

# ***Frequently Asked Questions About the EAO***



**Employee  
Assistance Office**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## **What is the Employee Assistance Office?**

The Employee Assistance Office is a resource provided by the University of Wisconsin to assist employees and their immediate family members or significant others who are finding it difficult to successfully cope with personal or work related issues and concerns.

## **Who is eligible to use the Employee Assistance Office?**

Employee Assistance Office services are available to all faculty, staff, LTE/project employees and their immediate family members or significant others.

## **Why do people use the Employee Assistance Office?**

Most people who come to the Employee Assistance Office have tried unsuccessfully to problem solve a situation in their personal or work life and are looking for additional options or resources for dealing with it.

## **What about Confidentiality?**

Contact with the staff of the Employee Assistance Office is confidential within limits as governed by Federal and State regulations. This information is reviewed with the employee at the time of their initial appointment.

## **What happens at the Employee Assistance Office?**

At the time of the initial visit, individuals are given the Employee Assistance Office Statement of Confidentiality to review and a brief questionnaire to fill out. They then meet with a consultant who reviews their situation, works to clarify their issues/concerns and to identify options and possible resources for addressing them. The initial consultation usually lasts approximately an hour. Subsequent follow-up visits, if necessary, are usually an hour or less.

## **How are Employee Assistance Office services accessed?**

Employee Assistance Office services can be accessed by calling 263-2987 during regular office hours (Monday-Friday, 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

## **Can Employee Assistance Office services be utilized on work time?**

Work time may be used to contact the Employee Assistance Office and for appointments with its consultants. Employees need to arrange time out of their work area with their supervisor to arrange coverage and work demands.

## **What is the cost of using the Employee Assistance Office?**

Employee Assistance Office services are available at no cost.

## **Where is the Employee Assistance Office located?**

The Employee Assistance Office is located in Room 226 Lowell Center, 610 Langdon Street, Madison, WI 53703, or at [eao.wisc.edu](http://eao.wisc.edu)

## **As a supervisor what should I do when an employee doesn't seek help for their problems?**

You can offer your employee the campus resources (Employee Assistance Office, Human Resources, Equity and Diversity Office). Whether they utilize the resources is up to the employee. Regardless, as their supervisor it is your job to hold the employee accountable for doing their work. This does include the ability to get along at work. So it is important you are clear about your expectations.

## **What should I do as a supervisor, if I make a formal supervisory referral and the employee refuses to go?**

You continue to hold the employee accountable for their work. You cannot make an employee take advantage of the referral. You have done your part in offering a resource and now it is up to employee to find a way to address the problem whether they do it on their own or with the help of the EAO. It is important to be clear that the employee is still responsible for making the necessary changes to address any work performance issue with or without help.

## **As a supervisor do I have to discipline for performance if I made a referral to EAO?**

As a supervisor you are responsible for addressing performance concerns with your employee and this needs to occur regardless of making a referral. The purpose of the referral is to provide a resource that could help the employee to address the problem so that it does not continue to impact the work environment.

## **How will I know if my employee followed through on the supervisory referral I made?**

It is important if you are making a formal supervisory referral that you contact the EAO before referring your employee. This will allow you to provide details of the behavior/performance problems, as well as your concerns. This way EAO can ask for a release of information from the employee in order to follow up with you on attendance and compliance.

## **What does it mean when someone says, "the supervisor was enabling"?**

Enabling is a tendency to protect the employee from the consequences of his/her behavior. However, it often takes consequences or the realization that there will be consequences to motivate change. Ways people enable: failure to confront or talking around an issue. Another example is denying or minimizing the problem. If you cannot afford to have all of your employees behaving in a particular way, then you cannot afford to have one employee behave that way. Remember, what you permit you promote.