

## SDCRAA HUMAN RESOURCES STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

Section:	<b>Compensation And Benefits</b>
Standard:	<b>EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM</b>
Section #:	<b>C-11</b>
Effective:	June 24, 2008

See Also:	Workplace Privacy; Benefits Coverage and Eligibility; Corrective Action; Formal Discipline; Substance Abuse/Drug Free Workplace; Accommodation for Substance Abuse Rehabilitation
-----------	---

### **GENERAL STANDARD**

The Authority provides an Employee Assistance Program (“EAP”) designed to provide confidential assistance to employees having personal problems.

### **SPECIFIC STANDARDS**

- ❑ The Employee Assistance Program is an Authority-provided benefit available to employees and their family members.
- ❑ The program provides confidential, professional counseling and referral services for problems such as marital, family, or emotional conflicts; alcohol or drug dependency; legal or financial difficulties; and child or elder care issues.
- ❑ The EAP service is completely confidential. Use of the service, or information disclosed by an employee using EAP services, will not be released to anyone in the Authority unless the release is authorized specifically by the employee in writing.
- ❑ There is no cost to the employee for the services of the EAP counselor. Other costs, such as for referral to another resource or for treatment, may be the employee’s responsibility.
- ❑ In accordance with benefit plan provisions, employees may attend up to six EAP counseling sessions per year during work hours. The first EAP session may be scheduled on paid work time; subsequent visits which

occur during the non-exempt employee's work days are charged to PTO or other leave time. Employees are responsible for scheduling sessions so that department operations are not impacted. Employees are required to request of their managers time off during their work day when they will be away from their work location. Employees are not required to inform their managers as to the specific reasons.

## **GUIDELINES**

The Authority periodically will conduct briefing sessions to remind managers and employees about the services available through the EAP.

Managers should encourage employees to seek assistance directly from the EAP at any time they or their family members may need help with personal or family issues. In addition, managers should:

- Emphasize the absolutely confidential nature of EAP services. Use of these services will not affect any employee's employment relationship with the Authority.
- Remind employees that everyone experiences difficult periods in their personal, family and professional lives. EAP services often help employees through these difficult periods.
- Convey an attitude that there is no stigma associated with use of the program.

The EAP can also provide a manager with advice and guidance on how to approach and deal constructively with difficult employee situations where the manager is concerned that personal problems, including alcohol or drug abuse, may be resulting in performance issues.

When suggesting that an employee consider using EAP services, the manager first should consult with the Director, Human Resources prior to discussing use of the EAP with the employee; and if it is determined advisable to suggest EAP use, be very careful to:

- Focus on performance, behavior, and/or attendance issues that are the Authority's concern;

- Express concern for the employee's well-being;
- Refrain from inquiring or soliciting information about the employee's personal matters;
- Offer no opinions or judgments regarding the employee's circumstances.

## ***PROCEDURES***

Managers must consult with a representative of the Human Resources Department whenever they suspect personal problems to be causing work-related problems.

Managers should refer to:

- ***Corrective Action*** or ***Formal Discipline*** Standards for procedures for addressing performance problems and refrain from relating personal reasons to the cause for performance-related problems.
- ***Substance Abuse/Drug Free Workplace*** Standard if they are concerned that an employee may have problems in this area and then consult with a representative of the Human Resources Department.
- ***Accommodation for Substance Abuse Rehabilitation*** Standard if an employee discloses that s/he has a substance abuse problem and wishes voluntarily to seek rehabilitation and then consult with a representative of the Human Resources Department.

Managers should contact a representative of the Human Resources Department for advice on how to raise and confront difficult issues with an employee when they suspect that personal and/or family issues may be contributing to a workplace or performance problem.