

## ***Supervisors Need Support, Too***

As a comprehensive resource designed to provide information, support, and guidance whenever work or personal issues arise, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is one of the most valuable benefits available to your agency's employees. An often-overlooked aspect of the EAP, however, is that it pulls double duty for managers and supervisors. Not only is the program here for you as an employee, it's got you covered as a leader to help you maneuver the unique demands, situations, and challenges you face. Your agency depends on you to further its mission, and your employees rely on you for consistent leadership. In today's constantly changing work environment, this can pose a challenge. Let's review some of the ways the EAP supports supervisors.

### **Confidential support, guidance, and answers**

At some point in your management career, you're bound to encounter a difficult work issue and challenges with employees that you must address. While you know it's your responsibility to handle such matters, you might not always know how you should proceed. Whenever you find yourself wondering *"How should I address this," "What am I allowed to say/discuss," "When should I talk to this employee,"* or *"What is the best approach for handling this challenge?"* call the EAP. You'll promptly be connected to licensed professional who will listen to your concerns and help you formulate a plan. Although you can reach out any time for any reason, these are some common issues managers call about:

- Referring an employee to the EAP
- Workplace conflict
- Productivity concerns
- Employee performance and conduct
- Incidents or crises that affect the workplace
- Absenteeism and presenteeism
- Supporting employees
- Choosing the best response in difficult situations
- Ethical concerns
- Identifying issues before they become problems

### **Challenging situations and sensitive issue assurance**

On occasion, difficult or sensitive issues can arise that might need to be handled with a bit more consideration, compassion, or diplomacy. Here are some examples:

- A formerly reliable employee begins arriving very late several times a week
- A valued employee passes away
- Conflict arises between members of your staff
- You are notified of a pending reduction in force (RIF), furlough, or reorganization
- You learn an employee is experiencing personal problems at home
- You suspect an employee is either drinking or abusing drugs on the job
- You're not sure how to suggest the EAP with an employee who may benefit from it

In these moments, lean on your EAP for specific guidance on how to appropriately proceed so you can feel more prepared to confidently broach the subject and tend to it quickly.

### **One-on-one management consultations**

Just as you would meet with a counselor to work through personal concerns, managers and supervisors can meet with a counselor to discuss the aspects of your leadership role that may be causing distress. These private, one-on-one consultations can be used to discuss the interpersonal issues that affect the workplace, gather best practices for interacting with employees who demonstrate performance or conduct issues, learn tips to navigate crises and grief in the workplace, and get support for working in a challenging environment. Whether it takes one to several appointments, all can be arranged at your convenience.

### **24/7 Access**

One of the most valuable aspects of the EAP is that it is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year. Whether you need help on your lunch break or something's keeping you up at night, your call will

always be answered by a live person who's ready to help. Or visit the program online where you'll find a myriad of resources and information, helpful tools, articles, and webinar recordings.

You're there for your employees – we're here for you. Remember that although it's your job as a manager to support your employees and handle work issues, it isn't your job to know how to handle every situation. That's what the EAP is for, we're here to help.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a voluntary and confidential employee benefit available to eligible federal employees at no cost.

24 HOURS A DAY

**800-222-0364**

TTY: 888-262-7848

[foh4you.com](http://foh4you.com)