

Employee Assistance Program

ORIGINATOR: Personnel
DATE: April, 1980
POLICY: #80-2

PURPOSE:

When University employees' job performance is adversely affected by personal problems, the University's commitment to excellence and the general health and welfare of the University community requires that immediate corrective action be taken to assist such employees and their families by referring them to professional counselors. It shall be the policy of the University through this program to assist employees who are identified as having problems that interfere with job performance.

APPLICABLE TO:

All employees.

RESPONSIBILITY:

1. Assistant Vice President for personnel to develop policies and procedures and to administer the program.
2. Supervisors to recognize and motivate troubled employees to acknowledge the need for help and to seek treatment when it adversely affects their job performance.
3. Employees to seek counseling, diagnosis, and treatment, where necessary, when problems cause unsatisfactory job performance.

POLICY:

Employees with problems are strongly encouraged to discuss the matter with their supervisors or seek help on their own. However, supervisors may refer employees to this program with the intention of arresting job-performance deterioration before disciplinary action is necessary or the employee becomes unemployable.

Public counseling and referral services available in the local community will work with the University by accepting referrals for diagnosis, treatment, and counseling.

Documentation will be limited solely to a record that a referral has been made. Records of referral will be kept strictly confidential. Moreover, no employees shall have their job security or promotional opportunities jeopardized as a result of participation in this program.

Nothing in this policy abrogates established University policies and procedures regarding disciplinary action nor does it alter the provisions of union contracts.

PROCEDURES:

Administrators and supervisors should be alert, through continuing observation, to changes in the work and behavioral patterns of personnel under their supervision.

Supervisors should document all specific instances where employees fail to meet established standards or where the individual patterns of performance appear to be deteriorating. This will provide supervisors with meaningful data to use in discussions with employees. Incidents such as declining job performance, poor quality, and developing absenteeism patterns, should be written down as they occur.

Interviews should focus on job deficiencies rather than personal observations or judgements. Be sure the employees understand their duties, what you expect of them in work performance, and specifically where they are failing to meet these standards. Interviews should be constructive, confidential, and held in private settings. Make no attempt to diagnose or counsel; a diagnostic and referral agent has specific training in these areas.

During the first interview employees should be confronted with documented instances of unsatisfactory job performance and given suggestions for correcting them. Suggest the availability of the Employee Assistance Program including professional help to assist them in improving their declining job performance. Emphasize that their job performance must improve immediately and be maintained at adequate levels. Record the highlights of the interview and contact the union representative if appropriate.

Supervisors should continue to document the employees' job performance. If it continues to deteriorate or does not improve, supervisors should warn the employees that continued poor performance may result in disciplinary action or dismissal. Strongly recommend utilization of the Employee Assistance Program. If employees acknowledge the need for help, refer them to the Employee Assistance administrator who will make appointments with appropriate agents or agencies.

If employees do not feel personal problems are contributing to unsatisfactory work performance, they must be given a firm choice between accepting the employee assistance, or accepting the consequences of continued, unsatisfactory job performance. They must be told that a period of poor performance has been tolerated but cannot be permitted to continue. If the employees choose to utilize the service of the Employee Assistance Program, they should be reminded that their jobs are not jeopardized and traditional action may be waived as long as the employees' job performance continues to improve. However, they will have no special privileges. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to monitor the adequacy of job performance and to determine whether or not the program is having the desired outcome of helping the employees to improve. After a reasonable period of time, job performance must return to satisfactory levels or traditional disciplinary procedures will be implemented.

An employee who seeks assistance through this program may voluntarily discuss the matter with the Assistant Vice President for Personnel without involving any other University employee.

FORMS:

Referral Record. The Assistant Vice President for Personnel will be responsible for the generation and confidential retention of this record. The record will not be included in the employees' personnel file or any other University file.