

Georgia Department of Public Safety

Policy Manual

SUBJECT EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	POLICY NUMBER 5.18
DISTRIBUTION ALL EMPLOYEES	REVISED DATE 11/7/2018
	POLICY REVIEWED 11/7/2018

5.18.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for implementation and administration of the Department of Public Safety Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

5.18.2 Policy

This policy addresses the employee assistance program (EAP) which is a confidential counseling program designed to assist employees and their family members who have personal problems that could interfere with their job performance and family life. The Department of Public Safety (DPS) believes that employees are a valuable asset and recognizes that personal problems can affect job performance and employees may be unable to resolve these problems alone.

5.18.3 Provisions

- A. The Department contracts with the State's vendor, Espyr, to provide EAP services for its employees 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- B. Employees may contact Espyr through one of the following methods:
 - 1. Telephone - 1-855-584-3855, TTY 678-569-2164 or TTY 1-800-316-9993.
 - 2. Website – www.espyr.com (password is SOG2015), or
 - 3. Espyr Mobile Application (Company ID is SOG2015)
- C. All DPS employees are eligible to use the EAP, including full-time, part-time and hourly-paid employees. Temporary agency employees are not eligible to use the program.
- D. EAP Services
 - 1. Employees and their dependents can receive confidential, professional counseling from a licensed therapist in the areas of marital problems, adolescent, family, grief, stress, alcohol and drug abuse, emotional, financial, eating disorders, aging parents, career or any personal problem that could interfere with job performance. This list is not all inclusive of the benefits offered through the EAP.

2. EAP will assist employees or dependents to find a counselor that is located near their work or home location.
3. During an emergency, employees can immediately access a mental health professional by calling 1-855-584-3855.
4. Employees and their dependents may use up to eight counseling sessions per problem to resolve their issues. However, if the services are assessed to be outside the scope of EAP, then employees will be referred to their medical benefit plan or community resources for further assistance. If employees decide to remain with Espyr and go beyond the designated eight sessions, then the cost will be charged to the employees.
5. The EAP also offers eligible employees access to a variety of work-life benefits, including, but not limited to, legal consultation, financial consultation, adoption assistance and referrals, academic resources, and relocation services and referral information. For more information, please visit www.espyr.com or contact Human Resources.

E. Employee Participation

1. Employee Self-Referral – EAP participation is typically voluntary. At any time, an employee may initiate and seek assistance from the EAP. Employees do not have to inform the Human Resources Division or their supervisors if they wish to utilize the EAP.
2. Supervisory or Management Referral – Management may offer non-mandatory referral when it recognizes that the EAP may benefit an employee with unsatisfactory performance or other work related problems, or when an employee discloses a personal issue that may be negatively affecting work. In those circumstances, the employee's EAP participation is voluntary, and the employee may accept or decline participation without penalty. Such management referral is not intended as a disciplinary measure, nor does it replace the Department's policies and procedures for dealing with work deficiencies.
3. Mandatory Referral – An appointing authority, in coordination with the Director of Human Resources, may require EAP in certain circumstances. A mandatory referral should be made only when the presenting problem is of an urgent or emergency nature. In such cases, compliance with such a referral is mandatory and failure to follow through with the EAP referral evaluation, treatment, and service recommendations in full may be the basis for termination of employment.

F. Leave and Work Time

1. EAP participation is typically not considered work time.
2. An employee who has been notified of a mandatory referral to EAP must be granted work time for EAP participation.
3. When an employee must use leave for EAP activities, supervisors should make a reasonable effort to approve the requested time off.

G. Confidentiality

1. EAP participation is confidential with limited exceptions as provided below.

2. EAP records (maintained by either the EAP or the Department) disclosing an employee's identity and, as applicable, particular information about the EAP participation, are released only when:
 - a. The employee provides written consent;
 - b. Disclosure is required by law, such as in the case of child abuse, elder abuse, or abuse to a disabled individual;
 - c. In response to a court order;
 - d. The EAP provider believes disclosure is necessary to lessen a serious or imminent threat of physical harm to a person or the public; or
 - e. An appointing authority is satisfied that disclosure of EAP records maintained by the Department is needed to assist law enforcement or medical personnel responding to a life-threatening or medical emergency.

5.18.4 Records

All records of employees' sessions are the property of Espyr. The records are coded and entered into a security sensitive computer system and at no time are the records a part of the employees' personnel file.

5.18.5 Reports

Espyr will submit periodic reports to the Department regarding employees' utilization of its services. The report reflects the number of employees using its services by division, problem areas, gender, race, and referral source, and average number of sessions attended, and does not identify those using the services.

5.18.6 Additional Information

- A. Human Resources is responsible for sending regular communication to inform and remind employees of the EAP program and benefits.
- B. Brochures and additional information regarding the EAP may be obtained by contacting the Human Resources Division.