



## HR 14-16-3

Approved by Vice-Chancellor of Business and Finance (5-26-2016)

### EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

#### PURPOSE

Governor's Executive Order #94, signed on June 20, 1990, acknowledged the need for Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) to be established in all state departments, independent agencies, the University of Wisconsin System, constitutional offices, and legislative branches of government. The Executive Order recognizes that personal problems and illnesses such as alcohol and other drug abuse and dependency, depression, separation and divorce, work-related stress and family stress can affect the productivity of our workforce causing economic and human loss. The employer, the employee, and the employee's family benefit substantially when help is sought as early as possible through a confidential EAP.

#### POLICY

It is the policy of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay to maintain and promote an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for its employees and their families. The Counseling and Health Center will coordinate the campus EAP.

UW-Green Bay recognizes that a wide range of personal problems, conditions, concerns and illnesses not directly associated with an employee's job functions can adversely affect an employee's job performance. In most instances, the employee can overcome such personal problems independently and the effect on job performance will be negligible. However, some situations may require additional help, which is why UW-Green Bay has developed an EAP.

The primary purpose of the EAP is to help reduce suffering and the loss of human resources resulting from personal, behavioral or medical problems by: (1) assisting in the early identification of such problems, and (2) offering support and/or information and referrals to community and professional resources. The EAP serves as a resource for supervisors and managers in helping to deal effectively with employees whose job performance is deteriorating because of such problems.

Nothing in this policy is to be interpreted as constituting a waiver of management's right to take disciplinary measures or an employee's right to pursue the grievance procedures within the university's operational policies.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

Employee contacts and information acquired by the EAP shall be confidential within limits governed by Federal and State regulations and University policy. However, it may be required that, information concerning an employee contact with the EAP be released if the following exceptions exist:

- The individual gives written authorization for disclosure;
- The information is required to handle a medical emergency;
- There is reasonable belief that an employee's conduct (including statements) places him or her or another person in imminent threat of bodily harm;
- There is reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse has been or will be committed;



- In response to a subpoena in a legal proceeding.

## PRINCIPLES

The Employee Assistance Program operates within the following principles:

- Early identification of personal problems, conditions and illnesses can lead to corrective action being taken sooner. Early and appropriate action can decrease the amount of disruption in both the employees' personal and professional life.
- Participation in the EAP is voluntary. At all times it is the prerogative of the employee to accept or reject referral to an EAP. Lack of participation in the EAP is NOT a cause for disciplinary action. The employee still remains responsible for meeting the job requirements regardless of participation in the EAP.
- Involvement in the EAP will not jeopardize an employee's job security and/or promotional opportunities providing he/she meets job requirements. No record of services provided by EAP is entered in an employee's personnel file.
- Employees will be given a reasonable amount of time to contact the EAP during their work hours without loss of pay.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

UW-Green Bay's EAP is a confidential work-site program designed to assist the prevention, identification, and resolution of behavioral, medical and productivity problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns. These include, but are not limited to health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other personal concerns which may adversely affect job performance.

EAP services will be provided through the Counseling and Health Center by certified professional counselors. Services provided are:

- Confidential support and short-term consultation related to problem assessment.
- Referrals for assessment, diagnosis, treatment and other assistance.
- Consultation and training of management, supervisors and other personnel in the identification and resolution of job/performance issues which may be caused by personal concerns.
- Prevention and wellness education for employees.

## METHODS FOR ACCESSING EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

An employee or a family member may independently, or upon the suggestion of the employee's supervisor, confer privately and confidentially with the EAP. Involvement in the EAP is completely at the discretion of the individual seeking assistance.

- A. Self-Referral.** Employees with personal problems are encouraged to seek help on their own initiative before health and job performance are adversely affected. Employees and/or family members may consult with the EAP by contacting the Counseling and Health Center, SS 1400, 465-2380. Consultation can be in person or over the telephone. If employees want to consult with the EAP during work time they will be allowed a reasonable amount of time without loss of pay for such assistance. However, they must arrange with their supervisor for time away from their work station or post in accordance with the operating procedures that have been



established for their work units. Employees are not required to use sick leave, vacation, or holiday time to cover the contact with the EAP. Employees may elect to contact the EAP during break times and lunch periods, as operating procedures permit.

The EAP will provide short-term consultation and referral to outside service providers. Ongoing counseling services will not be provided by the EAP itself.

**B. Supervisory Referral.** Supervisors may suggest contact with the EAP if an employee's job performance declines or negatively affects the work group. Supervisors may provide information about EAP to employees in any of the following situations:

1. When normal supervisory efforts to improve poor or inconsistent performance are not successful.
2. Whenever progressive discipline is being imposed.
3. Whenever a Concentrated Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is being implemented.

It is hoped that employee use of the EAP will bring about improvement in job performance. However, the use of EAP does not prevent supervisors from taking corrective action if performance problems persist or if performance falls off again after a period of improvement. Referral to EAP does NOT preclude the university from taking appropriate corrective action nor is it a basis for compromising performance standards or work rules.

## **COST**

There is no cost to the employee for the use of UW-Green Bay's EAP services. Please note that in the case of a supervisor referral, the department will be responsible for any costs incurred. Fees charged by community resources may be covered by the employee and/or the employee's health insurance coverage.

## **RECORDS**

EAP records and information from employee contacts are kept in a separate file from the personnel file. They are held in a confidential manner and secure location and will not be disclosed in accordance with various State and Federal Statutes, including but without limitations: Federal-Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C.S. 552 (a)) and 42 CFR Part 2; State-Secs. 19.36 (1), 19.85 (1) (f), 103.13 and 895.50, Wis. Stats. and related case law. Only the EAP staff will have access to the records. Each agency EAP director is responsible for keeping the records secured at all times.

Anonymous summary data of program use will be kept by the EAP. This summary information may be provided to the Department of Employee Relations on request in order that yearly reports may be made to the Governor.