

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

An employee assistance program (EAP) is an arrangement between a corporation, academic institution, or government agency and its employees that provides a variety of support programs for the employees. Although EAPs are aimed mainly at work-related difficulties, they can also help employees with problems that originate outside the workplace when such troubles impact work attendance or on-the-job performance.

The concept of the EAP originated in the 1970s in an effort to reduce substance abuse and intoxication in the workplace. Since that time, EAPs have evolved to deal with a variety of issues such as marital problems, depression, anger management, anxiety and physical illness. EAPs can provide day care for children of employees and elder care for parents of employees. Legal and financial assistance may also be available.