



Helping Your Employees Through Personal Problems

When large life events occur in an employee's personal life—it may affect their work as well. Suppose you notice that one of your employees who used to be consistently on time, productive, and jovial, is now consistently late, sad, and apathetic. When you see a drastic change in an employee's attitude or performance, there may be a non-job-related problem that's affecting them. As an employer, you can help your employee work through their problems so that he or she can get back to being an effective team member.

Investigate the choices your employees have:

- Can they take time off with pay to handle an at-home problem?
- Are there policies or resources at your company that help with drug or alcohol addiction?
- Are counseling services or referrals (for fee-based and non-fee-based agencies) available from your company?
- Does your personnel officer or human resources department suggest any further options?

Stay aware:

As you are helping an employee through his or her problem:

- Make sure to stay connected with the employee.
- Monitor their progress and give them support.
- Ask how he or she is doing and help with further counseling if needed.
- Determine what your expectations are, and when you expect the employee to return to full productivity.
- Decide what you'll do if the job performance is still unsatisfactory after a certain period.

Be helpful but firm:

Be helpful towards employees, but after a reasonable time, if the employee still has a decreased productivity, you may have to excuse the employee.

For more information about helping employees through large life events, contact your Work/Life Services.