

Frequently Asked Questions

Homewood City Schools' Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

What is the purpose of the EAP?

The Employee Assistance Program is an employee benefit designed to provide employees and their immediate household members with resources for resolving work-related and personal issues. The services are rendered by the Employee Assistance and Counseling Center of UAB and are designed to support and provide practical tools for balance in all areas of life by providing confidential counseling for individual, family, and relationship matters. The goal is to assist employees in clarifying issues, exploring options, and finding solutions. Overall, the EAP provides employee assistance, confidential counseling, community referral, supervisor consultation, crisis management, and a variety of educational programs to support successful work-life integration.

What are some issues for which I could use EAP?

EAP services include individual, couples, and family counseling to assist in clarifying issues, exploring options, and finding solutions, as well as educational programs to support successful work-life integration. EAPs help people work through many issues, including:

- Stress at work or home
- Couples, relationship or family problems
- Parenting
- Alcohol or drug addiction
- Smoking
- Grief and loss
- Loneliness
- Communication problems
- Depression or mood swings
- Eating disorders
- Self-esteem issues
- Stress related to physical or mental illness
- Stress related to finances
- Divorce

The EAP also provides a variety of stress management classes, educational programs, and support groups to support successful work-life integration and the quest for health in all areas of life. Programs provided and/or sponsored by the Employee Assistance and Counseling Center include: Meditation, T'ai Chi, Yoga, Beat the Pack (smoking cessation), Planning for Retirement, Women's Support Group, a Displaced Employees Support Group, and Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR)

The EAP also offers a confidential, anonymous Online Mental Health Screening link for depression, eating disorders, alcoholism, bipolar disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder.

Are the visits confidential?

Every consultation with the EAP Counselor is strictly confidential.

Records related to your visits are stored off site and available only to Employee Assistance and Counseling Center staff. Information is not available for, nor included in, personnel records. Information about you is protected by law and not released to supervisors, coworkers, friends, or family without specific permission approved by you in writing. Exceptions to this are dictated by law in cases such as risk of harm to self or others.

During the initial intake session, the client is asked to sign a specific limited consent form that enables the EAP counselor to consult with other Employee Assistance and Counseling Center professional staff members. The specific limited consent form does not in any way imply or grant consent to release any information regarding client counseling to anyone outside of the Employee Assistance and Counseling Center.

If you are referred by your supervisor, you will be given the option of signing a limited release to allow the Employee Assistance and Counseling Center counselor to verify your attendance and participation. No other information regarding clients or client attendance may be released at any time to anyone without the prior written consent of the client. This includes requests for information by supervisors, family members, treatment facilities, and all others.

The Employee Assistance and Counseling Center counselors understand that the assurance of confidentiality is essential to counseling progress and are dedicated to upholding their professional code of ethics and the center's policy of ensuring client confidentiality.

What are the qualifications of the counselors providing services?

The counseling staff consists of counselors with a variety of backgrounds and credentials to meet the varied needs of clients. Professional counselors include Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs), Associate Licensed Counselors (ALC), clinically supervised Counseling Interns at both the Master's and Doctorate level, and a licensed professional Art Therapist (LPAT). An Accountant provides financial counseling. In addition, counselors are trained in an array of specialized areas, including: couples, family and relationship therapy, disaster response, gerontology, addictions, interventions, trauma, smoking cessation, art, expressive therapies, and other non-traditional therapies. For more information about EAP staff and their credentials, please visit

<https://www.uab.edu/humanresources/home/resourcecenter/counselorsstaff>.

Who can participate in the EAP?

Services are available for Homewood City School system employees and their immediate household members. Members of an employee's immediate household include individuals living in the employee's house.

Who pays for the EAP services?

The Homewood City Schools Board of Education assumes the cost. Names of individuals seen for EAP services will not be shared with the Board of Education.

Do I need prior approval from a supervisor to utilize the EAP?

No, there is no requirement or expectation that an employee will inform his/her supervisor of plans to utilize services provided through the EAP.

How do I access EAP services?

Call the Employee Assistance and Counseling Center at **205-934-2281** or **1-877-872-2327 (toll-free within Alabama)** between 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., CST Monday through Friday to schedule an appointment. The Employee Assistance and Counseling Center office is located at:

**Magnolia Office Park, Suite 330
2112 11th Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35205**

Who do I contact if I have additional questions about the EAP?

You may contact the Employee Assistance and Counseling Center at 205-934-2281 or www.uab.edu/EACC , your school administrator, or the district's Assistant Superintendent of Instruction who coordinates Human Resources.