

RUSTENBURG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Policy & Procedures Statement

Employee Assistance Programme

Rustenburg Local Municipality has established an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to provide professional, confidential assistance for any type of personal problem. The programme is designed to encourage early employee awareness of such problems and to offer assistance at the earliest opportunity.

Employees are responsible for their performance and for taking constructive action to resolve any personal problem that affects or threatens to affect their on-job behaviour. Employees are encouraged to seek assistance through the EAP on their own before performance has been negatively affected.

This confidential programme is administered by the Careways Group (CG), a private consulting and service firm.

1. Eligibility:

- 1.1 All permanent and temporary employees,
- 1.2 Members of employee household.
- 1.3 Benefit eligible dependants.

2. Procedures:

- 2.1 Employees with a personal problem affecting job performance should receive the same careful consideration and offer of **PROFESSIONAL** and **CONFIDENTIAL** assistance that is presently extended to employees having health problems.
- 2.2 All records pertaining to the Employee Assistance Programme kept by the Careways Group, will remain the property of Careways Group. For self-referred individuals, Careways Group will not reveal any information that the individual discloses to those outside except in the following circumstances:
 1. You consent in writing;
 2. The law requires disclosure; or
 3. It is believed that life or safety is threatened by failure to disclose.

- 2.3 Rustenburg Local Municipality encourages employees with personal problems to take early advantage of the professional services provided through the Employee Assistance Programme. Careways Group representatives are available to answer any questions about the Employee Assistance Programme and the scope of available services.
- 2.4 Supervisors are responsible for implementation of this policy by remaining alert to all instances of sub-standard work performance and bringing these to the attention of the employee along with an offer of assistance at the earliest indication of a recurrent problem.
- 2.5 Employees are responsible for deciding to seek assistance through or accept referral to the Employee Assistance Programme, as well as to comply with the recommended action plan.
- 2.6 Utilization of the EAP is on a **VOLUNTARY** basis even if referred by management.
- 2.7 The decision to seek or accept assistance through the Employee Assistance Programme will not adversely affect an employee's **JOB SECURITY** or advancement opportunities. However, participation in the Employee Assistance Programme in no way relieves the employee of the responsibility to meet acceptable work performance and attendance standards.
- 2.8 Time off will be provided to eligible employees.
- 2.9 The Employee Assistance Programme is also available to family and household members of Rustenburg Local Municipality employees because employee work performance and attendance can be affected by the problems of an employee's spouse and/or household members.

3. Referral Guidelines:

Employees may obtain professional assistance through the Employee Assistance Programme in one of the following ways:

3.1 Self - Referral

- 3.1.1 An employee who desires confidential assistance for a personal problem should call **014 557 5310 / 014 592 2042** and ask to speak to an Employee Assistance Representative.
- 3.1.2 The Employee Assistance Representative will either provide the necessary assistance on the telephone or will arrange for further confidential consultation in Careways Group's counseling office in the employee's community.
- 3.1.3 Any communication between the employee and the Careways Group Representative will be held in confidence.

3.2 Supervisor Recommendation:

- 3.2.1 When an employee brings a personal problem to the attention of the supervisor, but work performance and attendance are within acceptable standards, the supervisor should encourage the employee to use the EAP. The supervisor should explain to the employee how the programme works and, if appropriate, offer assistance in making the appointment.

3.3 Supervisor Referral:

If a supervisor is in doubt about the appropriateness of making an EAP referral, the supervisor should contact Careways Group, his / her own supervisor, or the Human Resources Unit for consultation. The following are among the circumstances in which a supervisor should make a referral to the Employee Assistance Programme:

A request by an employee for assistance with a personal problem;

A decline in work performance on the part of the employee; or

A particular on-job incident or observation by the supervisor which indicates the possible presence of a personal problem, excluding incidents of flagrant misconduct which require other immediate disciplinary action.

- 3.3.1 When an employee's performance is the basis for a supervisor referral to the Employee Assistance Programme, the supervisor should prepare a written account of the observed performance problem. This account should be as detailed as possible including the dates, times, and descriptions of behaviours which have

become a part of a pattern of decline or particular incidents which warrant supervisory action.

- 3.3.2 The supervisor should then have a meeting with the employee to discuss the performance problem and communicate as clearly as possible the consequences of failure to resolve the performance difficulty. The supervisor should not speculate as to the cause of the performance decline or engage in discussion with the employee about any personal problem which may be hampering the employee's performance. This meeting should focus solely on work performance and attendance. The supervisor is encouraged to consult with the Employee Assistance Programme Representative and with his/her own supervisor to a meeting with the employee.
- 3.3.3 After the employee has been confronted with the performance problem, the supervisor should review the Employee Assistance Programme Policy with the employee, advise the employee of the availability of confidential professional assistance for any work hampering personal problem, and strongly encourage the employee to allow the supervisor to arrange an appointment with an Employee Assistance Programme Representative. Although the final decision to use the programme must be left up to the employee, the supervisor should emphasize the importance of the Employee Assistance Programme.
- 3.3.4 The supervisor should call **014 557 5310 / 014 592 2042** and arrange for a counseling session between the employee and the Employee Assistance Programme Representative.
- 3.3.5 Prior to the counseling session, the supervisor should make available to the Employee Assistance Programme Representative all the information relevant to the employee's performance problem. If necessary, the Employee Assistance Programme Representative will request a conference with the supervisor to further discuss the situation. Careways Group will tell the supervisor whether or not the employee kept the appointment and whether the employee has accepted Careways Group's recommendations for addressing the problem. Any other information will be held in confidence by Careways Group.
- 3.3.6 Whether or not the employee chooses assistance at this time, the supervisor should reinforce Rustenburg Local Municipality's expectation for improved performance and the consequences for failure to improve. The supervisor should also point out that the

Employee Assistance Programme will be available should the employee wish to use it in the future.

3.4 Mandatory (Formal) Referrals:

Mandatory (Formal) referrals may occur as a result of:

Voluntary employee disclosure of a substance abuse problem;
The result of a positive drug / alcohol test; and/or
The result of a problem serious enough to warrant disciplinary action up to and including termination.

3.4.1 Under circumstances that warrant a mandatory (formal) referral, the employee's supervisor and Head Human Resources Management will together contact the Employee Assistance Programme to discuss the situation.

3.4.2 The supervisor and Head: Human Resources Management will meet with the employee. Refusal to accept referral to the Employee Assistance Programme and to follow the EAP recommendation constitute misconduct, which could lead to dismissal.

3.4.3 The Head: Human Resources Management will be informed whether or not the employee keeps appointments and is following recommendations for addressing the problem.

3.5 Medical Referral:

3.5.1 The basis of the referral should be either:

The identification of a medical symptom or disorder which is commonly associated with a personal problem; or
A request from the employee for advise or assistance regarding a personal problem.

3.5.2 Medical staff should call **014 557 5310 / 014 592 2042** to arrange an appointment between an EAP counselor and the employee.

3.5.3 The employee should be advised that the appointment with the EAP counselor constitutes part of the recommended treatment plan and that the referral will be documented in the employee's medical record. The decision to accept assistance through the EAP should be left to the employee.

3.6 Family Member Referral:

- 3.6.1 An eligible member who desires confidential assistance for a personal problem should call **014 557 5310 / 014 592 2042** and ask to speak to an Employee Assistance Representative.
- 3.6.2 The Employee Assistance Representative will either provide the necessary assistance on the telephone or will arrange for further confidential consultation in a Careways Group counseling office in the caller's community.
- 3.6.3 Any communication with the Careways Group Representative will be held in confidence as specified in this policy statement.

4. Life Skills Courses

Lifeline will take responsibility for training in Life Skills courses. All employees will benefit from Life Skills courses. Life Skills Courses will be designed / developed in accordance with the needs and requirements of the employees / Rustenburg Local Municipality.

A year programme will be discussed and scheduled at the beginning of each financial year.

Supervisors and Directorates Training Committee Coordinators are responsible for identifying / nominating employees for Life Skills courses. It is the responsibility of the Director to ensure that Life Skills courses are attended.

5. Administration and upholding

The Human Resources Management Unit will be responsible for the administration of the policy. Upholding of the policy will be the responsibility of the Director: Corporate Support Services, Unit: Human Resources Management in consultation with the EAP providers.