5.35 Employee Assistance Program

Last Revised: NA

Policy: Piedmont Community College (PCC) recognizes that a wide range of behavioral/health problems can affect an employee’s job performance and quality of life. The college provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to all employees and immediate family members through the Employee Assistance Network to assist in resolving issues.

Purpose/Definitions: The intent of this policy is to offer confidential assistance in resolving behavioral/health problems and accelerate referral for diagnosis and treatment, including, but not limited to, family problems, marital difficulties, financial trouble, stress, substance abuse or addiction, depression, legal, financial and other problems. Since employee work performance can be affected by the problems of an employee’s spouse or other dependents, the program is also available to employees’ families.

The EAP is designed to help the employee overcome a problem, and in cases where job performance is impacted, to improve performance to an acceptable level. By identifying the problem at the earliest possible stage, the program is designed to motivate the employee to seek help, and to direct the employee to an appropriate assistance provider. PCC believes it is in the best interest of the employee, the employee’s family, and the organization to provide this benefit.

Employees are encouraged to use the EAP voluntarily when they need professional help or guidance.

Approval Authority/ Monitoring Authority: Piedmont Community College’s Board of Trustees has approval authority for this policy. The Vice President, Administrative Services has monitoring authority for this policy.

Procedure: Referral to EAP may occur as follows:

1. Self-Referral - The employee seeks the assistance of the EAP Program independently for assistance in problem solving. In many instances, the employee will overcome such behavioral/health problems independently, and any effect on job performance will be negligible. Strict confidentiality is essential and will be maintained. Information and records of employees with behavioral/health problems will be preserved in the same manner as all other medical records. There is no cost to PCC employees and dependent family members for the initial evaluation, counseling and referral services offered by the EAP.

2. Management Recommendation - Management may recommend participation in the EAP in cases where the employee is dealing with a personal or job-related issue that has the potential to negatively impact performance. Intervention in such instances, along with normal supervisory assistance, will serve either as motivation or guidance by which such problems can be resolved, so the employee’s job performance will return to an acceptable level.
It is recognized that, in some cases, the efforts of the supervisor may not have the desired effect on resolving the employee’s problems, and unsatisfactory performance may persist over a period of time. In such cases, a mandatory referral may be made (if the employee has not already been working with the EAP) and/or the disciplinary process may be followed, depending upon the severity of the performance/behavioral issue.

3. Mandatory Referral - When a director/supervisor, in consultation with Human Resources, identifies a significant performance or behavioral problem or a policy violation a mandatory referral may be made. In such a situation, improvement of performance or behavior is required regardless of participation in follow-up session recommended by the EAP. In the case of a mandatory referral, the Manager, Human Resources will call and make an appointment during the employee’s work hours for the employee to attend a session(s) with the EAP. Through the Manager, Human Resources, the supervisor will supply the EAP with a list of the problem behaviors and goals to be addressed during the session(s) with the EAP. It is the employee’s responsibility to cooperate in the designated treatment or rehabilitation plan. The EAP will alert the Manager, Human Resources if a mandatorily referred employee does not attend their session. After a reasonable opportunity for progress, discipline, up to and including job dismissal, may occur unless there is noticeable improvement in job performance.

Depending upon the severity of the performance/behavioral issue and its effect on the PCC workplace, the disciplinary process may also be followed at any point. Implementation of this policy will not require, or result in, any special regulations, privileges, or exemptions from the standard administrative practices applicable to job performance.

Employees may call 1-800-326-3864 to talk to a counselor or set an appointment to meet with a counselor. (Employee Assistance Network, Frank Horton Associates, LLC).

Legal Citation: N/A

History: Effective February 2012