

<b>GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE</b>	Transmittal # 17-14	Policy # 3.26
Applicability: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All DJJ Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Administration <input type="checkbox"/> Community Services <input type="checkbox"/> Secure Facilities (RYDCs and YDCs)	Related Standards & References: O.C.G.A. §§ 45-20-70, 45-20-71 State Personnel Board Rule 478-1-.30 ACA Standards: 4-JCF-6D-08, 3-JDF-1C-23 DJJ 8.5, 14.10	
Chapter 3: PERSONNEL	Effective Date: 12/15/17 Scheduled Review Date : 12/15/18	
Subject: EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	Replaces: 7/15/16 Office of Human Resources	
Attachments:  A – EAP Contractor’s Flyer B – Manager Referral Letter C – EAP Evaluation Report	APPROVED:  <hr/> Avery D. Niles, Commissioner	

## I. POLICY:

The Department of Juvenile Justice shall utilize an employee assistance program to enhance employee and workplace effectiveness through prevention, identification, and resolution of personal and productivity issues.

## II. DEFINITIONS:

**Critical Incident:** Unexpected loss of life of an employee/intern/contractor/volunteer or youth, on or off DJJ property, a traumatic incident affecting multiple staff, or an incident designated by an appropriate administrator. A traumatic incident includes, but is not limited to, physical assault of a severe nature, sexual assault, loss of life, psychological assault or death threat, hostage or major riot, witnessing an attempted suicide, exposure to a potentially life-threatening disease, or natural disaster.

**Critical Incident Stress Debriefing:** Intervention by the contracted Employee Assistance Program’s professional counselor to any covered individual who has been physically or emotionally affected by a traumatic event. Services will include group counseling and may include one-on-one counseling, debriefing, defusing, group education, and other specially designed services chosen on a case-by-case basis.

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** A confidential assessment, counseling, and referral service established to assist the agency and employees in coping with and overcoming persistent problems that may jeopardize an employee’s effective job performance. EAP also includes the provision of preventative and wellness services to employees. Services are provided by a contractor to the Department.

**Manager:** For the purposes of this policy, the staff member responsible for the overall operation of a Regional Youth Detention Center (RYDC), Youth Development Campus

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(YDC), community service office, or other DJJ owned, operated, or contracted facility/program.

### III. PROCEDURES:

#### A. Eligibility and Services:

1. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services will be available to all employees and their dependents. This coverage extends to minor dependents even if they do not currently live in the household of the covered employee. Anyone who lives in the same household as the employee, whether they are a dependent or not, may use EAP services.
2. Professional counselors will provide employees and their family and household members free and confidential help in the areas of:
  - a) Stress;
  - b) Emotional problems;
  - c) Marital and family problems;
  - d) Alcohol and drug problems;
  - e) Legal and financial problems;
  - f) Child care and elder care concerns; and
  - g) Grief and traumatic events.

#### B. Accessing Services:

1. All covered individuals are eligible to participate in the EAP and may access the EAP 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Each DJJ work unit will post the EAP Contractor's Flyer (Attachment A) on the official bulletin board.
2. During regular business hours, the EAP counselor will determine if the covered individual's issue or problem is of a non-emergency nature, an urgent nature, or an emergency nature. If there is no emergency, the counselor will offer a confidential appointment within 48 hours. For urgent situations, the counselor will offer an appointment with a counselor the same day as the call. For emergencies, covered individuals should seek immediate assistance at the closest emergency facility.

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3. During non-business hours, the counselor will determine if the covered individual's issue or problem is of a non-emergency nature, an urgent nature, or an emergency nature. If there is no emergency, the EAP intake counselor will record the relevant demographic information and will submit it to the appropriate EAP staff counselor the following day. For urgent or emergency situations, the on-call EAP staff counselor will make an appropriate determination concerning the assistance needed.

C. Participation:

1. Participation in the EAP, under most circumstances, is voluntary. Voluntary appointments may be scheduled outside of working hours or the employee may request leave for appointments during working hours.
2. Under certain circumstances, a manager may make a referral of an employee to the EAP for evaluation if the employee's behavior has or is likely to have a negative impact on the work environment (e.g., outbursts of anger, inability to control anger, noticeable stress or anxiety, etc.). The manager must consult with the Director of Human Resources or designee prior to making the referral for evaluation. The manager will provide the employee with a letter informing him/her of the appointment (see Attachment B, Manager Referral Letter).
  - a) The initial appointment is considered work time and the manager will schedule the initial appointment during working hours. The employee may schedule subsequent appointments outside of working hours or the employee may take leave.
  - b) When a manager refers an employee for evaluation for a safety-related issue, the employee may not return to work unless released for full, unrestricted duties by the EAP or the treatment provider. The EAP provider will complete the EAP Evaluation Report (Attachment C) and forward it to the Director of Human Resources.
3. Following a traumatic event that physically or emotionally affects an employee but does not greatly affect the work location, the DJJ manager may discuss the availability of EAP services with the employee and provide him/her with written material about the program
4. Use of the EAP, either voluntarily or through a manager referral, does not relieve employees or their managers of the responsible performance of assigned job duties. Employees who participate in the EAP are subject to the same performance standards that existed prior to EAP involvement.

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Participation in the EAP will not necessarily prevent disciplinary action for unsatisfactory work performance.

5. Managers who are aware of an employee's participation in the EAP shall not interfere in any way with the employee's opportunities for advancement because of EAP participation.

D. Critical Incident Response:

1. In situations where a critical incident has occurred, the facility/program/office manager will initiate a response using the following steps in the order given:
  - a) Contact the emergency services, if necessary;
  - b) Immediately notify the respective Deputy Commissioner;
  - c) Contact the EAP for guidance on how to effectively respond to the affected employees and arrange for necessary services;
  - d) Contact the Director of Human Resources or designee; and
  - e) Contact the Office of Victim Services.
  
2. When contacted by the facility/program/officer manager, the Deputy Commissioner will:
  - a) Be prepared to take notes;
  - b) Ask questions to assess the situation;
    - What happened?
    - Where did the incident occur?
    - When did the incident occur?
    - Who was involved?
    - Are there any injuries to staff or youth? And
    - Have you gathered all of the information needed to contact the EAP?
  - c) Provide direction to the manager:

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- To ensure that the chain of command is notified (see DJJ 8.5, Special Incident Reporting);
  - As to the expected EAP response time;
  - As to the expected update; and
  - To return to the scene and manage the incident.
- d) Notify the Commissioner.
3. The EAP provider will be available on campus or in the office in an effort to address staff needs and help the facility/office stabilize following the incident. Therefore, the manager will make every effort to ensure the services are provided in a well-organized manner.
  4. The facility Director must ensure that the EAP provider has the appropriate location to provide groups and should work with them to develop a clear plan of how the groups and any individual sessions that are provided.
  5. The EAP will provide a group counseling session during and/or after the critical incident to present facts, facilitate a brief, controlled discussion, answer questions, and provide information on stress survival skills and/or other available support services. If needed, the EAP facilitator will refer employees for additional individual EAP services.
  6. The EAP facilitator will provide the facility/program/office manager with a report documenting:
    - a) General observations;
    - b) General employee concerns;
    - c) Details of the service(s) provided, including the type and number of sessions; and
    - d) Whether additional EAP or other treatment services are needed for groups or individuals.

The EAP report will not identify specific employees.
  7. Following a critical incident, the DJJ manager will discuss the availability of EAP services with the affected employee and will provide him/her with written material about the program. If the employee agrees to participate,

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the DJJ manager will coordinate the first appointment for the employee by making contact with the EAP to arrange an appointment immediately following the incident.

8. At the direction of the Director of Human Resources, the Office of Victim Services will reach out to the victim to provide information on supplemental resources available to the victim, his/her family and/or non-dependents residing in the same household. Victim services will be provided within the scope of DJJ 14.10, Victims' Rights, Services, and Notification.
9. The Office of Behavioral Health Services may provide supplemental services upon request by the facility/program/office manager.

E. Appointments and Work Time:

1. The EAP offers appointments after normal business hours and on Saturdays, and employees are encouraged to schedule EAP appointments at times that do not interfere with their normal work hours.
2. Employees may request to use leave for appointments that are scheduled during work hours.
3. For referrals to the EAP by a manager, the evaluation visit with the EAP will be considered work time. Subsequent treatment appointments, if any, should be made outside of work hours, or the employee may request to take leave.
4. Critical incident response group counseling held during an employee's regular work schedule is considered work time. Those sessions held after an employee's regularly scheduled work hours are not considered work time.

F. Confidentiality:

1. With few exceptions, as described below, all conversations or appointments between covered individuals and the EAP counselor are kept strictly confidential. No information may be released to a third party, including the Department, without a signed authorization for the release of information.
2. All records pertaining to the use of the EAP by covered individuals remain the property of the EAP and will not be forwarded to the Department.

G. Exceptions:

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1. For manager referrals for evaluation only, limited information about an employee may be released to the Department by the EAP. Such information includes:
  - a) The status of the employee's condition during treatment;
  - b) The anticipated duration of treatment; and
  - c) A final report from the counselor relative to the employee's ability to return to work and/or resume normal duties.
2. For any situation where a covered individual has made a threat of violence, the EAP will inform the Department of the threat and that the individual may present a potential danger to others.
3. The EAP will release information as required by law, as required by a court order or subpoena, or in response to a signed authorization for release of information.

H. Payment Responsibility:

1. Covered individuals may receive, at no cost, up to 8 counseling sessions per issue or problem within any 12-month period. If the employee ceases to be employed by the Department during the counseling sessions, the covered individual will continue to be eligible to receive the 8 counseling sessions for that issue or problem.
2. Should the covered individual need additional counseling, the EAP will refer that individual to an appropriate provider or facility, where costs for treatment will be the sole responsibility of the covered individual.
3. In certain circumstances, a covered individual's health insurance plan may provide coverage for extended treatment. Covered individuals should directly contact their health insurance providers for additional information.

**IV. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES REQUIRED: NO**