



CITY OF MADISON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Eff. Date 02/07/2023

Purpose

The City of Madison Police Department is responsible for carrying out varied and complex programs, policies, and missions. The Department's key resource in meeting this responsibility is its employees. The Department is therefore interested in providing employees and their family members with support and resources to help contribute to a productive and healthy workforce. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) helps address and build social and behavioral skills needed to increase success in the workplace, as well as identify options around and/or solutions to personal and work-related challenges, which may interfere with an employee's job performance, job satisfaction, and/or longevity in their career.

It is the policy of the City of Madison at all levels and locations to maintain and promote an EAP that will support the organization and its employees in the following ways:

- Provide individual support, resources, and referral options to employees and family members for various occupational and behavioral health-related needs
- Conduct relevant trainings to city departments based on assessed need and request for behavioral health skill development
- Consult with supervisors (on topics such as handling an employee situation, concerns about an employee and how to address it, how to offer EAP services, request for EAP training, etc.)
- Respond to employees' needs following traumatic events that occur at work or impact the workplace.

EAP Overview

The EAP is a voluntary, work-based program that offers free and confidential mental health services to employees and their eligible family members who are experiencing personal and/or work related problems. These services include providing confidential assessments, short-term counseling, supervisor consultations, referrals, resources, and follow-up services. The City of Madison EAP utilizes a dual model EAP which consists of an internal EAP office and an external EAP provider that utilizes a 24/7 support and referral line to connect employees to local EAP affiliate counselors. Employees and family members have the option of accessing services through the internal or external program. The EAP also conducts city-wide and departmental trainings for employees, consults and advises on organizational issues that include mental or behavioral health components, and oversees an internal network of employees, designated as sworn Peer Support Officers and civilian EAP Facilitators, to help support the mental health and wellbeing of Madison Police Department personnel.

EAP is not a substitute for discipline, and does not interfere with personnel-related issues, including fitness for duty or alcohol and drug violations. The EAP can guide and support employees and supervisors as they navigate such situations, and provide referral options for employees who may want assistance addressing mental health or substance abuse related issues that may be impacting their performance in the workplace. Supervisors are asked to make EAP referrals at each step of progressive discipline.

EAP Services on Work Time

Employees may use EAP services on work time and be compensated for it. In order to do this, they must inform their direct supervisor of the date and time they will be going to the EAP if they have a work position where they need to be held accountable for their whereabouts. Employees do not need to inform anyone at work, including their supervisor, of the topic or content of their session(s) with the EAP. They can also attend EAP off work hours and not be compensated for it if they do not wish to disclose to their supervisor that they will be using EAP services.

Counseling that takes place outside of the City of Madison's EAP is not compensated as work time. This will be treated like any other personal appointment that requires proper notice of the absence and the use of benefit time to cover time away from work. If the employee requires counseling or other mental health supportive services which need to take place on work time, they may also inquire with their supervisor and Human Resources to see if they qualify for a protected leave of absence, accommodations, or flexing their schedule.

Confidentiality Guidelines

All contacts (which includes dates, times and content of sessions) with City EAP staff, Peer Support Officers, and external EAP Provider shall remain strictly confidential unless one of the following situations is involved:

- An unexplained, unusual, or suspicious death
- A case of suspected abuse or suspected neglect of a child, dependent adult, elderly or disabled person
- A threat to inflict bodily harm to yourself or to another person
- A threat to commit or a report of committing a serious crime
- A threat to public health and safety
- A report or information required to be reported by police per S.S. 968.075 (WI Domestic Abuse Law)

Peer Support Officers, however, are not afforded the same legal privilege regarding confidentiality that City EAP staff and external EAP Providers receive. See the Peer Support SOP for additional information regarding confidentiality of that cadre.

If the EAP representative is served with a subpoena requesting information covered by these guidelines, the EAP representative will notify the employee and consult with the City Attorney. The EAP representative shall reveal to the City Attorney only that information which is necessary for the City Attorney to take appropriate action.

In addition to these areas, information may also be released with your written consent by completing an "Authorization for Release of Confidential Information" form. If you have questions about this "Statement of Confidentiality", please raise them with the EAP representative at the beginning of your meeting.

A note about suicide

People often wonder if they can discuss things like suicide, self-harm, domestic violence, or substance abuse, out of fear that we will need to report them or the person they are talking about. Unless we assess that there is an imminent and serious threat of life or safety for you or the person you are talking about, we will continue to work with you confidentially and to assist you on getting the help you may need on your terms. When we are required to disclose information to provide you or the person you are concerned about with immediate medical or mental health assistance, we only disclose the minimum of what is required to assure safety, and only to those who are required to hear it.

Included below are suicide warning signs from the [Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#):

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill themselves
- Looking for a way to kill themselves, like searching online or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs

- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or isolating themselves
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Extreme mood swings

For more information, call or text 988.

Peer Support Program

Due to the stresses faced by first responders throughout the course of their careers, the Madison Police Department established its Peer Support Team in 2006 in order to provide support and linkage to resources for commissioned personnel. A designated Peer Support Program Administrator and Coordinator from MPD work with the EAP Manager to support, train, and oversee the activities of the Peer Support Officers (PSOs). Police PSOs must be active, sworn officers.

The purpose of the Peer Support Program is to provide a core group of personnel who are trained to provide support, information, and referral to employees and family members who are seeking assistance related to a critical incident, day-to-day work stress or personal life stress.

EAP Facilitator Network

The role of the EAP Facilitator is to serve as a support person for employees and their family members who are seeking information on EAP resources. Facilitators will not provide therapy or counseling, but will act as a referral person to professional resources. They assist the EAP staff in marketing the program and distributing EAP literature within their departments. EAP Facilitators are MPD civilian staff and are recruited based on the recommendation of their manager and peers. EAP Facilitators should be viewed as trustworthy and confidential and able to relate to co-workers who may be experiencing emotional distress.

EAP Referral Options

Employees, family members, and significant others may contact the City's internal EAP staff, or the external EAP Provider. All employee contact with the Employee Assistance Program is voluntary.

Supervisors should encourage employees to contact EAP when persistent job performance problems occur. If taking disciplinary action, supervisors are required to offer EAP at each stage of the disciplinary process. When an employee is referred to the EAP by his/her supervisor, the employee may choose whether or not to use the program and who the employee will contact (the internal or external EAP).

Types of EAP Referrals:

Self-referral: Employees experiencing personal challenges are encouraged to seek help on their own initiative before health or job performance is affected. They can discuss their problems with the internal, or the external EAP staff. EAP staff will assist the employee in contacting the employee's health care provider or in contacting appropriate community resources, if requested. The EAP will also follow up with employees to determine satisfaction with the referral and offer additional support, if needed.

Supervisory: Whenever an employee with an established record of acceptable work evidences a pattern of inconsistent or deteriorating job performance that fails to respond to supervisory input (e.g., verbal instructions, written job instructions, discussion of job performance), the supervisor should encourage the employee to contact the EAP. Please see [APM 2-12](#) for information on making a supervisor referral.

Family: Family members and significant others may contact the EAP concerning their own issue or the employee's. EAP contact information is made available to City employees and their family members/significant others.

Union/Employee Association: Like supervisors, union stewards/employee representatives often have the opportunity to observe job performance and interactions with other employees. They can play an important part in introducing EAP and encouraging employee utilization. Union stewards/employee representatives may be able to serve as a referral source by supporting the employee and encouraging them to contact the EAP.

Peer Support Officer: Peer Support Program members are often a first point of contact for employees seeking EAP information. They receive specialized training on how to support and refer an employee or family member for EAP services.

EAP Facilitator: EAP Facilitators are often a first point of contact for employees seeking EAP information. They receive specialized training on how to support and refer an employee or family member for EAP services.

Coworker: A co-worker may recommend EAP to a fellow employee.

Records and Reporting

The City of Madison EAP uses an EAP industry-specific software for collection and reporting of all utilization and program data. The data is securely stored external to the City's IT system and is administered by EAP professionals. EAP contact notes will be retained as electronic records for five years after a case is closed.

City of Madison EAP calculates utilization based on the calendar year (January – December). EAP annual utilization data is aggregated to protect the confidentiality of program users. Highlights of the report include number of new employee contacts, presenting issues, number and type of supervisor contacts, number and nature of critical incidents, and list of trainings presented.

Original SOP: 02/25/2015
(Reviewed Only: 02/15/2016, 12/26/2017, 01/31/2020)
(Revised: 12/22/2016, 02/07/2023)