

Policy Reference Number:	Policy No 1.44
Classification:	General
Last Reviewed:	February 2023 (187/2023)
Next Review Date:	February 2027
Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Approved By:	Council Resolution
Applicable Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999 Work Health Safety Act & Regulations 2012 Return to Work Act 2014 and Regulations 2015
Relevant Policies, Procedures and Standards:	

1. PURPOSE

Council has a commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the people it employs and recognizes that some problems that impact on the performance, job safety, health and wellbeing of employees may originate outside the work environment.

The Employee Assistance Program Policy (EAP) outlines the support that Council will provide to employees who are experiencing difficulties in their work or personal life. The aim of the EAP is to offer external professional, confidential counselling assistance to employees who may require help to resolve problems that are having an impact on the individual and their effectiveness in the workplace.

2. SCOPE

The EAP is available to all Council employees and their immediate family.

For the purpose of this policy, critical incidents are considered as Major incidents that may affect an individual, which may include serious accidents, robberies, personal threats, major fires or other natural disasters.

Eligible issues May include, but are not limited to:

- Relationship and family problems
- Grief and loss
- Emotional problems such as mental health issues
- Gambling
- Alcohol and drug use
- Stress
- Health issues
- Financial and legal concerns

3. PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

- 3.1 The EAP is a counselling service provided to all employees, which is free, voluntary, and confidential.
- 3.2 ACCESS Programs is the external counselling service that has been selected by Council to deliver the EAP.
- 3.3 ACCESS Programs is an independent workplace consulting organisation. Core services that can be accessed through ACCESS include:
 - Short term and solution-focused face-to-face counselling
 - Telephone counselling accessible through 1300 66 77 00 across Australia
 - Appointment times available at various locations throughout metropolitan and regional South Australia and nationally
 - After-hours access to counselling appointments and individual or group debriefing for critical incidents
 - Management coaching and support
 - Access to other additional services such as: mediation, consulting, investigations, and training
- 3.4 Use of the EAP is voluntary. Employees who experience major incidents such as serious accidents, robberies, personal threats, major fires or other natural disasters, will be encouraged to utilise the EAP by their Manager or Team Leader, but will not be directed to participate.

4. ACCESSING THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:

- 4.1 The EAP is available to all Council employees and their immediate family.
- 4.2 The EAP can be accessed by employees and their immediate family by making direct contact with ACCESS Programs on 1300 66 77 00, 24 hours, 7 days.
- 4.3 Employees and their immediate family who access the EAP must identify their connection with District Council of Robe to ensure correct invoicing.
- 4.4 The EAP will provide up to 3 counselling sessions at Council's cost.
- 4.5 If more than 3 visits are required (and proposed to be funded by Council), the employee/family member/counsellor will seek approval from the CEO.
- 4.6 Confidentiality will always be maintained.
- 4.7 No details of an employee accessing the EAP will be recorded on their Personnel File, except at the request of the employee.
- 4.8 Further information about this policy, how to access the EAP and access can be sought, in confidence, from the Executive Assistant

5. EXCEPTIONS

This policy does not apply to any workplace relations or situations for which other dispute resolution or Work Health Safety policy or procedure apply.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

This policy will be available for inspection at the Council offices listed below during ordinary business hours and available to be downloaded, free of charge, from Council's internet site: www.robe.sa.gov.au

Royal Circus, Robe SA 5276

Copies will be provided to interested parties upon request. Email council@robe.sa.gov.au

Any grievances in relation to this policy or its application should be forwarded in writing addressed to the Chief Executive Officer of Council.

9. POLICY REVIEW

This policy may be amended at any time and must be reviewed at least every four years since its adoption (or latest amendment).