

POLICY/ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE/ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE

SECTION: HUMAN RESOURCES	REFERENCE NUMBER: 107.10
SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND SERVICES	INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/20/89
TITLE: EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	LAST REVISION DATE:

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the City of Denton to provide counseling, resources, assistance and other support to employees and their dependents who may be experiencing on- or off-the-job, personal difficulties that may be affecting their work performance, work productivity, or ability adversely. It is recognized that problems not directly related to an employee's job duties and responsibilities can have a negative effect on that person's job performance. In some situations neither the efforts of the employee nor the supervisor have the desired effect of resolving the employee's performance problem or unsatisfactory performance. This situation could persist over a period of time, either constantly or intermittently. In those cases, it is the purpose of the Employee Assistance Program to provide counseling and assistance to help the employee resolve their problem.

It is the goal of the City of Denton to assist employees in seeking recourse to deal constructively with personal or behavioral problems that have or could adversely affect job performance or job productivity. This applies whether the problem is one of physical illness, mental or emotional distress, marital or family discord, alcoholism, drug use of abuse/addiction, legal matters, financial difficulties, or other concerns.

The Employee Assistance Program is available to all full-time and part-time employees, their immediate families and dependents.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

I. GENERAL

The purpose of the Employee Assistance Program is to assist employees to identify on- or off-the-job personal or behavioral problems that are adversely impacting their work performance, work productivity, or ability to identify and locate appropriate medical, emotional, physical, financial, legal, or other appropriate resources; and to assist the employee (or family/dependent) in dealing with the problem in a constructive fashion for a long-term positive solution to the problem.

In most cases, the employee will overcome such personal problems independently and the impact on the job will be negligible. In other instances, normal supervisory assistance may serve either as motivation or guidance by which such problems can be resolved so that the employee's job performance will return to an acceptable level.

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A. Referral

When an adverse behavioral problem or unusual job performance problem arises, the employee may be referred to the program by his/her supervisor. Employees may independently seek assistance without supervisory referral.

B. Confidentiality

Employees and/or dependents seeking assistance through the Employee Assistance Program are assured that reasonable efforts will be made to provide the services within strict principles of confidentiality.

The official personnel record of any employee will not include information concerning an employee's personal or behavioral problem except as it might apply to specific behaviors that relate to job performance and/or disciplinary actions because of violations of City policies, procedures, rules, etc. All EAP records will be kept under separate security arrangements in the Human Resources Department and separate from the employee's official personnel files. The City will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local law regarding the release of records.

C. Use of Vacation, Sick Leave, and Other Leaves of Absence

An employee participating in the EAP may request the use of any accrued sick leave or vacation to continue receiving pay and benefits while involved in a program. Employees who have insufficient accruals of sick leave or vacation may request a leave of absence without pay. The use of vacation, sick leave, or a leave of absence without pay will be granted in accordance with established policy giving consideration to the nature of the request and the needs of the department and City organization. It is the employee's responsibility during a leave without pay to pay any life, health, and disability insurance premiums or other deductions that normally are deducted from the employee's pay check during participation in the EAP.

D. Job Performance/Disciplinary Action

Participation in an EAP Program will not substitute for improved job performance, job productivity, ability, or meeting established job standards defined by the department. Should an employee's performance remain at an unacceptable level or not improve within the time frames established by the supervisor, an employee may still be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

E. Consideration for Other Employment Opportunities

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The fact that an employee is participating in an EAP Program will not be used as a factor in a decision to deny a promotional opportunity. However, continued employment or promotional consideration will be dependent upon current satisfactory performance in the current position and the established qualifications and selection criteria being used as the basis for a promotional position. Employees participating in an EAP Program may compete for open positions based upon their qualifications for the position, without consideration, either favorable or unfavorable, as a result of involvement in the EAP Program.

II. PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES IN USING THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

- A. To request assistance, an employee, supervisor, or family/dependent member may telephone or visit the City's Human Resources Department.
- B. Supervisors should use the EAP to assist and motivate the employee to take corrective action for an on- or off-the-job personal problem that is affecting job performance, job productivity, or ability adversely. Since variations in job performance, absenteeism, or tardiness are more apparent than their causes, the role of the supervisor is to identify the specific job performance problem(s) only and not diagnose their personal problem(s) of the employee. It is very important for the supervisor to document the specific behavior the employee is demonstrating (i.e. difficulty in motor functions, slurred speech, stumbling, glassy eyes, odor on the breath, patterns of absenteeism or tardiness, specific job related inability to meet established performance standards, etc.)
- C. An employee may request, accept, or refuse services from the EAP. However, it must be clearly communicated to the employee that refusal to accept a supervisor directed referral to the EAP places the responsibility to correct any performance problem or other on-the-job related difficulty directly on the employee.

Employees who are given notice of poor job performance must bring their performance back to an acceptable standard or they will be subject to a written agreement made with their supervisor, disciplinary action, or both, for unsatisfactory performance, regardless of their level of involvement in the EAP.

D. Payment for Services

Employees requiring in-patient or out-patient substance abuse or other treatment are responsible for arranging for the payment of all costs associated with those activities. Some costs may be funded through available health insurance coverage.

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The affected department may choose to assist the employee with a portion of the financial aspects of a particular program. Payment for services by a department will be handled on a case-by-case basis with consideration being given to the employee's cooperation in recognizing and dealing with the problem in a constructive manner, compliance with the professional (psychologist, psychiatrist, etc.) therapy and counseling directions and prescriptions in order to address and correct the problem.