

April is EAP Awareness Month



Manuel L. Peralta Jr.

Through the years, we have encouraged our members to use the EAP services that were bargained into our national agreement.

To read about EAP services, begin by going to nalc.org, hover over “Workplace Issues,” then go to the “Safety and Health” tab. While holding there, you will see three options to the right, click on “Employee Assistance Program” and you will land on our EAP information page.

The first tabbed section explains that the Employee Assistance Program is governed by Article 35 of the National Agreement. EAP is jointly administered by the NALC,

the American Postal Workers Union, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union and the USPS. It provides confidential education, referral and counseling to help employees through personal challenges of all types, including alcoholism and drug-abuse. This first section also contains a link (eap4you.com), which will take you to the national service provider of EAP services, currently New Directions Behavioral Health (NDBH). Please see below for information once we land there.

The next section of our web page contains copies of *PUB 518 - EAP Supervisor's Guide*, explaining the EAP program for all employees and *PUB 519*, which addresses counseling as follows:

The voluntary and confidential counseling services of the EAP provide an excellent opportunity to help employees address personal and family problems. EAP counseling helps employees with relationship concerns, depression, anxiety, divorce, death of a loved one, financial concerns, stress, substance abuse and other personal issues. Services are available to Postal Service employees and their immediate family members.

These publications also emphasize your right to confidentiality as follows:

Your privacy is protected by strict federal and state laws and regulations and by counselors’ professional ethical standards. Information you share with the EAP may not be released to anyone without your prior written consent, except in these situations: As required by law (for example, when a person’s emotional condition is a threat to himself, herself or others; or if child or elder abuse is suspected) or when a court order is issued upon a showing of good cause. Promotion of EAP services to all our employees is the duty and responsibility of the District Advisory Committee (DAC)

or the Joint Committee on Employee Assistance Program (JCEAP), whose composition is from the three national postal unions and management. If these advisory committees are not meeting, they are unable to promote EAP services to the employees in that district. The recent restructuring of the USPS has decimated the functionality of these committees and while the national unions work towards getting our committees to properly function, we need your help to share your knowledge of this program with your co-workers.

Now, as mentioned above, eap4you.com takes you to the NDBH landing page. When you land there, explore the menu items at the top. Services connects you to counseling, coaching, EAP benefits, health assessments and information on child care, elder care and crisis resources. You will also find a number of resources under “Suicide Prevention,” “Veterans & Military” and “Substance Abuse.”

As you scroll down the page, explore the section titled “Tools to Build a Better You.” Keep scrolling and explore each section as you learn all that is available. When you get to the bottom of the page, click the button in the “Search and Connect to Support” section. You will be asked for your ZIP Code and it will provide you with a listing of other help resources available.

Now, one element of the EAP that rarely gets enough attention outside the walls of the Post Office is the fact that EAP services are available at no cost to employees and their families living under the same roof.

Once you are familiar with the services available, you can explore connecting your family members with that information, such as by helping your children cope with pressures that we may not understand.

We hope you find what you are looking for and that you connect with the resources you need. Be well.

Make the Call!

USPS Employee Assistance Program

1-800-327-4968

(1-800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 1-877-492-7341

www.EAP4YOU.com