

MARCH
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FrontLine Leader

Employees — Your most valuable asset



We had an accident at our plant. It was a close call, but no one died. However, two employees were hospitalized. Should I ask the EAP to have a counselor reach out to the employees to deal with the trauma or recommend the EAP to them later?

A: Contact Continuum to discuss the situation and the best approach. Typically, EAPs do not initiate counseling with employees, but after a critical incident and one that may be overtly public, reminding the workers of the support services available to them

and their family members through Continuum is always appropriate. Don't forget yourself and the other employees. It's not unusual for others to have fear, concerns, anxiety, or even guilt over some aspect of the event that they believe, even mistakenly, could

have controlled in order to prevent the accident. Reach out to the EAP to discuss what would be best for everyone involved. Being injured isn't the only way a significant incident like this can impact an individual.

If an employee is showing signs of depression that the general public is educated to understand, why is it a problem to tell the worker that he or she appears to have depression and skip the job performance problems as the reason for a management referral to the EAP?



A: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) become relevant when your discussion centers on the existence of a medical problem. If your employee has not stated he or she is depressed or suffers with a condition that needs some sort of help to overcome, then it is better to focus just on the performance-related matters.

What's more, these behaviors do not demonstrate that you know or should have known the worker is depressed. Acting as if the worker is depressed would also be relevant to employment laws. The behaviors listed above alone are enough for a management referral. At the EAP, the issue of depression or some other condition with similar symptoms will be explored.

You're right; most people know a few or more symptoms of depression, but missing work, coming in late, staring off in a daze, or not engaging with fellow workers effectively enough to manage the work does not necessarily mean major depression.

Effective communication is always key and increases the likelihood of helping the employee make the changes needed for success. Loss of a valuable worker is a risk if the supervisor does not go to the next step to formalize the EAP referral with continuing performance problems.



- **I'm aware that Continuum offers consultative services. Can you share a few examples of what supervisors can request to receive help with?**

A: Although EAPs consult with managers in many ways, some of the most valuable include engaging and managing teams, offering tips for praising and inspiring employees, obtaining resources, being a sounding board, resolving conflicts, improving communication orally

and in writing, handling stress, overcoming worry and isolation, improving your relationship with upper managers, helping resolve personal problems, and offering tips on observing, documenting, addressing and following up on employees after a management referral.

Note that Continuum will assist you within its confidential boundaries established by the program's policies. Knowing this can prompt using the EAP more often and encourage you to be forthcoming about limitations and frustrations you experience so you can resolve problems and enjoy your job more.



My employee told me he uses CBD oil to help with his knee pain and that it's been very effective. He indicated that the label says it does not contain marijuana, but he has heard that he could test positive on a drug screen and is concerned. How should I respond?

A: CBD (cannabidiol) oil is getting a lot of attention these days. There are a myriad of companies promoting it as a natural remedy for pain relief, anxiety and stress reduction, and even improved sleep.

Most of these companies claim that their products are free of THC, the psychoactive compound in marijuana, so they should not lead to a positive workplace drug test. Nevertheless, stories are popping up all over about employees who claim to have tested positive for THC on a workplace drug screen.

Due to this, the Department of Transportation recently released a memo on CBD oil, which included the following information:

The Department of Transportation requires testing for marijuana, not CBD. The labeling of many CBD products may be misleading because products could contain higher levels of THC than the product label states. The FDA does not currently certify the levels of THC in the CBD products, so there is no Federal oversight to ensure that the labels are accurate.

To read the entire notice, visit <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDOT/bulletins/27bd19f>