

Frontline

Resources for Managers and Supervisors



Summer 2018

Understanding the EAP referral process

How we help

The Management Assistance Program component of Health Advocate's EAP+Work/Life service gives managers and supervisors guidance to become more effective leaders.

Lean on us for help with:

- Improving leadership skills
- Keeping employees engaged
- Managing disruptive events
- Promoting work/life balance
- Resolving employee conflicts

In this issue:

- Your role in employee intervention
- The 5-step referral process

Health Advocate's Management Assistance Program is committed to helping managers and supervisors succeed at work. In this issue of Frontline, we'll help you learn the basics about referring an employee to the EAP+Work/Life program.

Employees' personal problems become your concern when their performance becomes unsatisfactory. Problems with employee performance can often result from troubling personal factors that arise from conditions not related to the job.

Problem performance can be defined as:

- Job performance that is below standards of output or quality
- Behavior that is disruptive, or presents a safety hazard to the workforce or the public

These two areas can overlap. While the former may be dealt with internally, coping with the latter often leads to outreach to Health Advocate's EAP+Work/Life program.

Confidentiality is key

It's important to let your employees know that private discussions individuals have with a Health Advocate counselor will not be disclosed to anyone, except as required by law.

The exceptions are threats of suicide, violence (such as homicidal or terroristic threats) and child/elder abuse. The counselor must report all cases of abuse or neglect to the proper authorities and must also take appropriate action when they identify an employee who presents a danger to themselves or others. However, these are rare exceptions. What is important to stress is that the Health Advocate program is confidential.

Help is here

As a manager or supervisor, Health Advocate is available to assist you in referring an employee to the EAP, and other difficult workplace situations. Call Health Advocate about concerns such as performance problems, employee conflicts, workplace violence risks, critical incidents, domestic violence issues, and more.

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HealthAdvocateSM

Your role in employee intervention and referrals

Intervention with an employee whose performance is impacted by personal problems can be difficult. When confronted with an employee who is experiencing emotional, family or other personal problems (such as depression or grief), you may be uncertain about your role in assisting the employee in finding appropriate help.

Your role is to:

- **Be concerned** with job behavior and performance.
- **Remain alert** to changes in normal work pattern/ behavior/productivity
- **Take action** when the welfare of the employee and/or the organization is at risk

Your role is NOT to:

- **Diagnose** the employee's personal problem
- **Take on the employee's problem** and try to handle it alone
- **Be a "counselor"**
- **Cover up for the employee** or ignore work performance problems

Despite natural feelings of concern for someone under your supervision, you are responsible for your employees' job performance. Health Advocate's EAP counselors are trained to deal with personal problems that individuals may have — problems that may underlie the work performance problems you have observed. Your role is to address job performance, and let Health Advocate address the personal problems.

**Managers and supervisors:
Need more help understanding
the EAP referral process?**

Download our Supervisory Training Manual [here](#).

You can also visit your EAP+Work/Life website for more resources, or call us today for personalized help.

The 5-step referral process

There are five basic steps supervisors should aim to follow when considering referring an employee to the EAP program:

- 1. Recognition:** As a supervisor, you must pay attention to observable performance behaviors, such as frequent absenteeism or presenteeism, inconsistent levels of performance, behavioral issues, and difficulty focusing, just to name a few.
- 2. Documentation:** Documentation is essential for any disciplinary or corrective process. When you observe problem behavior or performance patterns, you should document them according to the personnel procedures of your organization.
- 3. Action – Supportive Confrontation:** Confronting an employee whose job performance has deteriorated is rarely easy. Meet with your employee and do the following:
 - Acknowledge the employee's strengths
 - Express concern for the employee
 - Describe the specific job performance problem(s)
 - Describe future performance expectations
 - Keep the focus on job performance
 - Set a time period in which you expect the employee to improve job performance
- 4. Referral:** Refer the employee to the Health Advocate EAP+Work/Life program. Your intervention can help the employee put some structure back into one area of life (the job) while offering a way to get control of other life concerns.
- 5. Monitoring:** After your corrective meeting with the employee, follow through on what you discussed. Continue to monitor job performance. If job performance improves, acknowledge this to the employee. If job performance remains unsatisfactory or deteriorates further, take whatever action is appropriate and make sure the employee is held accountable.

Health Advocate is available to consult with you at any point in the process. A supervisory consultation provides coaching to you regarding the management of troubled employees.

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