

<b>Subject:</b> Employee Assistance Program	<b>Number:</b> 2-24
	<b>Date Issued:</b> December 1, 1998 <b>Date Revised:</b>
<b>Responsible Department:</b> DAS—Human Resources	<b>Approved:</b>

## Purpose

The City of Fresno recognizes that many employment problems involving unacceptable work behavior may be caused by health problems, problem drinking, drug use, or emotional problems. It is further recognized that virtually any behavioral or health problem can be successfully treated or assisted providing it is identified and referral is made to an appropriate source of care or help. The purpose, therefore, of this program is to implement a workable Employee Assistance and Occupational Alcoholism Program that will:

1. Help supervisors to identify unacceptable work behavior at the earliest possible time; and
2. Refer the individual to a source of counseling assistance or treatment.

## Policy

The following policies will govern the program:

1. While the focus of this program is on alcoholism, unacceptable work performance or behavior due to both, problem drinking or personal problems, will be identified and referred for counseling and assistance.
2. The Assistance Program is neither pro-management nor pro-labor; it is a pro-people program.
3. The City views alcoholism as a treatable disease.
4. The use of alcohol by a City employee is a concern to the City as an employer when it results either directly or indirectly in job-related problems. A job problem exists when an employee's personal problems or use of alcohol:
  - a. Interferes with the efficient and safe performance of the assigned duties.
  - b. Reduces his or her dependability.
  - c. Reflects discredit upon the City.
5. No entry will be made in an employee's personnel file regarding his/her identification and referral for assistance or treatment. (This confidentiality extends only to the identification of personal problems and referral to assistance; the substandard performance can and should be totally documented and made a part of the employee's file.)

6. The City, through appropriate agencies, will offer rehabilitation assistance to any employee who suffers from alcoholism or problem drinking, but the responsibility for acceptance and following up with treatment is the responsibility of the employee.
7. Sick leave may be used for limited period of treatment in a detoxification unit or a rehabilitation center, providing satisfactory progress is maintained. (Limited period of treatment is defined as the period of time normally required for the modality of treatment being used.)

## Procedures

The Occupational Alcoholism Program processes the employee through four basic steps, which occur in the following order:

1. **Identification of the Employee.**

The supervisor must document instances where an employee's job performance or work behavior has fallen below acceptable standards and the cause cannot be attributed to lack of training or knowledge. **It must be emphasized that the only criterion for the identification of an alcoholic employee is deteriorating work performance.**

2. **Confrontation with the Employee.**

Once the employee's substandard work performance has been documented and appropriate counseling fails to bring the work performance up to acceptable standards, the employee should be confronted with the documented evidence of poor performance. Since usual corrective procedures have failed to bring the employee's work up to an acceptable standard, the assumption can be made that a personal problem is the cause. The employee should be given the option of facing further disciplinary action or meeting with the Employee Assistance Coordinator, who will help him obtain professional counseling. The supervisor can make an appointment for the individual by calling the Employee Assistance Coordinator. **The supervisor should not make any attempt to diagnose an employee's problem as stemming from alcohol, drug abuse, or other problems—this is the task of a trained counselor.** (In those cases where the counseling associated with previous corrective action has brought a drinking or personal problem to the point of open discussion, this may be included in the information provided to the Employee Assistance Officer.)

3. **Referral of the Employee to a Counselor.**

The supervisor can refer the employee directly to the counselor or, if he chooses, to the Employee Assistance Coordinator (EAC). The EAC will meet with the employee for the purpose of getting the employee to accept counseling from an appropriate source. If the employee refuses to accept additional counseling or referral to a source of assistance, the coordinator will refer the employee back to the supervisor for appropriate corrective action. In the event referral to assistance is rejected, this fact should be recorded for use should the corrective action be appealed or grieved.

On occasion, more than one session with the Employee Assistance Coordinator or the counselor will be necessary. The employee will be released to attend these sessions.

4. **Follow-up Procedure.**

The initial counseling will be done by a professional counselor from the Alcoholism Council of Fresno County. The counselor will direct the employee to an appropriate source of assistance, if the problem is not alcoholism. If the problem is alcohol, the counselor will direct the employee into the appropriate treatment modality and monitor his/her progress.

The counselor will keep the coordinator and supervisor informed of the employee's progress. The supervisor, in turn, will keep the counselor or coordinator informed of the employee's job performance improvement or continued deterioration.

In the event that the rehabilitation effort is unsuccessful after a reasonable period of time, the supervisor should proceed with disciplinary action or other alternatives that may be appropriate.

**Record Keeping**

No entry regarding counseling or referral will be made in the employee's personal records.