

# EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ERC: EAP)

## Types of EAP Referrals

- **Self-Referral:** The employee calls and schedules an EAP appointment on their own.
- **Informal Referral:** The employee is reminded by their leader/HR about the ERC: EAP. Normally there are no job performance issues.
- **Formal Supervisory Referral:** Because of job performance issues, the employee is told to utilize the EAP by a specific date and comply with the EAP recommendations.

**Self-Referral:** Most employees choose to use ERC: EAP services for their own reasons when the time is right for them. Although they may have heard about the EAP from an orientation, promotional materials, co-workers, or leadership, most employees refer themselves to the program. As their leader, you will never know which employee's has accessed the EAP or for what reasons unless they divulge the information to you.

**Informal Referral:** Sometimes employees will share with you details of problems they are experiencing in their personal lives. Although you want to express empathy and care, it's not a good management practice to attempt to counsel them. Not only can you lose objectivity as a leader and blur your relationship with employees, your advice could cause more harm than good.

A simple suggestion to call the ERC: EAP for help may be just what the employee needs to take action. You can give out the 1-800 card or other material that explains the ERC program. This informal referral is most often utilized when there is no performance issue. The leader is merely encouraging the employee to access the ERC: EAP by reminding them of its services and benefits: licensed professional counselors, complete confidentiality, no cost, and ease of access. It is up to the employee whether they take advantage of the ERC: EAP benefit.

**Formal Supervisory Referral:** Sometimes, employees with a positive performance history begin to demonstrate a pattern of decline over a period of time. They may show improvement temporarily upon supervisory intervention, but unfortunately backslide to an unsatisfactory level of performance. This pattern of work performance may cause the organization to take action, sometimes through a Performance Improvement Plan (or PIP). This PIP may include a formal referral to the ERC: EAP. Through this type of referral, the organization is setting the expectation that the employee must utilize the EAP. It is also expected the employee will sign an authorization allowing ERC to confirm the employee's attendance and their level of cooperation with EAP recommendations. The organization does not request nor will they be given information about details of the employee's counseling sessions or personal issues.

The decision to require an employee to use the ERC: EAP benefit should be considered carefully and involve an organization's human resources or legal departments. Attendance and participation in the EAP should not give preferential treatment for the employee or protection from further discipline, including discharge. Employees should always be evaluated on job performance criteria.

Questions about Employee Referrals? Call ERC at 1-800-222-8590 to speak to our Customer Services Team and gain the information you need to help your employees be at their best.