

County of Cumberland Board of Chosen Freeholders	Policy Number: 2.22	Pages: 1 of 4
Chapter: Employee Benefits		Effective Date: May 11, 1995
Subject: Employee Assistance Program (EAP)		

I. POLICY:

The Cumberland County Board of Chosen Freeholders is pleased to announce that it has adopted an Employee Assistance Program as a practical and constructive mechanism for dealing with employees' personal problems which affect job performance or as an aid to those employees and family members who voluntarily wish to use the program as a means of resolving a personal problem. The program is being offered to all employees and members of their immediate household family.

II. DEFINITIONS: NONE

III. PROCEDURE:

- A. The general purpose of the program is to assure that any Cumberland County employee having a personal or job performance problem will receive careful consideration and an offer of confidential and subsequent referral services.
- B. County Administration recognizes that an employee may, at times, experience personal problems which, if ignored, often impact on the job performance. It is also recognized that many personal problems can be successfully dealt with and resolved, provided assistance is offered at an early stage and referral is made to an appropriate form of care. This applies whether the problem is one of physical illness, mental or emotional illness, alcoholism, drug abuse, marital or family distress, financial or other concerns.
- C. The Employee Assistance Program is available to all Cumberland County employees and to members of their immediate household family.
- D. Referral to the EAP may be done by way of (1) self referral, (2) supervisory referral, (3) family referral and (4) medical referral. Referral to the program may initially be to the in-house EAP liaison, who will contact the EAP counselor at the contractual agency or directly to the EAP office. The EAP counselor will explain how the program operates and initiate appropriate action.

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1. Self Referral

Any employee who is experiencing a personal problem is encouraged to seek confidential assistance by directly contacting the EAP. The employee is encouraged to seek assistance at the earliest stage of a problem before it interferes with the performance of work functions. Contact may be established via telephone to arrange for a confidential consultation. Self referral employees, i.e. voluntary or family members seeking assistance, will be able to do so with complete anonymity.

2. Supervisory Referral

This may be done by a supervisor if there is:

- a. A decline in work performance and/or attendance or some other incident which may indicate a personal or medical problem; or
- b. A request from the employee for advice or assistance regarding a personal problem

Note: Work performance may be documented by the supervisor and presented to the employee to indicate concern and to justify referral activity. Declining performance will be presented to the employee in a formal manner to review areas of concern and to outline a mutually agreed upon corrective action.

3. Family Referral

Since an employee's concern with the problems of a family member may also impact on his/her job performance, the EAP is made available to all household family members of Cumberland County personnel. The employee may refer the family member to the EAP, or the family member may seek the program services on his/her own by directly contacting the program. Family members shall be entitled to the same levels of service and confidentiality as all county personnel.

4. Medical Referral

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A worker's compensation physician or other occupational health provider may also refer an employee to the EAP when, in his/her opinion, he/she feels the employee may benefit from program services.

- E. Participation in this program insures that no employee with alcoholism or other personal problems will have either job security or promotional opportunities jeopardized because of a referral for diagnosis, counseling, or treatment. Substandard work performance, however, will be dealt with through corrective action or ultimately, termination. The EAP is designed to provide assistance to normal administrative procedures. It is not intended to interfere or replace the normal disciplinary process, nor is it intended to replace or interfere with policy #4.04 "Drug Free Workplace" or Policy \$4.05 "Drug & Alcohol Testing for Safety Sensitive Employees".
1. It is also recognized that non-professional persons do not have the qualifications or training to diagnose alcoholism or other problems; therefore, referral (other than self referral) for diagnosis, counseling, and/or treatment will be based solely on work performance criteria.
 2. The decision to request or accept assistance through the Employee Assistance Program is the personal choice of the individual. Any employee has the right to voluntarily seek or refuse assistance through the EAP.
 3. Employees referred to and participating in the Employee Assistance Program will be expected to meet and maintain existing job performance standards and established work rules.
- F. The individual's legal rights (as outlined in Federal Register Volume 40, No. 127, July, 1975) to confidentiality and privacy under federal law will be protected. Any information revealed by an employee while receiving services under this program shall remain confidential and separate from the County's medical or personnel records and shall always be used in a responsible manner and will only be released to an appropriate individual with the individual's written consent or otherwise in accordance with established legal procedures.
- G. Expenses incurred for diagnosis and treatment of alcoholism, drug abuse, physical or psychiatric problems, etc. will be reimbursed in accordance with the provision of the Group Insurance Plan applicable to all participating Cumberland County employees.

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Cumberland County will not assume any responsibility for bills incurred which exceed insurance coverage or are incurred by county employees who do not participate in a county medical benefits program.

H. The Employee Assistance Program will maintain an oversight advisory committee to provide ongoing guidance and review of program operations. This committee will not have access to the names of anyone using or seeking services of the EAP, nor will they have access to any records maintained by EAP staff on individuals using the program. Committee membership may include:

- * EAP coordinator
- * EAP director (from outside organization)
- * Management representative
- * Personnel representative
- * Medical or social services representative
- * Union representative
- * Training representative