOB PERFORMANCE**

1. Major change in duties or responsibilities.
2. Interferes with or ignores established procedures.
3. Inability to follow through on job performance recommendations.
4. Lunch drinking.
5. Has detailed discussion about obtaining or using drugs and/or alcohol.
6. Increased tolerance for alcohol.
8. Comes to work with the smell of alcohol on the breath.
9. Drinking or popping pills on the job.
10. Increased occurrences of real minor illnesses.
11. Fluctuating periods of high or low productivity.
12. Episodes of forgetfulness/confusion.
13. Volatile emotional reactions with little apparent cause.
14. High accident rate-on and off the job.

**OTHER HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS**

1. Has detailed discussions about death, suicide, or harming someone.
2. Has made specific verbal threats or has been physically threatening to others in the workplace.