

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

Employee assistance programs (EAPs) are employer-sponsored programs that provide support services to employees experiencing health, family, financial, alcohol, drug, or stress issues. The structure and operation of each EAP will vary with the needs of each company, but EAPs should generally be governed by a written document that:

- Defines the program's relationship to the company;
- Includes strict confidentiality standards;
- Defines the scope of services provided; and
- Establishes guidelines to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

In addition, in order avoid having to comply with certain Affordable Care Act requirements, an EAP [cannot](#):

- Provide significant medical care benefits;
- Require participants to exhaust EAP benefits before using group health plan benefits;
- Require participation in a traditional group health plan to receive EAP benefits;
- **Require employee premiums or contributions;** or
- **Impose cost-sharing requirements.**