

Title: Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	
Purpose: To improve the productivity and healthy functioning of employees whose job performance may be affected by personal, marital, and other types of problems.	
Issued by: Health Services Branch	Date: July 7, 2009
References: CS Circular 988 (11-25-1974)	

I. PURPOSE

This policy is to guide supervisors and employees in receiving employee assistance program (EAP) counseling and consulting services for personal and work-related interpersonal issues that may be negatively impacting employees' job performance or a department's effectiveness and morale.

II. ELIGIBILITY

Counseling and referral services are available to employees or officers of the City and County of Honolulu (City), or any family member of such employees' household, with priority given to those employees whose job performance is affected.

III. INITIATING COUNSELING AND CONSULTING SERVICES

- A. Any person who desires assistance should first contact the EAP counselor by telephone. EAP counseling sessions are held by the EAP counselor on an appointment basis. The appointment may be made by employees or by the employees' supervisors, if employees desire assistance in setting up the initial appointments.
- B. Employees or supervisors may initiate EAP counseling services. However, employees shall not be ordered to receive such services; employees must seek such services voluntarily.
- C. Employees are not required to receive the approval of their supervisors to receive assistance under the program; however, employees must receive approval from their supervisors prior to any time off taken during working hours, in accordance with established departmental procedures. Employees are not required to disclose the nature of the EAP appointment to anyone, including their supervisors.

IV. PROGRAM OPERATIONS

A. Time off.

1. Employees will be granted time off with pay for the first visit to the EAP counselor if such visit is scheduled during working hours and the employee has prior approval. Such time off shall not be charged to any accrued paid leave. The time off granted shall be only for the period required to see the EAP counselor, in addition to a reasonable amount of travel time. The EAP counselor will provide verification of time off, if needed.
2. For subsequent visits approved during working hours, employees can request sick leave, vacation leave or other appropriate leave. Existing provisions for a physician's verification for all absences due to illness shall be applicable.
3. EAP counseling services may be provided during non-working hours without supervisory authorization. Such visits by employees will not be subject to compensation nor will the City be liable for reimbursing employees for their time.

B. Confidentiality

1. All information received from employees under the program shall be held in strictest confidence except as provided by law.
2. All open and closed EAP case records shall be kept in a locked file cabinet separate from employees' personnel files. The only individuals with access to EAP case records shall be those providing EAP services and authorized personnel providing clinical review of files for quality of service.

C. Counselor's relationship with agency.

1. Information regarding the employees' participation in EAP counseling or any recommended treatment will only be disclosed to supervisors with the employees' written authorization. The EAP counselor will not discuss employees' personal problems with their supervisors unless legally required to do so. If in the EAP counselor's judgment any discussion is necessary, for example, when the work environment contributes to the problems or where the health and safety of employees are affected, the EAP counselor may do so, but only with the written authorization of the employees.
2. The EAP counselor is also available to provide consultation and training to supervisors regarding effectively intervening with employees whose problems may be impacting the workplace. Consultations may be conducted by telephone or in person at the EAP office and shall be held in strictest confidence.

D. Application of collective bargaining agreements.

This program does not affect any of the employees' rights under the collective bargaining agreements.