

Employee Assistance Program

The district will maintain, as budgets permit, a staff assistance program designed to provide support to staff members and their families who are experiencing difficulties which may affect job performance. A district employee assistance program committee may be established to assist in the implementation of this operational procedure and make program recommendations.

A wide range of problems not directly associated with a job function may affect the staff member's job performance. These problems may result from alcohol abuse or alcoholism; other drug abuse; physical, mental, or emotional illness; personal problems such as marital, family, financial, or legal difficulties; or any combination of these problems.

The employee assistance program will provide professional and confidential assistance to staff members and their families seeking assistance.

Participation in the staff assistance program will not jeopardize employment or job promotion, nor shall such participation substitute for employer action(s) regarding evaluation, probation, and/or termination as provided for under collective bargaining agreements or board policies. The program will be evaluated by the assistant superintendent for human resources on an annual basis.

1. Purpose

In order to achieve the objective of enhancing the personal and on-the-job life of a staff member through the staff assistance program, the district will strive to:

- 1.1 provide confidential, professional, and appropriate assistance to staff members and their immediate family members within the scope of the program operational procedure;
- 1.2 promote education and awareness that alcoholism and chemical dependency are diseases for which there is effective treatment and rehabilitation;
- 1.3 promote adequate treatment coverage for chemical dependency by district-approved group insurance plans as for any other disease under these plans;
- 1.4 provide training in order to increase the supervisor's awareness in identifying changes in staff member's behavior and performance; and
- 1.5 provide training regarding the supervisor's role in relation to troubled staff members and the utilization of the staff assistance program.

2. Procedures

- 2.1 Referrals may be made by a staff member, family member or a supervisor.
- 2.2 A staff member exhibiting continuing job performance problems, not readily corrected by usual administrative procedures, would be appropriate for referral to the employee assistance program. When such a staff member is identified, the supervisor will contact the staff member association representative, if applicable, to inform him/her of a scheduled conference with the staff member.

The supervisor will inform the staff member of his/her right to determine whether the association representative will be present at the conference. The staff member may invite the association representative to the scheduled conference. The conference will be restricted to issues of job performance. Supervisors will avoid expressing opinions or judgments regarding diagnosis or causes.

- 2.3 After the supervisor reviews job performance deficiencies with the staff member, the supervisor will inform the staff member of professional and confidential services available through the district's staff assistance program.
- 2.4 The staff member may choose to accept or reject the offer to meet with the district's staff assistance coordinator for confidential help and referral. If the staff member rejects the offer and the job performance problems do not recur after the conference, the issue is resolved.

If the staff member chooses to participate in the staff assistance program, then a district human resources administrator will arrange a referral for the staff member to a district-retained professional agency for assessment and treatment.

- 2.4 If the staff member rejects the offer, and the supervisor and the staff member association representative, if applicable, recognize that the job performance problem is continuing and the staff member's performance is not satisfactory, the next step will be to offer the staff member a firm choice between accepting the assistance offered by the program or be confronted with whatever action is appropriate within the framework of existing collective bargaining agreements or board policies.
- 2.6 The decision to request and/or accept assistance through the staff assistance program is the personal responsibility of the staff member.
- 2.7 All records resulting from an individual's involvement in the staff assistance program will be confidential unless the staff member provides a written release of information.

Cross References:

(cf.: 5000 – Recruitment and Selection of Staff)

Legal References:

- RCW 28A.400.300 Hiring and discharging employees—Leaves for employees—Seniority and leave benefits, retention upon transfers between schools
- RCW 28A.405.210 Conditions and contracts of employment—Determination of probable cause for non-renewal of contracts—Notice—Opportunity for hearing
- WAC 162-12 Pre-employment Inquiry Guide (Human Rights Commission)

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Adoption Date:

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