



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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March 17, 2020

Dear EAP Stakeholders;

We are in an unprecedented time in history as the world takes a pause to overcome COVID-19. The change in our daily routines and “business as usual” are being disrupted and the emotional impact may be overwhelming for some. It is a difficult time. We would like to let you know how your EAP will be there to assist you during this tumultuous period.

Please know that your EAP has implemented a strategic model to continue to serve our callers through telecommunication/tele-therapy or via phone. Please direct your calls to our regular EAP number (631-289-0480) and we will be available. Through the assistance of the ES-BOCES IT Department we have been able to arrange for our phone system to forward your incoming calls to one of our support staff. Your call will be answered and we will subsequently contact a counselor to return the phone call. We have taken advantage of various HIPAA compliant face-to-face software apps and the counselor will be able to coordinate with the incoming caller to proceed with the method most comfortable for the caller. Of course, should the caller only have a telephone, we will provide phone counseling.

We continue to have access to all of our referral database information and any incoming calls requesting referrals can be provided by simply calling our regular EAP telephone numbers. We will not be able to accept incoming facsimiles and therefore request you telephone in your request for confidentiality.

Please be advised we are already encountering many private practitioners who are not taking new cases as a result of COVID-19. As always, until we are able to find a suitable mental health referral, your EAP Counselor will provide the sessions at no cost to the individual.

Our resource and online system has been coordinated to allow us to intercommunicate with one another and to share available resources as this crisis unfolds. We have also coordinated with the ES-BOCES Office of Communications to post Community Resources and potential Emergency Services our EAP Community may need; this information is all available on the ES-BOCES website (<https://www.esboces.org/Page/2791>)

EAP Counselors will be reaching out to arrange our workshops and sub-committee meetings via Video Conference for those who have technology capability. We have postponed any scheduled meetings for the next two weeks, to allow everyone to settle in and respond to their own work needs. However, if you would like to schedule a workshop or hold a meeting during that time, please feel free to reach out and call our offices.

As we charter in to unknown territory, please be mindful when people experience panic and fear, they often become agitated and hostile. This is a time when our lessons in Mindfulness and self-care are most important. As we experienced during Hurricane Sandy, Long Islanders have incredible resiliency and ability to take care of one another in their times of need. Let this be another example of what makes our region special. Please show understanding and follow the guidelines sent out to us by our State/Local Health Departments and the Center for Disease Control. Comply with your local law enforcement and support our community members who are emergency responders. This is a time when we most need cooperation. Take advantage of the time in your homes, it is a good opportunity to reach out to friends/family to keep us social and engaged. Check on those who you think may be alone or do not have many support systems. Engage and the rewards will be many.

In Peace,

Dr. Michael L. Miles, LCSW-R

A Union Management Employee Assistance Program