ILLINOIS NATIONAL GUARD

TPP 904-13
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

SUPERVISOR'S HANDBOOK

This supersedes Technician Personnel Plan 904, dated 1 October 1996 Chapter 10, Technician Assistance Program (TEP).

Users of this publication are invited to send comments and suggested improvements, through command channels, to The Adjutant General of Illinois, ATTN: HRO, 1301 N. MacArthur Blvd, Springfield, Illinois 62702-2399

FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL:

//Signature on file//

CONTENTS

Employee Assistant Program (EAP)

SECTION:	PARA.	PAGE
General	1-1	1
Responsibilities	1-2	1
Maintenance of Records	1-3	3
Role of Supervisor	1-4	3
Use of Sick Leave	1-5	4

1-1 GENERAL:

a. Public Laws 91-616 and 92-255 require the establishment of treatment and rehabilitation programs and services for the prevention of alcoholism, alcohol abuse, and drug abuse among Federal employees (excepted and competitive technicians). These programs are also to be extended to the immediate family of technicians who are felt to be alcohol or drug abusers.

b. Technician Personnel Plan 792 of the Illinois Department of Military Affairs sets forth the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for providing referral services and other assistance to aid technicians in resolving personal problems which impact upon their conduct and job performance. For further information in regarding the specifics of EAP, contact the State Equal Employment Manager (SEEM) in the Human Resource Office.

1-2 RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. The Employee Assistance Program Coordinator (EAPC) is the State Equal Employment Manager who has overall program responsibility. This responsibility includes providing information regarding EAP during the orientation of newly employed technicians. The EAPC, located in the Human Resource Office is responsible for administering the Employee Assistance Program and:

(1) Arranging for educational materials and/or training programs for all employees to be used to prevent or discourage alcohol or drug abuse or other covered problems within the technician work force.

(2) Arranging for training of supervisors and managers, to ensure that they understand the program and procedures for dealing with technicians who are experiencing alcohol or drug abuse problems, financial difficulties, legal, family, emotional, or other personal problems, and the benefits from successful rehabilitation.

(3) Provide advisory and technical assistance to supervisors and managers for dealing with technicians experiencing performance and conduct problems, which are thought to be contributed to or aggravated by the personal problems mentioned above.

b. As supervisors and managers, you legitimately have fairly explicit expectations of employees in terms of job performance and behavior. When an employee fails to fulfill these expectations, you have both the right and the duty to confront the employee with the deficiencies and provide them the opportunity to correct the problem(s). Dealing with poor performance or improper conduct are basic supervisory responsibilities. A supervisor is to:

(1) Ensure that each employee understands the quality of work performance and standards for conduct and attendance that are expected.

(2) Be alert, through the continuous observations made for the appraisal process, to any adverse changes in work performance, conduct, or attendance. Some of the signs to watch for are:

(a) Increased absenteeism or tardiness

(b) Lower job efficiency

(c) Diminishing or poor work quality

(d) Missed suspense's, deadlines, or appointments

(e) Unpredictable behavior

(f) Increases in accidents or safety violations

(g) Impaired personal relationships

(h) Evidence of financial difficulties

(i) Marital or family problems

(j) Unexplained sickness or other emotionally based behavior patterns

(3) Document specific occasions when an employee's work performance, behavior or attendance fails to meet minimum standards, or where the pattern of performance appears to be deteriorating.

(4) Conduct an interview with the employee focusing on poor work performance or deficient behavior. The employee should be advised of the availability of the EAP if it is felt that the poor performance is being caused or contributed by any personal or health problem. All performance and conduct related counseling and actions taken are to be documented thoroughly.

(5) Offer a firm choice prior to any adverse action being taken if the employee refuses to take advantage of the EAP and their performance or conduct continues to be unacceptable. If the employee chooses to accept assistance through the program, the planned action should be held in abeyance until the employee completes whatever program they are going through and performance shows improvement. If the employee refuses to accept assistance, you are to continue with progressive, appropriate action to deal with the employee in accordance with appropriate regulations and other guidance.

(6) Contact the EAPC for advice and assistance if observations indicate the possibility of a referral is needed. As the supervisor/manager, you must be able to describe the behavior, but should never try to diagnose, assign cause or draw a conclusion. Those are medical or trained professional counseling responsibilities.

1-3 MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS:

a. The documentation of an employee's deficient job performance, conduct, or attendance and the actions taken to motivate the individual's correction of the deficiencies will always be documented on the NGB Form 904-1, and filed in the supervisor's work file. The notes maintained on these issues are not subject to the increased confidentiality requirements of the EAP.

b. Documentation of referrals for counseling related to performance, conduct, or attendance will not be made in the supervisor's work file, however, nor will they be maintained in the technician's Official Personnel File (OPF). Records on technicians who have been referred for counseling will be maintained in a secure room, a locked file cabinet, or other similar container when not in use.

c. Discussion of technician problems, even while attempting to maintain anonymity of the subject of discussion, with persons not having a need to know is discouraged on the grounds of ethics and good supervisory practices.

d. When a technician is referred for counseling, you are not entitled to feedback concerning that employee's progress or performance unless the EAPC receives written authorization to provide that information from the individual.

e. If the EAPC receives written consent from the employee to provide you with information concerning progress, that information is not to be shared with anyone, including your supervisors, unless:

(1) The consent specifically indicates authorization for disclosure of the information to others besides the immediate supervisor with the need to know, and identifies them; or

(2) You receive a separate written consent from the technician to further disclose the information received, and it identifies to whom it may be disclosed.

f. The legal liabilities for unauthorized disclosure of any information relating to a technician's participation in the EAP for alcohol and/or drug abuse are severe: **ANY PERSON WHO VIOLATES THE CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS OF PUBLIC LAW 92-255 MAY BE FINED UP TO $500 FOR THE FIRST OFFENSE, AND UP TO $5000 FOR EACH SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE.**

1-4 ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR:

a. In dealing with potential alcohol and/or drug abuse or other personal problems which impact upon acceptable performance, conduct, or attendance, the supervisor's role is to identify the problem employee early and motivate him/her to accept help. It is not the role of the supervisor to help the employee cover up the problem, nor is it to be a counselor or therapist.

b. A technician's desire to hold onto their job is a very effective tool for you to use to motivate that individual to seek and accept help. By using your authority fairly and constructively, you can make the technician

understand that, unless the suspected problem causing the poor performance or conduct is solved, and the performance or conduct is brought back up to standards, they will be subjected to disciplinary or adverse action and possible removal.

c. A supervisor is not to attempt to deal with the possible alcohol, drug, or personal problem. Only the facts of unacceptable job performance, conduct, or attendance, and the ultimate consequences if not corrected, are to be dealt with. The supervisory actions taken will be the same as any other work performance, conduct, or attendance problem.

d. As soon as it is perceived that an employee is suffering from declining performance or conduct that may be influenced by a personal problem, you should present the EAP as one means of helping them understand what those problems may be and how to resolve them. Assuring the employee that participation in the EAP will not jeopardize their jobs or future with the National Guard is essential. It is also necessary that use of the EAP is voluntary and strictly confidential.

e. You should make contact with the EAPC early whenever you have an employee who is having performance or conduct problems where you suspect alcohol, drugs, or personal problems might be a factor. This is especially important when it becomes clear that normal supervisory methods are not succeeding in assisting the employee to attain acceptable work standards. The earlier that a referral is made, the better the chance for a favorable outcome, and the possible avoidance of costly and time-consuming personnel actions. Allowing problems to advance to a severe stage can lessen the probability of getting them resolved, quickly or at all, and getting the employee back to a productive work status.

1-5 USE OF SICK LEAVE: Employees who decide to undergo a prescribed program of treatment under referral from the program, which will involve working with a doctor, should be granted sick leave like any other employee needing to see a physician. If an employee is going through treatment for problems not requiring some type of medical treatment (clergy, marriage counselor, financial manager, etc.), annual leave should be granted. The Human Resource Office can provide further assistance in this area.