



EAP GUIDE  
FOR  
SUPERVISORS

CITY OF HOUSTON  
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

170 HEIGHTS BLVD., BLDG. 1  
HOUSTON, TX 77007  
&  
611 WALKER  
HOUSTON, TX 77002

(713) 866-4242  
FAX (713) 866-4129

EAP Intranet Site:  
[www.coh.ci.houston.tx.us/eap/index.htm](http://www.coh.ci.houston.tx.us/eap/index.htm)

(accessible only within city network)

# CITY OF HOUSTON

## ***EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM***

(713) 866-4242  
FAX (713) 866-4129

### **EAP GUIDE FOR SUPERVISORS**

**PURPOSE:** To provide information for supervisors and managers about using the EAP as a resource. To guide the supervisor step by step through the process of handling a troubled employee.

**DEFINITION:** The EAP is a benefit, which the City provides to employees and their family members. It is free and confidential and can assist employees to resolve personal and work problems, which may be impacting work performance. It is an important resource for supervisors and for employees. When a supervisor refers an employee to the EAP, we can provide assessment and appropriate referrals or brief counseling to help resolve whatever problems may be occurring.

### **RECOGNIZING THE TROUBLED EMPLOYEE**

The following are some of the primary signs of a troubled employee:

- **ABSENTEEISM AND/OR TARDINESS**

- ✓ Unauthorized and/or frequent absences, Monday & Friday, before and after holidays and paydays
- ✓ Tardiness and early departures
- ✓ Extended lunch periods
- ✓ Frequent calling off work for sickness and/or illness
- ✓ Peculiar and increasingly improbable excuses for absences
- ✓ Continued absences from work station – more than job requires
- ✓ Long coffee breaks
- ✓ Excessive use of phone

- **SAFETY**

- ✓ Accidents on the job
- ✓ Accidents off the job
- ✓ Disregard for safety on the job

- **PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY**

- ✓ Decreased efficiency and output
- ✓ Missed deadlines
- ✓ Mistakes
- ✓ Exercises poor judgment/makes bad decisions
- ✓ Alternate periods of high and low productivity
- ✓ Difficulty in concentrating
- ✓ Routine jobs take more time
- ✓ Increased spoilage and breakage of equipment through negligence and carelessness

- **MORALE AND RELATIONSHIPS ON THE JOB**

- ✓ Over-reaction to real or imagined criticism
- ✓ Avoids supervisor or coworkers
- ✓ Gets angry or hostile with workers
- ✓ Sudden and/or frequent mood changes from sadness to normal or elation
- ✓ Withdrawn (silent, indifferent to and uncomfortable with fellow employees)
- ✓ Borrows money from coworkers
- ✓ Resents authority, flouts rules
- ✓ Easily bothered and/or distracted by noise, confusion, waiting and red tape
- ✓ Blames machinery, distractions and/or others for mistakes on the job

- **OTHER (APPEARANCE, ETC.)**

- ✓ Decreased interest and/or drastic change in personal appearance
- ✓ Physical complaints (exhaustion, headaches, stomach pains, etc.)
- ✓ Crying, trembling or restlessness
- ✓ Sleeps on the job and/or is lethargic
- ✓ Involvement with the law, i.e. wage attachments.

## THE SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

- **MONITOR PERFORMANCE.** Although not always possible, it is preferable for supervisors to monitor employee behavior and job performance on a regular basis, daily if possible.
  
- **DOCUMENT WORK PERFORMANCE.**
  - ✓ Be specific regarding the date, time and place of unsatisfactory job performance.
  - ✓ Provide actual observations, not your opinions or conclusions. A worksheet is provided at the back of this handout to assist you.
  - ✓ Include examples of satisfactory and excellent work, as well as that which is below par.
  - ✓ Keep records confidential and update them on a regular basis (daily, weekly, monthly).
  - ✓ Provide factual information that shows the employee's job performance over a period of time.
  - ✓ Be objective, fair and consistent.
  
- **CONTACT AND DISCUSS.** Once a problem is noted, the supervisor should contact his or her resources.
  - ✓ Discuss the situation with your own supervisor or manager and/or Human Resources to identify pertinent City policies.
  - ✓ Contact and discuss the situation with an EAP counselor, who can help you decide how to discuss problems with the employee and refer to the EAP. **Note:** This contact puts EAP on notice that job performance is at stake. Direct contact is very important.
  - ✓ After an employee has been referred to the EAP and signs a release of information, a counselor will follow up to inform you of employee's attendance and compliance with recommendations.

- **TALK TO THE EMPLOYEE.** Remember, the objective is to work with the employee to reach a mutual goal of good job performance. The employee needs the supervisor's feedback in order to understand that a change is necessary.

- ✓ Take action early before any formal corrective action is needed.
- ✓ Select a time and location that ensures privacy.
- ✓ Gather documentation.
- ✓ Prepare for various responses from the employee.
- ✓ Points to cover during the meeting:
  - Reason for meeting
  - Need for better job results
  - Expected job performance.
- ✓ Recommend EAP services.
- ✓ Provide EAP location, phone number and contact information.
- ✓ Offer to arrange EAP appointment.

**Do List**

Do Allow a Voluntary Decision  
Do Emphasize Confidentiality  
Do Stick to Performance  
Do Follow Up  
Do Support Your Employee  
Do Remember: Behavior Problems  
Seldom Go Away without Help

**Don't List**

Don't Diagnose  
Don't Moralize  
Don't Cover Up  
Don't Label  
Don't Intimidate  
Don't Downgrade  
Don't Patronize

## **DISCUSSION WITH THE EMPLOYEE**

- Discuss the specific behavior and job results over time.
- Explain the deficits and offer yourself as a resource at this point. Focus on the behavior, not the person.
- Focus on the required changes. The employee's point of view and any new information merit attention, however.
- Obtain feedback from the employee to make sure the needed changes are understood.
- Obtain employee's agreement that a change is needed, and it is his or her responsibility to make the change.
- Explain the consequent steps if the job performance does not improve.
- Get employee's agreement on a plan.
- Set an appointment to meet and again review performance.
- The EAP as a resource and give information about its services. Offer to arrange an EAP appointment.
- Provide a written summary of the recommendations.
- Use a supportive statement to close.

## VARIOUS ROLES IN CORRECTIVE COUNSELING

ROLE	FUNCTIONS
Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Be objective, fair and consistent</li> <li>▪ Monitor performance</li> <li>▪ Coach and confront</li> <li>▪ Take corrective action</li> <li>▪ Use progressive discipline</li> <li>▪ Consult with Human Resources</li> <li>▪ Consult with EAP; refer to EAP</li> <li>▪ Use the EAP</li> <li>▪ Protect employee's confidentiality</li> </ul>
Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure the guidelines of the Employee Assistance Program are communicated and used by supervisors</li> <li>▪ Protect employee's confidentiality</li> </ul>
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Orient employees and Supervisors to Employee Assistance Program</li> <li>▪ Consult with supervisor regarding policies and discipline</li> <li>▪ Protect employee's confidentiality</li> </ul>
Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain acceptable job performance</li> <li>▪ Responsible for own health</li> <li>▪ Protect your confidentiality</li> </ul>
EAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review health and job information</li> <li>▪ Make preliminary assessment</li> <li>▪ Treatment and/or referral</li> <li>▪ Follow up with employee</li> <li>▪ Protect employee's confidentiality</li> </ul>

If work performance/behavioral standards deteriorate in a previously acceptable employee, and usual supervisory techniques fail to get results, consider the use of the EAP to help find solutions. Call any time, but these questions can help you decide when.

**SUPERVISORY WORKSHEET**

Employee	Dept/Division	Date
----------	---------------	------

A. Have you observed continued instances or patterns of performance problems or deterioration in any of the following areas? Check those that apply.

<p>1. QUANTITY/QUALITY OF WORK  <input type="checkbox"/> Gradual reduction in quantity/quality  <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent</p> <p>2. ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY  <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent unscheduled absences (Number in last 12 months _____)  <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent complaints of vague illness/symptoms  <input type="checkbox"/> Frequently leaves early or returns late from lunch (Number per week/month _____)  <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent unexplained disappearances from job (Number per day/week/month _____)</p> <p>3. JUDGMENT  <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent  <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent errors on routine matters</p> <p>4. INITIATIVE  <input type="checkbox"/> Not willing to change work responsibilities  <input type="checkbox"/> Needs constant supervision</p> <p>5. RESOURCE UTILIZATION  <input type="checkbox"/> Overly dependent on others  <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to identify appropriate resources</p> <p>6. DEPENDABILITY  <input type="checkbox"/> Fails to meet schedules  <input type="checkbox"/> Makes unreliable/untrue statements</p> <p>7. ANALYTICAL ABILITY  <input type="checkbox"/> Details often neglected  <input type="checkbox"/> Increased number of poor decisions</p>	<p>8. JOB RELATED KNOWLEDGE  <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced awareness of what is going on  <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to keep current  <input type="checkbox"/> Forgetful</p> <p>9. ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE  <input type="checkbox"/> Argumentative  <input type="checkbox"/> Less communicative than in the past  <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear/imprecise written communication</p> <p>10. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS  <input type="checkbox"/> Deliberately avoids colleagues/supervisor  <input type="checkbox"/> Complains more than usual  <input type="checkbox"/> Unusually sensitive to advice or criticism  <input type="checkbox"/> Overly critical of others  <input type="checkbox"/> More frequent isolation</p> <p>11. SAFETY CONSCIOUSNESS  <input type="checkbox"/> Higher than average on-job accidents  <input type="checkbox"/> Takes needless risks  <input type="checkbox"/> Disregards safety of others  <input type="checkbox"/> Not paying attention to risks</p> <p>12. OTHER BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS  <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate personal appearance  <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of interest/enthusiasm for job  <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme mood swings  <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate behavior—specify _____</p>
--	--

B. Regarding the checked responses in items 1 – 12,  
 Does any documentation support your observations?  
 Have your concerns regarding performance or behavior been communicated in some form to the employee?  
 Has his/her work performance or behavior continued to deteriorate? Over what period of time? \_\_\_\_\_

If the total number of checks under section A is excessive in your judgment, please contact the EAP at the above number for consultation. A copy of this form can be faxed or forwarded in a confidential envelope to the EAP for all routine supervisory referrals.

Supervisor	Phone
------------	-------