

Employee Assistance Program

Number: H-5

Revision:

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1.0 POLICY

The Town of Carolina Beach provides a program of Employee Assistance in order to assist employees and their families in the early intervention of any personal problems which may affect the employee's job performance.

2.0 PURPOSE

The Town values each employee as an important investment. In an effort to help each employee be more successful, the Town provides the Employee Assistance Program to assist employees to resolve their personal problems. The Town wants to assist employees through this voluntary and confidential service but in no way does this policy or program excuse an employee from the expectation of adequate job performance.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all non-probationary benefit-eligible employees.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Benefit-Eligible** - Full time and part-time employees who are eligible for coverage and participation in the Town's benefit programs in addition to legally mandated coverage. See **Policy on Position Types**.
- 4.2 **Immediate Family** - For the purpose of this policy, "immediate family" is defined as the employee's spouse, son, or daughter, stepson or stepdaughter.
- 4.3 **Employee Assistance Program** - An employer sponsored program to assist employees and their families with personal, emotional and psycho-social problems and referral to medical or community resources for assistance and/or treatment.
- 4.4 Personal problems include, but are not limited to:
 - Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity
 - Mental Health Disorders
 - Parent/Child Conflicts
 - Stress
 - Depression
 - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
 - Substance Abuse
 - Marital Problems
 - School-Related Issues
 - Work-Related Issues
- 4.5 **Confidentiality** - Ensuring that information is accessible only to those authorized to have access to it.
- 4.6 **Consent** - For the purposes of this policy, consent means express written permission to share, collect or otherwise have access to pertinent personal medical information for the purpose of performing a complete health evaluation.

5.0 ORGANIZATIONAL RULES

- 5.1 The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is essentially a self-referral program but supervisors may recommend employees seek assistance before performance issues

result in corrective action. An employee is encouraged to personally contact the EAP counselor or any community agency for confidential counseling, referral or treatment.

- 5.2 When an employee is referred for evaluation and/or treatment, through town management, the referral will remain confidential. The Town's Employee Assistance Program places the responsibility for assessment, counseling, referral, and treatment in the hands of qualified professionals.
- 5.3 The Employee Assistance Program will not require or result in any special regulations, privileges, or exemptions from already established administrative practices and policies applicable to job performance.
- 5.4 The Town provides the initial assessment and counseling service to the employee and immediate family members. The cost of the treatment beyond two visits is the responsibility of the employee. Health insurance may help defray the costs of some treatments.
- 5.5 No employee will have job security or promotional opportunities jeopardized for participating in the Employee Assistance Program. However, participation in the EAP does not change the Town's expectations of acceptable job performance.
- 5.6 An employee can be excused from work for an amount of time not to exceed two hours during regular working hours if no other arrangement can be made for providing necessary services after working hours. Accrued sick leave can be granted for the purpose of prolonged treatment or rehabilitation;
- 5.7 Supervisory Referral - While the EAP is primarily intended to be an employee self-referral program, there may be circumstances when a supervisor recognizes performance problems that could lead to corrective action if not corrected. In these situations, the supervisor may recommend the EAP to the employee as a program that may be of assistance. The supervisor should focus only on the performance deficiency and the need to improve, not the reasons for the performance deficiency. Referral of the employee to EAP should be made in an attempt to assist the employee to be more successful not as a corrective action. See Section 6.2 below for the steps the supervisor should follow when recommending EAP to an employee.

6.0 PROCEDURES

- 6.1 Employee Self-Referral
 - A. The employee may self-refer to EAP directly through the Town sponsored EAP provider. Employees who need assistance with a self-referral may contact Human Resources for assistance.
 - B. Any and all self-directed referrals will be handled with confidentiality.
 - C. All immediate family members are eligible for the initial assessment through the Town's EAP provider.
- 6.2 Supervisory Referral
 - A. When an employee's work performance or attendance declines the supervisor, following standard departmental procedure, will discuss the issue with the employee.
 - B. If performance or attendance problems do not improve after the first conference, the supervisor will again discuss the performance deficiency with the employee and the disciplinary consequences that will occur if the employee does not improve his performance. The Human Resources Department is available, upon request, to assist the supervisor.
 - C. Supervisors will not diagnose the reasons for the declining work performance to try to find causes. If it appears that the employee cannot improve his performance or attendance, the supervisor may discuss the EAP with the employee and recommend he discuss the EAP with Human Resources. The supervisor should indicate the recommendation is an effort to assist the employee to be more successful regardless of the issues preventing the employee

from performing adequately. If the supervisor has sufficient cause to believe the declining performance is related to substance abuse, he should follow the procedures in **Policy on Substance Abuse**.

D. Whether or not the employee accepts the offer of assistance and job performance or attendance problems continue, the regular disciplinary procedures will apply; see **Policy on Corrective Action**.

7.0 APPENDIX, APPENDICES

None