

Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE Policy no. POHR12 <small>(Copy on Web site)</small>	Title: Employee Assistance Policy Executive approved: 21/03/2017 <i>Responsible Officer: Executive Manager Human Resources</i> <i>Authorising Officer: CEO</i> <i>Review: Annual (11th April 2018)</i>
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EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE POLICY

1. PURPOSE

GOTAFE is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy working environment. As part of this commitment, GOTAFE values the importance of the contribution of its employees. In instances where GOTAFE employees or immediate family members are experiencing work-related and/or personal health problems, it may affect their work performance as well as their quality of life and general sense of well being.

The GOTAFE Employee Assistance Program provides confidential counselling and consulting services that focus on the early assessment and prevention and/or remediation of personal problems experienced by employees or family members.

GOTAFE has engaged the services of Optum to provide its EAP services independent of GOTAFE. The aim is that this will encourage employees of GOTAFE and their family members to utilise the service with no fear of reprisal or confidentiality issues.

2. SCOPE

The EAP service is accessible only by GOTAFE employees and immediate family members, as defined below. This Policy does not apply to contractors of GOTAFE. Counsellors employed by GOTAFE are for the use of students, and are not normally available for GOTAFE employees.

3. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
EAP	Employee Assistance Program.
Employee	A person employed by GOTAFE on a continuing or fixed-term basis, either full-time, part-time or on a casual basis.
Immediate Family	A spouse, de facto partner, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of an employee; or a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of the employee's spouse or de facto partner living under the same roof.

4. POLICY

4.1 What Is The EAP

The EAP provides confidential short term counselling and wellbeing support to all employees and immediate family members. The EAP can resolve a broad range of work or personal issues before they impact adversely on them and cause deterioration in health and wellbeing.

The EAP is easily accessible, voluntary and can provide support on a range of personal and work related issues such as:

- Maximising your potential/performance
- Relationship and marital problems

- Workplace conflict and communication
- Career path
- Retirement
- Grief and bereavement
- Balancing family and work responsibilities
- Concerns about your children or family members
- Changes at work or home
- Depression, anxiety
- Stress management
- Elder care issues
- Eating disorders
- Addictions

4.2 Who Provides The Service

GOTAFE's EAP is provided by Optum. They have been operating internationally since 1975, in Australia since 1993.

Optum counsellors are all highly experienced, professionally qualified psychologists or social workers.

4.3 Who Pays For The Service

The EAP program is fully subsidised by GOTAFE. An employee, including immediate family members of the employee, may normally access a total of six (6) one-hour sessions per issue, per year. Should additional sessions/services be required, the provider may refer the employee or family member to an appropriate external agency. They may also arrange with the employee or immediate family member to continue with the provider in a private capacity, at the individuals expense.

4.4 Where Does The Counselling Take Place

Counselling and coaching can be accessed over the phone, via a face to face appointment, or online depending on employee preference.

4.5 Attendance At Sessions

Any employee who attends the service during work hours must advise either their nominated Supervisor (or relevant Manager). Should the employee advise their Supervisor that they are attending EAP, the Supervisor is required to observe strictest confidentiality and to support the employee in the accessing the EAP. If an employee is unable to attend an appointment, as agreed between themselves and the relevant Manager or Supervisor, the Manager or Supervisor and Optum are to be advised as soon as possible. Exceptional circumstances must exist for an employee to fail to attend a designated appointment.

4.6 Confidentiality

All consultations will be conducted in complete confidence between the employee or immediate family member and the EAP counselor. GOTAFE is provided with a statistical data report on the broad categories and frequency of access of the EAP. Such data under **NO** circumstances includes names, employee numbers, or other personal identifying information of persons using the EAP services.

4.7 Accessing GOTAFE's EAP

A GOTAFE employee or an immediate family member may access the EAP provider directly and make an appointment when the need arises. A Supervisor may, in consultation with a GOTAFE employee, refer the employee to the EAP provider.

This service is available 24/7 by phone and face-to-face counselling is available by appointment.

Phone:

From Australia:- 1300 361 008

Online:

Optum offers a member's only portal that once accessed, offers a range of resources, articles and tools on numerous topics related to health and wellbeing.

To access Optum, use the information below to log into the portal.

To access Optum visit the following link;

<https://www.livewell.optum.com/public/welcome.asp>

Access code: **Goulburn**

4.8 Manager Hotline Online

Optum provides 'Manager Hotline Online'. Manager Hotline Online provides the opportunity to seek specialised advice and support through a dedicated and confidential online facility,

The type of issues that managers generally seek assistance for are:

- Strategies for addressing difficult employee behavioural issues. This may include, but are not limited to, anger management, depression, workplace conflict, absenteeism, suspected alcohol and/or drug misuse.
- Support in identifying and implementing coping strategies during times of pressure and stress.
- Responding to employee grief and trauma.
- Performance issues for which there appears to be no tangible reason
- Change management issues
- Information on issues such as depression, anxiety and stress

Managers are also encouraged to contact their HR Business Partner, and other internal resources for assistance where required.

Call the toll free number below for the Manager Hotline:

From Australia - 1300 361 008

4.9 Further Information

For further information relating to GOTAFE's Employee Assistance Program, please contact Human Resources.