

Two New Employee Benefits and Two Upgrades

In these days when national surveys as well as our own recruitment experience show that employees are paying more attention to their benefits packages than ever before, we have good news—two new benefits and two benefit upgrades.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Effective July 1, 2008, we have a new employee assistance program which is open to all employees, whether they are eligible for benefits or not. It also includes their immediate family members. The core confidential services it offers are unlimited access to a 24/7 hotline staffed by masters level professionals and 8 free counseling sessions per issue per family member per year. Issues that can be addressed include relationships, parenting support, debt, stress, depression, alcohol & drugs, grief, and other personal issues that might affect work productivity. The program also includes one free hour of phone time with a financial advisor per person per issue per year, and a free half hour with an attorney, plus 25% off of their cost should you utilize their services. A flyer with the contact details can be found at: http://www.sfarchdiocese.org/media/files/hr-docs/Archdiocese_SF_EAP_Brochure.pdf. The program has been funded for the next 5 years at no cost to the locations or the employees.

24/7

However, the service that might prove most useful to you as a supervisor is their Workplace Support Service. Say you have an employee that is underperforming due to what seems to be personal reasons. You are reluctant to talk with them about their performance because the causes seem personal. Before this EAP service you had very few tools to utilize in this

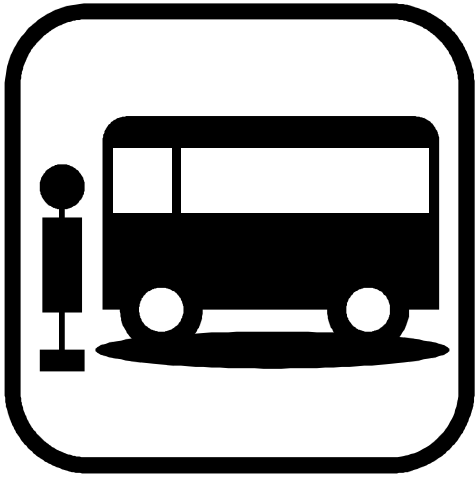
kind of situation. Now you can call the EAP and consult with a Workplace Support Specialist during regular business hours about this employee. They will help you identify the problems and strategize on solutions. Such solutions might involve the employee committing to meet with an EAP counselor with particular goals. In this case the employee would be asked to provide written consent for you to be informed by the EAP about the employee's attendance and progress in working towards the goals designed for the employee. Please note: **This Workplace**



Support service does not replace the need to consult with HR and Legal regarding disciplinary situations or other concerns that might lead to termination.

Section 132 Public Transportation Flexible Spending Accounts

The other new cost-neutral benefit for benefits-eligible employees only is a flexible spending account similar to (and run by the same company—Flex-Plan-- as) our Section 125 Unreimbursed Medical Expenses/ Dependent Childcare Expenses reimbursement flexible spending account. Except this new one is for unreimbursed public transportation expenses up to \$120 per month. Deductions are made from the employees paycheck free of Federal,



State & FICA taxes. This saves employees 25-40%, which if someone chose the maximum of \$120 per month and was in the highest tax bracket, would amount to a savings of \$575 for 2009. It saves employers the cost of FICA (7.65%). It includes expenses for Muni, BART, CalTrans, Golden Gate bus & ferry, among others. Interested employees can sign up for this benefit during Open Enrollment, which runs from October 23 through November 14. The benefit is effective January 1, 2009, just like the Section 125 benefit. We are pleased to offer this benefit, which both helps employees stretch their non-profit salaries, helps the environment, and constitutes another step for the Archdiocese toward being a Green Employer.

Section 125 Unreimbursed Medical Expenses Upgrade

Those that enroll in the Section 125 Unreimbursed Medical Expenses flexible spending account for 2009 can now elect up to \$2700 per year (compared with \$2400 previously). Medical, dental, & vision costs are going up, and so Monsignor Schlitt approved this maximum cap increase. Not only does the employee with higher medical needs save taxes on the extra \$300 set aside, but the employer can bank 7.65% of that in FICA tax savings.

Dental Insurance Upgrade

The last upgrade to mention is the dental insurance maximum cap increase. As of July 1, 2009, benefits-eligible employees enrolled in RETA health insurance now have their dental cap increased to \$1750 from \$1500. The cap hadn't been raised in a number of years despite rising dental costs, so the Health Insurance Advisory Group recommended the increase, and Monsignor Schlitt approved it.

More information on these and our other employee benefits can be found at our website—<http://www.sfarchdiocese.org/about-us/departments-and-offices/human-resources/information-for-new-employees/>; or call Tom Hoffman, Benefits Manager, at (415) 614-5539.



A.M.D.G.