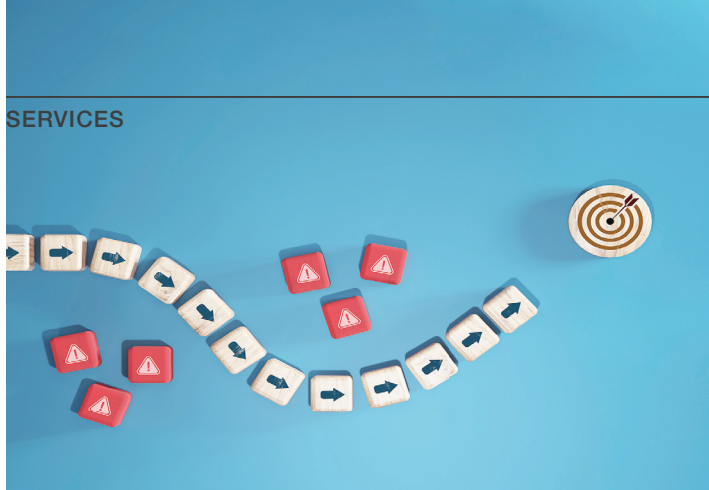


# Crisis vs. Non-Crisis

## Guidance for USPS Employees and Support Personnel



The following content can help USPS employees, shop stewards, and other support personnel understand how the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) prioritizes cases, what to expect during the appointment process, and how to support employees between initial contact and their first appointment.

### Crisis vs. Non-Crisis: How EAP Triage Works

#### Crisis Situation:

- Immediate risk of harm to self or others
- Suicidal thoughts, self-harm, or threats of violence
- Severe mental health symptoms impairing daily functioning
- Traumatic event (workplace violence, death of a coworker, etc.)

#### Non-Crisis Situation:

- Stress, grief, anxiety, work-life balance issues
- Marital conflict, job stress, or burnout
- Desire for personal development or general support
- Seeking support for ongoing, non-emergent concerns

### EAP Response Process: What Happens Next

#### If Crisis is Identified - Immediate Actions Taken:

- Caller is connected to a licensed counselor
- A safety assessment is conducted
- Emergency services are engaged if necessary
- A virtual or in person appointment is prioritized
- Follow-up contacts and case management may occur

#### If Non-Crisis is Identified - Next Steps:

The employee will speak with an EAP clinician who will:

- Assess needs
- Schedule a counseling appointment
- Offer other resources if needed (online resources, self-help tools, referrals, articles)

#### Support Role (USPS Employee):

- Ensure the employee is in a private, safe space
- Stay with the employee, if possible, while the call is made
- Provide information if the employee is unable

#### Support Role (USPS Employee):

- Encourage the employee to make the call promptly
- Reinforce confidentiality and support
- Offer “In-the-Moment” Support if symptoms worsen

### Bridging the Gap: Between the Call and First Appointment

- **In-the-Moment Support** — Provides immediate, short-term emotional support over the phone; helps the employee feel validated; useful for increased stress, emotional overwhelm, or hesitancy about counseling.
- **Reassure the Employee** — EAP is confidential and does not affect employment. Waiting for an appointment is normal. Encourage self-care in the meantime (sleep, nutrition, physical activity).
- **Provide Workplace Support** — Continue checking in without pushing for personal details.

If you're unsure how to handle a situation, the EAP can provide guidance on crisis and non-crisis concerns.