

# **Directive on employee assistance programs**

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# Directive on Employee Assistance Programs

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## 1. Effective date

- 1.1 This directive takes effect on April 1, 2020.
- 1.2 In conjunction with the *Policy on People Management*, this directive replaces the *Policy on Employee Assistance Program* dates December 1, 1999.

## 2. Authorities

- 2.1 This directive is issued pursuant to the same authorities indicated in section 2 of the *Policy on People Management*.

## 3. Objective and expected result

- 3.1 The objective of this directive is to support employee health, well-being and productivity.
- 3.2 The expected result of this directive is that persons employed and their dependants who are experiencing personal or work-related issues have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

## 4. Requirements

- 4.1 The head of human resources is responsible for the following:
  - 4.1.1 Ensuring that the EAP is administered in accordance with the requirements contained in this directive, regardless of whether the service delivery model is internal, external, an interdepartmental arrangement or blended/hybrid;
    - 4.1.1.1 For greater certainty, organizations can deliver EAP services using the model that best responds to their operational needs;
  - 4.1.2 Ensuring access to the EAP for all persons employed and their dependants (i.e., “clients”);
  - 4.1.3 Ensuring that the EAP comprises at a minimum the following services:
    - 4.1.3.1 Timely and confidential assessment of the client’s needs and issues;

- 4.1.3.2 Short-term and confidential counselling to help clients alleviate or resolve their personal or work-related issues;
- 4.1.3.3 Referrals to internal or external community resources where appropriate;
- 4.1.3.4 Follow-up with the client to monitor progress and/or the impact of the EAP assistance and to determine whether the client needs additional services;
- 4.1.3.5 Education, promotion and prevention activities to support health and well-being, including the ongoing promotion of EAP services and how to access them;
- 4.1.3.6 Advisory services to managers, including on how to refer persons employed and dependants to the EAP; and
- 4.1.3.7 Initial stress debriefing (individually or in groups) after a critical incident, and EAP follow-up as appropriate;
- 4.1.4 Consulting employee representatives and providing them with an opportunity to help develop and participate in the educational and promotional aspects of the EAP;
- 4.1.5 Ensuring that EAP services are offered in both official languages;
- 4.1.6 Ensuring that procedures are established for the appropriate handling of personal information collected, used, retained, disclosed and disposed of in the context of the EAP;
  - 4.1.6.1 For greater clarity, confidentiality cannot be promised in the following situations:
    - 4.1.6.1.1 The circumstances set out in subsection 8(2) of the *Privacy Act*, which include court subpoenas;
    - 4.1.6.1.2 Suspected cases of abuse or neglect of a child;
    - 4.1.6.1.3 When there is a risk of serious bodily harm or death to the client or others; and
    - 4.1.6.1.4 Any other situation where the EAP practitioner is required by law to disclose confidential information;
- 4.1.7 Ensuring that measures are in place to monitor and assess the quality of the services provided; and
- 4.1.8 Ensuring that leave for consulting the EAP is administered in accordance with the relevant collective agreements, or with the employee's relevant terms and conditions

of employment for those employees not governed by a collective agreement.

## 5. Roles of other government organizations

- 5.1 The roles of other government organizations in relation to this directive are described in section 5 of the *Policy on People Management*.

## 6. Application

- 6.1 This directive applies to persons employed and the organizations listed in section 6 of the *Policy on People Management*.

## 7. References

### 7.1 Legislation

- *Canada Labour Code (Part II)*
- *Privacy Act*
- *Privacy Regulations*
- *Official Languages Act*

### 7.2 Related policy instruments

- *Contracting Policy*
- *Directive on Duty to Accommodate*
- *Operational Security Standard: Management of Information Technology Security*
- *Operational Security Standard on Physical Security*
- *Policy on Privacy Protection*
- *Security Organization and Administration Standard*
- *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector*

## 8. Enquiries

- 8.1 For interpretation of any aspect of this directive, contact Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Public Enquiries.

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