



# TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

## Operating Policy and Procedure

**HSCEP OP:** 70.38, **Employee Assistance Program**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to establish procedures governing the use of and referral to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

**REVIEW:** This HSCEP OP will be reviewed on November 1 of each even-numbered year (ENY) by the assistant vice president for Human Resources (AVPHR) or designee, with recommendations for revisions submitted to the chief financial officer or designee by November 15.

### **POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

#### **I. General**

- A. TTUHSC El Paso recognizes that personal problems can have a direct and adverse impact on an individual's ability to function effectively on the job.
- B. TTUHSC El Paso seeks to retain valuable employees and maintain productivity by identifying personal problems at early stages and encouraging employees to seek help with problems. However, no part of this policy, or any of the procedures within, is intended to affect the authority of TTUHSC El Paso to manage its workplace or discipline its employees. Nor is this policy a guarantee of employment, continued employment, or terms or conditions of employment. Exceptions to this policy may be made in unusual or extenuating circumstances, but only with the approval of the president.
- C. TTUHSC El Paso has made available a confidential, on-site counseling service called the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP is a professional assessment and/or short term counseling service offered to employees with personal problems that may be affecting their jobs. The program provides up to five (5) sessions with EAP counselors at no cost to the individual. No information is released to the employer or a supervisor concerning the nature of the problem, and it does not become a part of the employee's personnel record. Confidentiality is regulated by federal guidelines.

#### **II. Eligibility**

- A. All full-time, part-time, and temporary employees will be able to obtain the services of the EAP at any time. Members of employees' immediate families, living in their households, are also eligible.
- B. The EAP is intended for situations when an employee experiences problems that are beyond his/her ability to manage and the problems affect performance or behavior on the job. The EAP aims at prevention and early intervention. Utilization of EAP is voluntary on the employee's part however, the employee is encouraged to seek assistance before job performance is severely impaired.
- C. The EAP is intended to help with a wide range of personal problems including emotional and behavioral concerns. EAP is not intended to address job-related issues. Employees

should discuss job-related problems with the supervisor or follow the procedures outlined in HSCEP OP 70.10, Non-Faculty Employee Complaint Procedure.

### **III. Utilizing the Employee Assistance Program**

An employee who is experiencing personal problems or whose job performance is affected by personal problems is encouraged to voluntarily request help from the EAP. No employee will have job security jeopardized by such a good faith request.

An employee may voluntarily seek assistance either by requesting help from a supervisor, the Human Resources Department, or by contacting the EAP directly. If an employee contacts a supervisor for assistance, the supervisor should assist the employee in contacting the EAP but should not attempt to diagnose the problem or counsel the employee.

An employee may seek assistance by contacting the EAP directly at (915) 215-6256. The EAP is headquartered in the TTUHSC El Paso Department of Psychiatry.

Employees who are utilizing EAP services will be expected to continue working while undergoing counseling or rehabilitation and will be required to meet all established standards of conduct, discipline, and job performance.

Work time lost for EAP counseling or rehabilitation will be charged to accrued sick leave, vacation leave, and/or leave without pay.

### **IV. Extended External Counseling/Rehabilitation Services**

The EAP offers up to five (5) counseling sessions per household per year, at no cost to the employee. Any counseling or treatment beyond these five sessions will be referred to another provider, and the charges assessed by that provider are the responsibility of the individual. In many cases, further counseling by another provider can come under the benefits of the employee's health plan.

### **V. Notice**

Each TTUHSC department is encouraged to post the name and telephone number of the EAP in a location where all employees may see it.

### **VI. Confidentiality**

All information involving counseling, rehabilitation, or treatment through the EAP will be treated as confidential medical information and is maintained in the EAP Office. All such information will only be accessible to those TTUHSC El Paso officials, designated medical or professional persons, or other individuals who have been specifically designated and consented to by the employee. Information will not be provided to any other party without the written consent of the employee except as may be required pursuant to the administrative or legal procedure or process. Any TTUHSC El Paso employee who willfully discloses such information in violation of TTUHSC El Paso policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **VII. Evaluation of EAP Services**

Evaluation of EAP services will be conducted annually by the EAP director and the AVPHR.

### **VIII. Right to Change Policy**

TTUHSC El Paso reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend, or rescind this policy in whole or in part at any time without the consent of employees.