



**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

General Order Number: 08-06	Effective Date: February 18, 2021
Division: Health and Safety	
Chapter: Employee & Volunteer Assistance Programs	
By Order of the Fire Chief: Tiffany D. Green <i>TJG</i>	Issue Date: February 18, 2021

POLICY

The Prince George’s County Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department recognizes that unresolved problems have a negative impact on the individual, as well as creates potential for decline in work attendance, job performance, and overall safety.

Because our personnel are entrusted with the responsibility to protect the lives and property of the citizens of Prince George’s County, it is of paramount importance that personnel obtain supplemental Departmental assistance for any problem that has the potential to interfere with our Fire/EMS Department services.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the Volunteer Assistance Program (VAP) will provide assessment and navigation services to the Prince George’s County Fire/EMS Department. The programs coordinate a wide range of counseling support options for the personnel of the Department. This program seeks to assist personnel with clinical assessment and navigation to link, as needed, various providers to assist with mental and physical well-being.

The key to the success of these programs is the confidentiality in which the Fire/EMS Department’s EAP/VAP Counselors assess and navigate “clients” down pathways that lead to a healthier functionality and emotionality.

DEFINITIONS

Administrative Leave – Leave status at the discretion of the Appointing Authority, for County employee(s) in interest to consult with appropriate county personnel regarding counseling in accordance with Personnel law, section 16-222(a)(10).

Client – Employee or volunteer who is seen by the EAP/VAP Counselor via Self-Referral or Supervisory Referral.

Clinical Assessment – A way of diagnosing and planning treatment for a patient that involves evaluating someone in order to figure out what is wrong. There are many types of psychological assessments, all of which have their own strengths and weaknesses.

Counselor – Authorized person who gives advice or counseling.



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Family Medical Leave – Provides eligible employees with up to 15 weeks of job-protected leave status per year, for an employee's serious health condition or a family member's serious health condition, in accordance with *General Order 11-18, Parental Leave and Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)*.

Navigation – The method of determining position, direction or course of action.

Stabilization – The process to make stable, steadfast, or firm.

PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES

I. General Provisions

- A. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the Volunteer Assistance Program (VAP) will provide assessment and navigation services to the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department personnel. The program serves to coordinate a wide range of counseling support options for the personnel of the Department. This program seeks to assist personnel with clinical assessment and navigation to link as needed various providers to assist with mental and physical well-being.

II. Confidentiality Exceptions

- A. All information revealed by the client will remain completely confidential, with the exception of any of the following:
1. The client reveals information about child abuse or neglect that is required by law to be released to appropriate child protective services.
 2. The client gives **WRITTEN** authorization for release of information.
 3. The EAP/VAP receives a Judicial Order(s) to release specific information for a court proceeding.
 4. The client is a danger to self and others.
 5. The client is in the state of a bona fide medical emergency and needs medical attention.

III. Referral Types

A. Self-Referral

1. Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department personnel may choose to seek services and/or guidance through the Departmental EAP and VAP before unresolved personal problems accelerate to the point of impacting health, conduct and job performance.



B. Supervisory Referral

1. In the case a supervisor experiences an on-duty conduct or performance issue of personnel that hinders work assignment or jeopardizes crew/team integrity or cohesion, the supervisor shall refer on-duty personnel to the appropriate Departmental assistance program according to the following procedure:
 - a) Promptly complete and transmit a Supervisory Referral Form to pgfdeapvap@co.pg.md.us.
 - b) Call the Departmental EAP/VAP counselor to confirm receipt of supervisory referral, answer outstanding counselor concerns and set an appointment time for the mandated counseling session. Supervisory referrals shall be scheduled same work shift or next work shift as a detail. Personnel may opt to attend the mandatory appointment on their own time only if scheduled before the shift following supervisory referral date.
 - c) Documentation of referral to the EAP/VAP cannot become a part of the employee's personnel record, PPA documentation, or disciplinary charges.
 - d) Referring supervisor shall privately and confidentially discuss the conduct and/or performance concerns with the on-duty personnel as well as the justification and intent for mandated supervisory referral.
 - e) The counselor will obtain written consent from the client to inform the supervisor only of the following facts:
 - (1) Whether or not the employee/member agreed to participate in the program.
 - (2) Whether or not the employee/member is attending EAP/VAP appointments.
 - (3) Whether or not the employee/member should be removed from assigned work shift for any duration and referred to Health & Wellness for further determination.
2. If the employee/member declines to engage or accept guidance, the EAP/VAP counselor will document this fact and then notify the referring supervisor. Supervisory-referred personnel are not required to participate in the program beyond the single mandated visit. If supervisory-referred personnel fail to show up to scheduled appointment, the supervisor will be notified of non-compliance of the referral. Health & Wellness will address duty status and fitness for duty in accordance with *General Order 08-09, Non-Service Connected Temporary Disability, Light Duty Requests and Light Duty Assignments*.
3. **Supervisors are reminded that the Employee Assistance Program is not a substitute for performance and conduct disciplinary actions.** Any employee/member that exhibits notable performance and/or conduct problems is subject to routine disciplinary actions, even after referral to the EAP/VAP.



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IV. Program Operations

A. Employees and volunteer members will have access to EAP/VAP Service via Supervisory Referral or Self-Referral.

1. Career Employees

a) Supervisory Referral Procedure

(1) On-duty employees who need services may be placed on administrative leave by the designee of the Fire Chief, until they can be seen by the EAP Counselor.

(a) Employee meets with EAP/VAP Counselor for assessment of situation and/or condition.

(b) Employee is provided with assessment and recommendations for services outside of initial session, with due dates for completion.

(c) Employees assessed to not be fit for operational assignment, will be placed on light duty in accordance with *General Order 08-09, Non-Service Connected Temporary Disability, Light Duty Requests and Light Duty Assignments*.

(d) Employees assessed to be fit for Full Duty will returned to duty.

b) Self-Referral Procedure

(1) On-duty employees who self-disclose the need for services may be placed on administrative leave by the designee of the Fire Chief, until they can be seen by the EAP/VAP Counselor.

(a) Employee meets with the EAP Counselor for assessment of situation and/or condition within 24-48 hours.

(b) Employee is provided with assessment and recommendations for services outside of initial session.

(c) Employees assessed to not be fit for operational assignment will be placed on light duty in accordance with *General Order 08-09, Non-Service Connected Temporary Disability, Light Duty Requests and Light Duty Assignments*.

(2) Off-duty employees will schedule a meeting with the EAP Counselor.

(a) Employee meets with the EAP Counselor for assessment of situation and/or condition within 24-48 hours.

(b) Employee is provided with assessment and recommendations for services outside of initial session.

(c) Employees assessed to not be fit for operational assignment will be placed on light duty in accordance with *General Order 08-09, Non-Service Connected Temporary Disability, Light Duty Requests and Light Duty Assignments*.

(d) Employees assessed to be fit for Full Duty will returned to duty.



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2. Volunteer Members

a) Supervisory Referral Procedure

- (1) On-duty volunteer members who are supervisory-referred for services will be removed from operations by the designee of the Fire Chief, until they can be seen by the VAP Counselor.
 - (a) Volunteer member meets with the VAP Counselor for assessment of situation and/or condition.
 - (b) Volunteer member is provided with assessment and recommendations for services outside of initial session.
 - (c) Volunteers assessed to not be fit for operational assignment will be placed on light duty in accordance with *General Order 08-09, Non-Service Connected Temporary Disability, Light Duty Requests and Light Duty Assignments*.
 - (d) Volunteers assessed to be fit for Full Duty will returned to duty.
- (2) Off-duty volunteer members will schedule a meeting with the VAP Counselor.
 - (a) Volunteer member meets with VAP Counselor for assessment of situation and/or condition within 24-48 hours.
 - (b) Volunteer member is provided with assessment and recommendations for services outside of initial session.
 - (c) Volunteers assessed to not be fit for operational assignment, will be placed on light duty in accordance with *General Order 08-09, Non-Service Connected Temporary Disability, Light Duty Requests and Light Duty Assignments*.
 - (d) Volunteers assessed to be fit for Full Duty will returned to duty.

V. Clinical Assessment and/or Navigation

- A. Employee or volunteer will meet with the EAP/VAP Counselor via face-to-face or virtual meeting. The EAP/VAP Counselor will assess disclosed issues via supervisory or self-referral. The employee/volunteer will be provided with a written recommended treatment plan with due dates for completion.

VI. Follow-Up

- A. Employee or volunteer will provide EAP/VAP Counselor with all required documentation in accordance with clinical assessment/treatment plan. The EAP/VAP Counselor will send a recommendation for release to full duty or light duty to Health & Wellness. Health & Wellness, based on EAP/VAP recommendation, will change employee/volunteer duty status or refer for fitness for duty in accordance with *General Order 08-09, Non-Service Connected Temporary Disability, Light Duty Requests and Light Duty Assignments*.



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VII. Departmental Therapist/Counselor Contact Information

Office Phone: 301-883-6270

Office Fax: 301-883-6107

Latif Rasheed: 240-832-5758

Dr. Demetri Kornegay: 202-570-3084

Physical Address: 1400 McCormick Drive, Suite 310, Largo, MD 20774

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS / ATTACHMENTS

Attachment – Supervisory Referral Form



**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
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Supervisory Referral for Services Form

EMPLOYEE NAME & CONTACT NUMBER: _____

REFERRAL JUSTIFICATION RELATED TO PERFORMANCE, BEHAVIOR AND/OR ATTENDANCE

Please provide a brief description of the presenting problem or concern:

Please describe any relevant behaviors or actions displayed by the employee:

Please provide information regarding any direct observations, credible third-party reports, or other reliable evidence:

Please provide any particular questions, concerns, or topics that the Counselor should address:

AFTER READING EACH STATEMENT, PLEASE PLACE YOUR INITIALS IN THE SPACE PROVIDED AND SIGN/DATE BELOW

By the signature below, I acknowledge that I understand the following:

_____ The purpose of the evaluation is to enable the EAP/VAP Counselor to make a recommendation to the Office of the Fire Chief about whether the individual is unfit for duty, specifically unable to safely and effectively perform duties due to psychological factors.

Supervisory Referral for Services Form

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_____ If the individual is determined to be unfit for duty, EAP/VAP will initiate the process to place the individual in an operational status in accordance with General Orders 08-06 and 08-09.

_____ If the individual is fit for duty and returned to assignment, I will only be advised of the individual's compliance with the EAP/VAP mandated appointment. No other information about the individual will be disclosed.

_____ I may be called upon to provide a written release of information in the event that an additional evaluation or other specific recommendations related to this referral are requested.

_____ No copies of referral forms shall be maintained in any location outside of EAP/VAP.

Referring Supervisor Rank, Name and Contact Number: _____

Referring Supervisor Signature: _____

Return Form to: Latif Rasheed, Counselor IV, EAP/VAP Program

1400 McCormick Drive, Suite #240

Largo, Maryland 20774

Office: 301-883-6270

Cell: 240-832-5758

Virgil D. Walker, Manager, Health & Wellness

6820 Webster Street, Suite 120

Landover Hills, Maryland 20784

Office: 301-583-1951

Cell: 301-456-4456