

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. What is the OEAP?

A. The OEAP is the State of Ohio Employee Assistance Program (OEAP) counseling referral program. Because problems at work may spill over into problems at home and vice-versa, the OEAP will provide confidential assistance with counseling referrals to employees and their dependents to assist in resolving personal problems.

The OEAP is supported by both labor and management. It is a benefit that has been offered to all state employees and their families since 1984.

Q. What is the purpose of the OEAP?

A. OEAP is available to offer assist State employees who are experiencing personal problems that may affect their job performance. OEAP provides counseling referrals, support and self-referrals to employees seeking professional assistance for various problems.

Q. Who is eligible to use OEAP?

A. All current, disabled or retired State of Ohio employees and their dependents may contact OEAP for assistance. There is no limit to the number of telephone calls that can be made to OEAP.

Q. How do employees access the OEAP?

A. For direct assistance involving a personal, confidential problem, employees can contact the OEAP by calling the toll-free telephone number at 800-221-6EAP (6327). OEAP Consultants are ready to take calls during regular hours which are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. OEAP maintains the highest degree of professionalism and confidentiality in all contacts with employees, managers and union representatives.

Q. What problems will the OEAP help employees with?

A. The OEAP can provide confidential assistance for all types of problems or questions. For example, OEAP can provide assistance with: marital issues, conflict management, problems with co-workers or supervisor, financial trouble, alcohol or drugs, aging issues, elder care, legal problems, can make a referral to a mental health professional for ongoing counseling.

Q. What other services are provided by OEAP?

A. Other services available include:

- Consultation services when you have concerns about family members, a friend or co-worker who may be experiencing problems;
- Critical Incident Stress Management Systems may be arranged and facilitated by OEAP staff during traumatic events such as death or serious injury of a co-worker; and
- Intervention services for organizations in transition for agencies and institutions that may be experiencing workforce reductions or reorganizations.

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Q. Is the OEAP voluntary?

A. Yes, the decision to participate in the OEAP is up the individual employee or family member. However, a supervisor, union representative or co-worker may recommend an employee seek assistance, but the final decision is the employee's.

Q. Do callers/clients have to follow the OEAP recommendations?

A. No, individuals who use the OEAP services can decide whether to follow the recommendations provided by an OEAP Consultant. This is a decision totally up to the caller.

Q. What is the relationship between the OEAP and State of Ohio Drug Free Workplace Program?

A. Employees who have been in violation of the State Drug Free Workplace policy may be offered an opportunity to enroll in a Participation Agreement with the OEAP. If a Participation Agreement is offered and accepted these employees are required to contact and follow through with the recommendations of the OEAP.

Q. Will my call and information be confidential?

A. Yes, the OEAP ensures strict confidentiality as governed by state law ([Ohio Revised Code 3701.041](#)) and the federal regulations ([42 CFR Part 2](#)) to protect clients. No information regarding an employee's participating in OEAP will be released unless the employee provides authorization, in writing. Otherwise, only the EAP clients and OEAP Consultants will know what has been discussed. The only exception is when a child or elder abuse is suspected or if a person is in immediate danger of harming himself/herself or others. State law requires that such instances or suspected instances be reported.

Q. How much does it cost to use OEAP or who pays the bills?

A. OEAP is part of the employee benefit package and there is no charge for using this service. If a referral is made for ongoing counseling, a co-payment will be charged for each session, for which the employee is responsible. Employees can contact OEAP for services regardless of whether the person is enrolled in the state medical plan. Referrals to other resources may or may not be free depending upon the resource provided. If there is a fee, it is the person's responsibility to pay the associated fees.

Q. What types of records are maintained in OEAP?

A. The OEAP maintain records on the type of intake calls and referrals made. A quarterly composite of types, number of calls and utilization of service is provided to state agencies for program performance. These reports contain no reference to individual callers or clients.

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- Q. As a supervisor or union representative, how do I communicate information about the OEAP to employees?**
- A.** Supervisors should be communicating with employees prior to the identification of a problem. If there are employees experiencing performance problems, they should be reminded of the OEAP. Supervisors may want to hold brief informational sessions with employee(s) to share information about the OEAP or request that OEAP provide an informational session with employees. Also, new employees will learn about the OEAP during new employee orientation.
- Q. What steps should I take, as a supervisor before contacting the OEAP regarding an employee problem affecting work performance?**
- A.** First, discuss the situation with your agency Human Resources Office prior to contacting OEAP. This provides the supervisor and human resources representative the opportunity to share information about the situation in order to follow up in an appropriate manner.
- Q. How do I request help for conflict management or mediation services?**
- A.** Call the OEAP at 800-221-6327 and provide a description of the issue to determine if mediation is a viable option.