



## **eviCore EAP**

# An Employer's Guide to Effective EAP Utilization

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## **I. The EAP Partnership and You**

Employees may come to work with a multitude of issues that may impact their ability to perform their jobs effectively on a daily basis. At times, these issues are significant enough in nature to affect an employee's performance in a noticeable way.

For these distressed employees, the supervisor is often the first person to become aware of the situation because of a change in attendance, decline in work habits, inappropriate conduct, decline in appearance or information brought to them by concerned co-workers.

Early intervention for such employees may prevent the progressive decline of work performance and provide them with much needed assistance. The EAP can offer resources for issues such as emotional distress, referrals to treatment for alcohol and/or drug use, family conflict, marital/relationship concerns, financial and legal difficulties, or concerns with job performance.

At eviCore EAP, our purpose is to provide employers with resources to solve employee's problems and improve overall well-being. The EAP is not intended to be a punitive course of action that may intimidate or coerce employees into improving job performance, but instead is designed as a proactive resource for all employees.

## **II. How does the EAP Work?**

The majority of employees contact the EAP on their own. This type of contact is called a self referral.

**Self Referral** – Any benefit-eligible employee or their dependent (as defined by IRS Pub 929) can contact the EAP directly to address any situation they may be experiencing. The EAP will work confidentially with the individual to develop an effective plan to address their situation.

In addition to the self referral, employers have several options to encourage employees to contact the EAP. Options include:

**Suggested Referral** – At any time, an employer may suggest/remind an employee who is in need of resources that the EAP is available to them as a confidential resource. No documentation will be completed by the employer, and no information will be reported to the employer regarding employee activity with the EAP program.

**Administrative Referral** – An Administrative referral to the EAP is a strong recommendation by an employer to an employee that they utilize all available resources to improve workplace performance.

An Administrative referral requires the completion of documentation by the employer and the employee. With executed consent, on-going communication will occur between the employer and the EAP. This includes notification of employee contact with the EAP, willingness to complete the initial EAP Assessment, treatment recommendation and continued compliance with care.

For some situations involving significant violation of policy and procedure, compliance with the EAP administrative referral may be deemed mandatory by the employer and considered a condition of continued employment.

Once an individual contacts the EAP Program, the first step will be to discuss the situation with an EAP professional and to develop a plan of action.

EAP Action plans can include all or some of the following:

- Telephonic consultations
- Face to face appointments
- Referrals for community resources
- Referrals for medical care or treatment
- Legal information
- Financial information

### **III. Confidentiality**

Be assured that the EAP program is completely confidential except as required or permitted by law. Legal limitations on confidentiality are related to the following circumstances:

- (1) Written authorization is provided
- (2) There is an imminent threat of harm to self or others
- (3) Abuse or neglect of a child
- (4) Receipt of a court order and a judicial subpoena
- (5) Customer experiences a medical emergency during EAP care

When consents are executed, employers are only provided with information that is relevant to the Administrative referral. The purpose of such limited disclosure allows employers and employees to have clear boundaries between performance standards and personal privacy issues.

### **IV. Administrative Referral Process**

The purpose of leadership in an organization is to mentor employee performance, not identify or diagnose personal problems that employees may be experiencing.

Employers initiate Administrative referrals to the EAP when serious performance issues have been identified. Having the ability to refer employees to the EAP allows employers to establish clear boundaries between job performance and expectations vs. an employee's personal issues that an employer can not, or should not, be attempting to solve.

Identifying and documenting impaired job performance is essential. Keep in mind however, that in most circumstances, a pattern of job performance deficiencies is what you are looking for, not a single minor incident. At times, a single severe policy violation may require immediate documentation and disciplinary action.

None of the following examples are considered an absolute indicator of the need for an EAP referral. However, they are examples of behaviors or performance issues that an employer may observe that result in negative changes in job performance.

|                                       |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Unauthorized leave                    | Inability to focus on job             |
| Excessive leave                       | Unusual physical symptoms             |
| Excessive Monday/Friday absenteeism   | Tics, restlessness or tremors         |
| Arriving late/leaving early           | Confusion                             |
| Unexcused absences                    | Poor memory                           |
| Inability to complete daily tasks     | Refusal of assignments                |
| Frequent breaks                       | Increased errors                      |
| Delay in returning from breaks        | Low productivity                      |
| Non-business use of phone or internet | Missed deadlines                      |
| Accidents on the job                  | Poor decision making                  |
| Physical illness on the job           | Complaints from co-workers            |
| Refusal to follow safety rules        | Complaints from customers             |
| Carelessness for self and others      | Improbable excuses for errors         |
| Over-reactions                        | Mismanagement of job assignments      |
| Emotional instability                 | Mismanagement of budgets or reports   |
| Change in peer relationships          | Crying or emotional outbursts at work |
| Requests to borrow money              | Obvious abnormal appearance           |
| Requests to receive pay early         | Intoxication or admitted impairment   |
| Poor judgment                         | Damage to workplace property          |
| Threats towards self or coworkers     | Threats to the workplace              |

### **V. Following Workplace Policies and Procedures and Documenting Observable Performance Issues**

Only observable, verifiable facts should be documented. Addressing performance issues quickly sends the message that the employer is committed to maintaining a productive workforce. A prompt and reasonable reaction to poor performers also helps to reduce disturbances amongst co-workers, thus salvaging productivity and morale. And finally, an effective and speedy response to a performance issue will often help prevent future recurrences, as employees clearly understand what is and is not acceptable in the workplace.

Every employer has specific policies and procedures about what should or should not be addressed and documented. In general, some helpful tips include:

- Focus on current incidents. The goal is to address the current situation and future, not on a review of any past unaddressed issues;
- avoid personal opinions or your explanations for why you think the performance problem occurred;
- be consistent and fair with all employees;
- document patterns of decline;
- for a single incident, identify why the incident was so significant in nature;
- document what discipline has occurred;
- document what solutions were agreed upon;
- follow-up, and review consistently; and
- acknowledge improved performance.

## **VI. Completion of the EAP Administrative Referral Process**

The following will finalize the referral process:

- ✓ Complete the Administrative Referral Form
- ✓ Have employee sign the Authorization to Release Administrative Referral Information
- ✓ Make copies of all documents and distribute copies to employee for their records
- ✓ Fax completed documentation to eviCore EAP at (716) 712-2796
- ✓ Call the EAP program if you would like to discuss the referral (716)712-2777

If eviCore EAP has questions regarding the referral, they will contact the employer representative to discuss the referral.

eviCore EAP will communicate to you, the referent, the employee's compliance with the Administrative referral. It is expected that the employee will contact the program within three (3) business days.

Failure of an employee to contact the EAP program within three (3) business days will result in a communication of non-compliance to be sent to the employer. If there is contact by the employee within an additional seven (7) business days, the EAP program will close the administrative referral case. The employer may refer the employee back to the EAP by completing the referral process again including all related documentation and consents to release information.

Upon contact, and telephonic assessment of the employee's situation by the EAP, a range of EAP services will be established for the employee. Types of service options include EAP appointments or appointments with appropriate providers in the community for issues such as substance abuse or serious mental health issues. On going communication between the EAP and employer representative will continue for the duration of EAP care.

For additional assistance on making an Administrative referral, please refer to the following:

- Attached sample of completed EAP Administrative Referral Form
- Attached sample of completed Authorization to Release Administrative Referral Information



# eviCore EAP

p 716.712.2777 | f 716.712.2796 | e eap@eviCore.com

## Administrative Referral Form

Employer should retain original – employee should receive a copy – EAP should receive a fax

Employee Name: **John Doe** D.O.B: **01/01/1979** Date: **02/01/18** Employee Job Title: **Sales Manager**

Is compliance with this Administrative referral considered Mandatory?  Yes  No

Length of employment: **7 years** Employee Cell Phone #: **716-777-7777**

Employee Home Address: **123 Nowhere Street, Nowhere, NY 17777**

Employer Name: **The Widget Company of WNY**

Person(s) Authorized to Receive Information regarding this referral:

Name of Employer Representative: **Mary Smith**

Department/Title: **HR Manager**

Phone Number: **888-888-8888** Email: **msmith@thewidgetcompanyofWNY.com**

Name of Employer Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Reason for Referral - Specific job performance difficulties/policy violations – Review with employee:

On January 30th, you were witnessed at the worksite, by your supervisor and a representative from human resources as exhibiting signs of intoxication. Your eyes were bloodshot; you smelled of liquor, you laughed and giggled uncontrollably when confronted about your appearance. This appearance and behavior constituted a misconduct violation and was enough reasonable cause to suspect you were intoxicated. Per policies and procedures, you were escorted to a drug testing facility. Those test results revealed that your blood level was above the acceptable limit and thereby, you are in violation of policy 2.50 Drug-Free Workplace.

### Attach any disciplinary/corrective action write-ups and/or last chance agreements.

Has disciplinary action been taken?  No  Yes (Type of Action) **3 day Suspension**

Has employee been put on leave of absence?  Paid  Unpaid  N/A

For referrals related to drug/alcohol use do you require toxicology/breathalyzer results?  Yes  No

Services beyond the EAP benefit may be recommended at any time during the EAP process. Costs associated with such services are not included in the EAP benefit and the EAP customer is responsible for such costs.

**Employee must contact the EAP Program within three (3) business days of referral date on this form. I accept, and have received a copy of this referral to eviCore EAP.**

John Doe  
Employee signature

2/1/18  
Date



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### Authorization to Release Administrative Referral Information

**A copy of this authorization must be given to the employee.**

In signing below, I (employee) **John Doe** \_\_\_\_\_ confirm that I met with (Supervisor/HR/Employer/EAP) representative **Mary Smith** on (date) **2/1/18** regarding my work performance concerns that have resulted in this referral to eviCore EAP.

I am willing to receive an EAP assessment to discuss what recommendations the EAP program has to assist me with addressing my situation. I also agree to the submission by my employer of the referral information included on the "*Administrative EAP Referral Form*" and any additional needed documentation to the eviCore EAP Program.

I understand that I must contact eviCore EAP at **1-888-276-6632** within three (3) business days and comply with the completion of an assessment and subsequently any recommendations made by the EAP and/or treatment provider. Additionally, I understand that eviCore EAP is required to communicate to my employer my contact and compliance with the EAP Program. I agree to this communication including date and time of my initial contact, willingness to complete the initial EAP Assessment, acceptance for referrals for assessment and treatment outside of the EAP benefit, results of toxicology and breathalyzer tests if applicable and continued compliance or non-compliance with EAP and/or treatment services as related to this Administrative Referral.

Employees retain the right to refuse a referral to the EAP program and/or treatment provider. For such refusals, workplace disciplinary and/or corrective action may continue, up to and including discharge as dictated by an employer's applicable policies and procedures.

This authorization is valid for one year from the date of signature and is subject to written or verbal revocation by me at any time, except to the extent that action has been taken in reliance upon it.

Employee Signature **John Doe**

Date: **02/01/2018**

Witness Signature **Mary Smith**

Date: **02/01/2018**

**Photocopies and electronic facsimile copies of this authorization are considered valid as original.**

## **VII. Frequently Asked Questions**

What is the correct way to complete an Administrative referral? What should I write?

- Referrals should be factual and based on objective information, not an opinion of the situation. Please see the attached example of a completed Administrative referral, or contact the EAP program for assistance in completing the referral paperwork accurately.

What if an employee refuses the Administrative referral?

- Employees retain the right to refuse a referral to the EAP program. The EAP is an offer of assistance to the employee. Therefore, completing the referral, even if an employee refuses to follow through, gives the employer documented evidence that the employee was offered every opportunity to improve their performance.

Do I wait to see improvement in an employee's performance until after the EAP process begins?

- No, do not wait for the EAP process to begin to expect performance improvement. Performance improvement should begin immediately following a discussion between the employer and the employee where performance expectations have been explained and clearly understood. For those employees who may have to take leave from work, or are suspended, performance improvements should be expected upon the first scheduled working day.

## **VIII. Contact Information**

For any questions or to speak to your EAP, contact us at:

716.712.2777 or online at [www.evicore.com/eap](http://www.evicore.com/eap)

Fax: 716.712.2796

Email: [eap@evicore.com](mailto:eap@evicore.com)