

Work-life balance employee assistance program (EAP)

Questions and answers

Q How does the work-life balance employee assistance program work?

A Help is only a call or a click away. Your employees are given a toll-free number and a website address to access — both are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If your staff call, master's-level consultants are available immediately to discuss their concerns. The EAP services are designed to help your managers and front line staff be healthier and more productive by helping them with problems at both work and home.

Q How do employees access the EAP service?

A Employees call one of the central, toll-free numbers (1-800-854-1446 for English, 1-877-858-2147 for Spanish and 1-800-999-3004 for TTY/TDD) or go online at www.lifebalance.net using their desktop or mobile device (ID and password are both "lifebalance").

Q Who provides the work-life balance EAP services?

A The work-life balance employee assistance program is provided through Unum, as part of your group disability or life insurance, in partnership with LifeWorks. The two companies began working together in 1992, when they offered the nation's first work-life balance employee assistance program integrated with group insurance. The resulting service provides clients with an affordable and valuable offer that benefits both them and their employees.

LifeWorks partners with more than 42,000 organizations around the world on health and productivity solutions. They provide work-life services in 170 languages to over 14 million employees around the world.

Q Do employees have to pay to use the services?

A Unum is providing the program through your group disability or life insurance. Your employees are not charged for calling a consultant, using the website or downloading materials. Also, employees can receive up to three local, face-to-face counseling sessions* for each problem (not

just per year). However, if an employee or caller selects a referral to a child or elder care provider, attorney, social worker, etc., the caller is responsible for paying for services not included in this program. In addition, some services may be payable under the employee's medical or health insurance plan, so the consultant will advise the caller to review his or her policy's details.

Q How can this service help my company?

A The work-life balance employee assistance program can help you with increasing staff demands, administrative requirements, assisting employees on disability and addressing productivity. In addition to helping your employees become more productive by assisting them with their personal or professional problems, this program can also help your managers. Managers and supervisors can call the toll-free number around the clock to speak with master's-level management consultants who can coach them on handling disciplinary actions, staff communications, performance problems, and corporate change. They can use these consultants to prepare for a difficult conversation, make a mandatory employee EAP referral, have a confidential sounding board and get an unbiased, third-party view. They also have unlimited website access to online guides, articles, web links, e-books and podcasts to help them manage their work force and their work load.

This program is also part of a beneficial and valuable benefits package that can help recruit and retain high-performance employees. From around-the-clock phone consultations with master's-level consultants to elder-and child-care searches and referrals, the work-life balance EAP can help your staff balance the shifting priorities of work and home. Employees and their families will have unlimited access to resources — online and by phone — to help with work issues, child care, addiction, depression, elder care and other concerns. In addition to phone assistance, three local face-to-face counseling sessions* (per issue, not per year) are also included.

Q How can one toll-free number help employees located all over the country?

A When employees call the toll-free number, a consultant will talk to them about their problems and needs no matter where they reside in the U.S., no matter what time of day they call. LifeWorks maintains a national database of local mental health providers contracted to provide face-to-face sessions as well as other referral sources.

Q Are all calls confidential?

A Yes, within the constraints of the law.** No information about your employees or what they discuss with the consultants will be available to anyone without their explicit written consent — not even to their family.

Q What information do employees need to give consultants?

A The consultant will ask for name, phone number, email address, city and the nature of the call. This helps the consultant address the caller personally, email requested information and make referrals to local resources. It also helps the consultant in subsequent calls. Each caller is screened for risk to ensure they are not in danger. All information provided is confidential from the employer.

Q Can the service help if the employee's family lives in another state?

A Absolutely. A consultant will provide information on various options and alternatives available in the caller's community (or in a community he or she specifies) when direct services related to legal resources, child care, elder care, disability assistance or mental health counseling are necessary.

Q Can the service help with special needs?

A Yes. Programs available for special needs children and adults vary considerably depending on the family's location. In many areas, resources are scarce. Nevertheless, a consultant will help the family identify all possible options available to meet their special need — and work with them until a solution is found.

Q Can employees call more than once?

A Yes. Employees and their immediate family members can call the service as often as they wish for information and referrals. They can also call to discuss their current arrangements, concerns regarding day-to-day issues and problems balancing the demands of work against those of a personal nature.

Q Can employees talk to the same consultant?

A Yes. Actually, they are encouraged to talk with the same consultant. Usually toward the end of the first call, the consultant will ask whether the caller wants to talk again. If the caller does, he or she decides who will call whom, when, where, and whether the consultant can leave his or her name and a message on the caller's answering machine.

Q Can employees give the 800-number to just anyone?

A You and your employees decide who gets the number. The service is for all of your staff that is covered by the Unum group insurance plan and anyone close to them — children, parents, domestic partners, and spouses — whose situation causes them stress and concern.

Q Can young children and teenagers call?

A Many parents give this number to older children. Consultants usually encourage children to talk to their parents, or maybe an aunt or grandparent, etc. When they get calls from children, they may ask who gave them the number and if they can talk to a parent to get permission to speak with the child. If a child needs to see a counselor in person, the consultant will require parental permission to refer a child to an EAP provider.

We also require that the parent attend at least the first session with the child. An exception to this is if a minor is emancipated. By law, minors cannot be referred to resources without their parents' permission. An exception would be if the consultant felt a child were in danger — then the consultant may call local law enforcement officials on the child's behalf.

* In California and Nevada, employees and their family members may confer with a local consultant up to three times in a six-month time period.

** The consultants must abide by federal regulations regarding duty to warn of harm to self or others. In these instances, the consultant may be mandated to report a situation to the appropriate authority.

The Work-life balance employee assistance program, provided by LifeWorks, is available with select Unum insurance offerings. Terms and availability of service are subject to change. Service provider does not provide legal advice; please consult your attorney for guidance.

Services are not valid after coverage terminates. Please contact your Unum representative for details.

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