

Subject:	STAFF ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
Section:	PPG# 2605
Chapter:	Personnel
Effective Date:	7/1/98

POLICY

Staff Assistance Program

The department will maintain, as revenues permit, a staff assistance program designed to provide support to staff member who are experiencing a job performance problem. A staff assistance program committee may be established to assist in the implementation of this policy and make program recommendations.

A wide range of problems not directly associated with a job function may affect the staff member's job performance. These problems may result from alcohol abuse or alcoholism; other chemical substance abuse; physical, mental, or emotional illness; personal problems such as marital, family, financial, or legal difficulties; or any combination of these problems.

The staff assistance program will provide professional and confidential assistance to staff members and their families seeking assistance.

Participation in the staff assistance program will not jeopardize employment or job promotion, nor shall such participation substitute for employer action (s) regarding evaluation, probation, and/ or termination as provided for under collective bargaining agreements or board policies. The program will be evaluated on an annual basis.

In order to achieve the objective of enhancing the personal and on-the-job life of a staff member through the staff assistance program, the department will strive to:

1. Provide confidential, professional, and appropriate assistance to staff members and their immediate family members within the scope of the program policy.
2. Promote education and awareness that alcoholism and chemical dependency are diseases for which there is effective treatment and rehabilitation.
3. Promote adequate treatment coverage for chemical dependency by department-approved group insurance plans as for any other disease under these plans.
4. Provide training in order to increase the supervisor's awareness in identifying changes in staff member's behavior and performance.

5. Provide training regarding the supervisor's role in relation to troubled staff members and the utilization of the staff assistance program.

Procedures are as follows:

1. A staff member, family member or a supervisor may make referrals.
2. A staff member exhibiting continuing job performance problems not readily corrected by usual administrative procedures would be appropriate for referral to the staff assistance program. When such a staff member is identified, the supervisor will contact the staff member organization representative, if applicable, to inform him/ her of the conference with the staff member. The supervisor will inform the staff member of his/ her right to determine whether the organization representative will be present at the conference. The staff member may invite the organization representative to the scheduled conference. The conference will be restricted to issues of job performance. Supervisors will avoid expressing opinions or judgments regarding diagnosis or causes.
3. After the supervisor reviews job performance deficiencies with the staff, the supervisor will inform the staff member of professional and confidential services available through the district's staff assistance program.
4. The staff member may choose to accept or reject the offer to meet with the district's staff assistance coordinator for confidential help and referral. If the staff member rejects the offer and the job performance problems do not recur after the conference, the issue is resolved. If the staff member chooses to participate in the staff assistance program, then the district's staff assistance coordinator will arrange a referral for the staff member to a district-retained professional agency for assessment and treatment.
5. If the staff member rejects the offer, and the supervisor and the staff member organization representative, if applicable, recognize that the job performance problem is continuing and the staff member's performance is not satisfactory, the next step will be to offer the staff member a firm choice between accepting the assistance offered by the program or be confronted with whatever action is appropriate within the framework of existing collective bargaining agreements or board policies.
6. The decision to request and/ or accept assistance through the staff assistance program is the personal responsibility of the staff member.
7. All records resulting from an individual's involvement in the staff assistance program will be confidential unless the staff member provides a written release of information.

