



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
National Joint Committee

Committee Members

Brian Hellman, Director,
Safety & Health, NALC

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Improvement

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District Human Resources Managers

It has come to our attention that more and more districts are trying to standardize their method of referring employees to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). In doing so, managers are inadvertently jeopardizing the intentions of Article 35 of the APWU and NALC agreements which jointly commit to support the EAP.

Management's written referrals to the EAP should not in any way resemble a "form" or any standard template. Standardized referrals tend to suggest that the referral is part of a disciplinary process. This is not the perception we want employees to have about the EAP.

The ELM also states that "The supervisor or manager should not attempt to diagnose the perceived problem." A standard form may lend itself to a subjective evaluation of the employee's predisposition.

In addition, we have recently seen Pre-Disciplinary Interview (PDI) forms that include a suggested EAP referral. This, too, is inappropriate and should not be a standard part of any PDI.

Further, the Administrative Support Manual (ASM), Section 32, Forms Management, outlines the responsibility of Headquarters Function Units (323.1) as follows:

"Headquarters functional units are responsible for defining forms requirements based on business needs and process."

The Headquarters function of EAP/WEI Programs will not define form requirements for EAP referrals.

Standardized referral forms or templates suggest that the referral is not based on individual fact circumstances. The APWU and NALC, as part of the National Joint Committee (NJC) with contractual rights to speak to the general guidelines of EAP with respect to the level or services and the mechanisms by which they're provided, also agree that there should be no form (or any type of template) used in making management EAP referrals.

Additionally, the ASM addresses what Field Management must do to get a form approved for use. The use of a form that has not gone through that process is not considered an approved form.

Make the Call!

1-800-EAP-4-YOU

The USPS has worked hard for many years to establish the EAP as a non-disciplinary, completely voluntary service offered to all employees and their families in times of need. It is not to be used in conjunction with any type of disciplinary action.

Therefore, the National Joint EAP Committee is requesting that all standard forms/memoranda/templates currently being used in association with EAP referrals, PDIs or any other disciplinary-type action, be discontinued immediately.

If the manager or supervisor has any questions or concerns about how to address a situation in which they feel an employee may benefit from EAP services, they can receive coaching on how to properly interface with an employee any day and any time by calling 1-800-EAP-4-YOU (800-327-4968) or the TTY number of 1-877-492-7341.

Sincerely,



The National Joint EAP Committee,

Valerie E. Martin, Manager, Contract Administration NPMHU & EAP/WEI Programs
Brian Hellman, Director, Safety & Health, NALC
Sue Carney, Director, Human Relations, APWU

cc: Trina King, EAP Administrator