Approved:

City of Riverside, California
Human Resources Policy and Procedure Manual

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Human Resources Director

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City Manager

Number: V-15 Effective Date: 07/06
Revision Date: TBD

SUBJECT: **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

PURPOSE:

To describe the Employee Assistance Program, a benefit ~~provided~~offered by the City ~~of Riverside~~, to provide professional services to benefited~~help~~ employees and ~~their~~eligible family members dealing with personal ~~resolve~~ problems and/or issues that affect their personal lives or job performance.

POLICY:

The City ~~of Riverside~~ recognizes that its employees are its most important resource. In order to promote an efficient and productive workplace, the City will provide an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to ~~help~~offer benefited employees and ~~their~~eligible family members the resources and expert assistance needed to resolve problems or issues that affect their personal lives or job performance.

Service Provider - ~~:~~

The City will provide employee assistance program services through a qualified organization. The organization will provide a full service program for benefited employees and ~~their~~eligible family members. Services will include, but are not limited to assessment and referral, crisis intervention, stress, legal, financial, marital, substance abuse, referral service to community-based resources, EAP related in-service training, employee wellness and education, supervisor training and consultation incorporating EAP services.

1. P~~P~~eriodic reports will be given to the employer on the number of employees using the program. No names or other identifying information will be included in this report.

Confidentiality - ~~:~~

2. The program is confidential. Employee Assistance Program providers are licensed professional clinicians. By law they are mandated to ensure the confidentiality of the program participants with the exception of the following: 1) child abuse or molestation; 2) elder abuse; 3) homicidal threats or activities; 4) suicidal threats or activities; or 5) any other situation where there is reasonable cause to believe that the participant is in such mental or emotional condition as to be dangerous to himself/herself or to the person or

property of another and disclosure is necessary to prevent the threatened danger. In these cases they must report the incident to the proper authorities.

Employee Services - :

3. The Employee Assistance Program is a voluntary program available to the employee and/or eligible family member; an eligible family member is a dependent as defined in Human Resources Policy V-9 Health/Vision and Dental Insurance. This request for help may be initiated by the employee or the family member to deal with personal issues, Cmarital or family difficulties, financial or legal problems, work related problems, alcohol or drug abuse, etc.

The initial problem assessment is free of cost to the employee and/or their family members. Additional free of cost counseling services or sessions will be offered as outlined in the contract with the EAP provider. After all free services/sessions from the EAP provider are exhausted, Iif professional counseling and therapy are still needed, the employee's regular health insurance and/or other benefits will be considered. If services that are not covered by insurance are necessary, the EAP works with the employee to try to minimize out-of-pocket costs;. Tthese costs will be the employee's responsibility but are usually available on a sliding scale based on the individual's ability to pay.

For employees in the Police and Fire Departments that may deal with critical and traumatic events, onsite assistance shall be provided in a timely fashion to assist with critical incident stress in emergency situations or other traumatic events in which mental health professionals or trained counselors are needed.

Supervisory Referrals - :

4. The organization recognizes that a wide range of problems or issues can have an affect on the employee's job performance. The Employee Assistance Program referral process may be incorporated as a form of the improvement process within the performance evaluation and/or progressive discipline process. Supervisors may encourage to consult with the Human Resources Department and the use of the Employee Assistance Program when a performance problem occurs in order to assist the employee in the improvement process. The supervisor will not attempt to diagnose or counsel employees on personal issues.

The supervisor's responsibilities include continuously monitoring an employee'=s work performance. If the supervisor can determine by observing, documenting, and informing the employee of work performance expectations, that his/her job performance has deteriorated, the supervisor may take the following actions, within the performance improvement process. Supervisors are responsible for constructively confronting employees about their deteriorating work performance and setting expectations for improvement.

Employees are responsible for taking the necessary steps to resolve issues that are interfering with job performance, and the EAP is a mechanism by which the employee can seek assistance and resolve issues which may be affecting work performance. All employees are required to meet existing job performance standards. Regardless of an

employee'~~=~~s involvement, non-involvement, or promise of involvement with the EAP, the employee remains accountable to the supervisor for resolving work performance discrepancies.

The supervisor may take the following actions within the performance improvement/evaluation process. This policy does not replace existing policies and/or collective bargaining agreements.

Step 1: During a supervisor/employee conference, the employee is made aware of deteriorating work performance. Expectations for work performance improvement are discussed and a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is developed. The supervisor informs the employee that the organization has an Employee Assistance Program to assist employees and their family members in resolving problems that affect their personal lives or job performance. The supervisor provides an EAP brochure and business card. The employee is to utilize the EAP as one resource for work performance improvement.

Step 2: An informal supervisory referral may be made by the supervisor at a follow-up supervisor/employee conference to review the work performance of the employee. The supervisor advises the employee that sufficient improvement in the work performance areas previously identified have not been achieved. After a review of the work performance concerns and the expectations for work performance improvement, the supervisor again refers the employee to the Employee Assistance Program indicating that the supervisor will contact the EAP and inform them that the employee will call within a designated time frame. The EAP will inform the supervisor whether or not the employee has contacted the EAP and followed through on the initial step of assessment through the EAP process.

Step 3: A formal written supervisory referral is made when the work performance problem has deteriorated to a point of serious concern to the organization. In the implementation of the referral, three aspects of the referral need to be included: 1) identify the length of time for the employee to contact the EAP; 2) stipulate that the employee will need to authorize the necessary releases of information related to participation in the EAP program as part of the referral so that the EAP can report to the supervisor on whether the employee is in compliance with the ~~following through on the EAP~~program recommendations ~~recommended program~~; and 3) emphasize the importance of following all aspects of the recommendations of the EAP. The formal supervisory referral process should be coordinated with the Human Resources Director or designee.