



Employee Assistance Program
National Joint Committee

NJC Members

Patrick M. Devine USPS

Manager, Contract Administration (NPMHU) & Employee Workplace Programs

Daleo Freeman APWU

Human Relations Director

Manuel L. Peralta, Jr., NALC

Director, Safety & Health

Neil Ryan NPMHU

Assistant to the National Officers

Ad Hoc Member

Susan Wozniak

EAP Administrator



Meeting Minutes

MEETING MINUTES

USPS NJC MEETING

Date: January 23, 2024
Time: 11:00 am

IN ATTENDANCE

Patrick Devine- USPS, Daleo Freeman- APWU, Manuel Peralta Jr. – NALC, Neil Ryan- NPMHU, Debby Szeredy- APWU, Elizabeth Bradley- NDBH, Susan Wozniak- USPS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The November 2023 minutes are pending approval. It was discussed that established past practice has been to draft minutes and submit to USPS. USPS then provides NJC minutes to be approved for the next meeting.

MONTH END REPORTS

Data reports for November and December 2023 were discussed. Included in the analysis were EAP4YOU.COM visits, crisis response, average speed to answer, calls managed, critical incident responses.

The NJC discussed receiving the month end report for November, when available rather than at the January meeting, as we hold no NJC meeting in December. It was agreed that the November report will not be held until the January meeting.

There was a lower call volume and activity trending down in December due to the holiday season.

The suggestion was made to contact the Postal Inspection Service for an accurate account of robberies each month because the inspectors keep a report of all robberies and suicides so that we can track whether EAP is covering most incidents, so we can see the effectiveness of EAP. USPS will coordinate.

The suggestion was that there should be a kit provided for all managers with instructions and guidelines to follow in the event of a robbery, including a primary step to contact EAP.

Postal and NDBH will follow up.

Additional agenda items were submitted on 1-22-2024 to be included on today's agenda. See attached list.

DAC

It was reported that several managers do not believe they are required to hold DAC meetings.

The USPS continues to observe the DAC meeting process implementation internally.

All Unions stated that they will provide an updated list of all DAC Committee members in Excel format for the completion of the Master List. The Master List includes all names of union DAC/JCEP Members and their location including Mgt. HR and Consultant /Clinicians with locations. The Unions agreed emails would remain off the Master List and therefore there is no need for a disclosure agreement.

It was brought up again that DAC/JCEPs need to schedule future meetings ahead of time, so everyone knows when the next meeting is.

WEBSITE

The start of EAP Orientations began on January 5, 2024. Monthly orientations will be held on every 1st Friday, consisting of a live Zoom meeting conducted by a presenter with an interactive question and answer forum. You must register for each orientation. After you are fully registered you will receive an email with a link for the zoom meeting. New Directions Behavioral Health is utilizing different Consultants/Clinicians each month for the orientation.

One NJC member attended the January training and had questions on counseling vs. coaching. There can be a stigma placed on counseling services. To soften the stigma and encourage EAP services in a more positive light, EAP also promotes coaching services. There are certain situations where a person may feel that coaching is more appropriate than counseling and coaching can promote better success i.e., financial planning. The orientation included a tour of the Website and how to utilize it.

The NJC discussed the following: Can someone pick both counseling and coaching? Yes, coaching is free and does not take away from the employees' number of counseling sessions. Coaching involves creating specific goals, managing priorities, and increasing motivation. Counseling is a better fit for things like substance abuse, depression, anxiety, and mental health concerns.

Who gives answers for the live orientations? There are different consultants assigned for each month who conduct the Q&A. No Q&A from first orientation.

Do we record the 1st Friday Orientation meetings each month? No, but we also have a video on the Home Page with similar information. The new orientation slide deck will be sent to the NJC.

JCEAP

No change, still working on vacancies with counselors.

OTHER BUSINESS

EAP For Retirees

Mistaken information has been dispersed around that retirees that they were eligible for EAP benefits. Currently retirees are not eligible for EAP benefits. A question was asked about providing EAP benefits for retirees. That benefit would need to be negotiated by each union in their contract.

USPS agreed to give timelines on APWU questions about the Maine response by the next meeting. The FAQ document with the requested guideline references will be provided to the group.

In-person Meetings – were discussed again. No decision was made.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting will be held on Tuesday February 27, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.

Motion to adjourn was made at 12:45 p.m. and was passed unanimously.

Included additional agenda items. (Next Page)

MEETING AGENDA ADDITIONS

Date:

January 22, 2024

1) The October 24, 2023, NJC minutes as posted, contained a statement that "USPS NJC representative will research issues and update the NJC at the next meeting. During the November meeting there was no update on what actions have taken place to address the fact that management was not showing up at the DAC meetings. Has the concern been addressed?

2) During the DAC training that was conducted last summer, there were several questions posed that we did not answer, but rather we told the attendees that we would compile the questions and bring the questions and proposed answers to the NJC to discuss. Among the questions posed was the subject of in-person meetings. When I read the draft of the answers to the questions, I posed an exception to the answer and during our meetings in October or November I explained that at the front end of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the NALC and the APWU agreed to allow for web based meeting with the express condition that doing so will not be used as grounds to change policy and that it would not be precedent setting. To date, that remains unfinished business.

As background, I draw everyone's attention to the minutes of the March 24, 2020, NJC Meeting which begins with the following: "...Today's meeting was held by WebEx with all parties following the protocol and guidance of the CDC in the COVID-19 event pandemic..."

3) The biggest concern appears to be what steps have been taken to get the meetings on track? If our DACs are not meeting, then they cannot be performing the task assigned to them, i.e., promoting the program.