



MARIPOSA COUNTY

Human Resources/Risk Management • (209) 742-1375



RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2015-265

MEETING: June 2, 2015

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Steve Johnson, Human Resources Director - Risk Manager

RE: Employee Assistance Program

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Approve the County of Mariposa's Participation in an Employee Assistance Program ("EAP"), that is provided by CSAC-EIA through its contract with the EAP provider Managed Health Network (MHN), in the amount of \$8,595.60 for twelve (12) months, provided the EAP provider is responsive to the County's needs.

County employees face many of the emotional problems prevalent in society today. In some cases, these problems affect the employee's health, effectiveness on the job, and work attendance. Specific problems facing County employees include but are not limited to: financial, drug and alcohol, health, death in family, illness of an elder relative or child, and the pressures and stresses of balancing work and family responsibilities. In addition, due to some of the responsibilities of first responders and social workers, secondary traumatization is a prevalent cause of burn out in these professions and one that can be addressed through adequate access to resources such as an EAP.

The County does not currently provide employees and their dependents with an EAP. In recognizing problems that employees face, MHN's EAP services include: confidential personal counseling, work and family related issues, stress, childcare issues, eldercare, substance abuse, etc. In addition, EAP programs provide a valuable tool for supervisors to refer troubled employees to professional outside help. The function of the EAP is to see to the emotional, mental and psychological health of County workers and their families by providing access to outside counseling and referrals to appropriate community and professional resources for help in resolving problems.

MHN's EAP services also include practical advice through unlimited telephone consultation with managers, timely referral information and educational literature for a wide range of needs including child and elder care, educational seminars and a robust website with useful assessment tools and resources, all as part of their annual cost. Additionally, MHN's EAP provides quarterly utilization reports that reflect the services used by the County employees and their dependents. County Employees and their family members are eligible for up to three in person or telephone counseling sessions per incident per year, in addition to the other services mentioned previously.

Benefits of an EAP Program

The benefits of an EAP include the following:

- Productivity-personal problems of employees can have an impact on their job performance and productivity, leading to strained relations with co-workers and frequent absences or accidents. An EAP can help County employees and their eligible family members deal with difficulties that may be causing them trouble in the workplace. They will be able to get short term, results oriented professional psychological counselling to help them resolve their problems. The result is a healthier, more productive employee with improved relations at home and at work.
- Confidentiality-the County is not notified when an employee uses the service. In addition, employees can access the EAP services by phone, or in person. This is especially important in small, rural communities, where access to professional services and privacy concerns may be barriers to our employees seeking help.
- Immediate Access-employees have access to an EAP hotline 24 hours a day, so there is no need to wait to seek assistance. If an appointment with a medical professional or counselor is necessary, the employee can arrange to see one in just a few days.
- Improved Organizational Morale-in addition to providing onsite traumatic incident response and consultation and support, MHN provides on-line and in person trainings that help to foster a healthy workplace.

Overall, employee attendance and job performance are also improved.

Ways to Contact the EAP Program

There are three ways for employees to contact the EAP Program:

- Face-to-face counseling - Talk in person with a provider (a marriage and family therapist or psychologist, for example) from the MHN network. MHN can offer a referral when an employee calls them, or the employee can search for a provider on the MHN member website.
- Telephonic consultations - Very convenient and private.
- Web-video consultations - Convenient and easy, but with a personal touch.

Review of MHN

County Human Resources/Risk Management staff worked closely with the County's insurance and loss prevention administrators, CSAC-EIA, in determining the viability of the services offered by MHN, based on the following: types of services offered, quality of services offered, customer service capability, online tools, communication and marketing materials, statistical reports and contract length.

In addition, the EAP's costs are mitigated in part because of the fact that CSAC-EIA brings a competitive volume discount to bear on their relationship with this vendor.

County Human Resources/Risk Management staff have also discussed this EAP benefit with all of the County's bargaining units, consistent with State law.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

The County does not have an EAP at this time.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

- 1) Continue with the current system, without an EAP, and have employees rely on their Medical Insurance provider to provide counseling and other services that are offered through an EAP. However, this alternative would not provide the County with the ability to make management referrals, utilize the traumatic incident response provisions or offer the associated EAP training tools that come with the EAP offerings.
- 2) Look to utilize another EAP vendor. However, by utilizing the power of "volume purchasing" which comes as part of the County's affiliation with CSAC-EIA, it will be very difficult to match or better the current cost of the proposed EAP.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

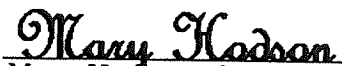
The overall, annual cost to the County of MHN's services is based on the following formula: \$1.90 per eligible employee per month x 12 months x 377 employees = \$8,595.60 annually. The cost of the program is included in the General Insurance budget in the Fiscal Year 2015-16 Requested Budget. In the General Insurance budget each Department pays the share of cost for their employees. In Departments that don't rely on General Fund dollars, such as Human Services, these costs can be covered by Program Realignment funds. In other Departments, General Fund dollars may need to be budgeted to cover these costs. That being said, EAP outcomes including: improved morale, increased productivity, decreased absences, decreased performance issues, decreased turnover and decreased workers compensation claims, will likely result in an overall savings to the County.

ATTACHMENTS:

MHN Agreement_CSAC-EIA_7.1.07 (PDF)

CAO RECOMMENDATION

Requested Action Recommended



Mary Hoatson, CAO

5/28/2015

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Marshall Long, District III Supervisor

SECONDER: Rosemarie Smallcombe, District I Supervisor

AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Carrier