



<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	1 July 2020
<b>REVIEW DATE</b>	1 July 2023
<b>POLICY OWNER</b>	Chancery
<b>APPLIES TO</b>	This Policy applies to lay employees (Workers) of the Diocese.
<b>EXCLUSIONS</b>	Where an agency or entity of the Diocese has its own policy, the relevant agency or entity policy will apply to Workers engaged by those agencies or entities. In the event of conflict between the policies of agencies or entities and the Diocesan policy, the Diocesan policy prevails.
<b>RELATED POLICIES, GUIDELINES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	Employee Assistance Program Procedure & FAQs
<b>REFERENCE</b>	There are no references to this policy.
<b>RELATED FORMS</b>	AccessEAP Employee Assistance Program- brochure AccessEAP Manager and Leader - brochure
<b>HEADINGS</b>	Objective Definitions Policy Statement <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. EAP Services provided by the Diocese of Lismore</li><li>2. Key principles of the EAP framework</li><li>3. Accessing EAP</li><li>4. Alternatives to the EAP</li></ol> Revision/ Modification History Approval Date/ Revision History
<b>PAGES</b>	3

## OBJECTIVE

This policy is to ensure that Diocesan Workers have support in resolving personal and work-related issues that might be adversely impacting their work and are aware of alternate services that might be able to support them if they do not wish to use the Diocesan EAP service or if they require longer-term assistance

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that will ensure the Employee Assistance Program meets the Diocese's requirements and effectively supports the wellbeing of all staff members, including supervisors and managers.

## DEFINITIONS

**Diocese** means the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lismore and includes without limitation any Diocesan agencies, corporations, entities, parishes, parish corporations and parish entities where the Worker is employed or otherwise engaged.

Diocesan agency delegate means Manager of the relevant Diocesan agency.

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** means the program that the Diocese has put in place with the EAPP.

**Employee Assistance Program Provider (EAPP)** means AccessEAP or any other EAP provider that the Diocese or Diocesan agencies or entities might engage from time to time, to provide EAP services to Workers.

Immediate family members means the partner/spouse or child of the staff Worker.

**Worker** means all lay employees of the Diocese.

## POLICY STATEMENT

The Diocese of Lismore recognises the importance of providing support for staff members and their immediate families experiencing person or work-related issues and concerns to maintain a safe and healthy working environment. Support is provided through an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which offers confidential, professional assistance to staff members and their immediate families. The Diocese provides funding for EAP services as detailed below.

### 1. EAP Services provided by the Diocese of Lismore

#### 1.1 EAP Counselling

Face to face, telephone or online counselling is available through the EAP.

The aim of the EAP is early identification and provision of assistance to help resolve either work-related or personal issues. Matters that may be addressed through the EAP include, but are not limited to:

- personal issues and/or trauma;
- dealing with work or life change, working relationships;
- interpersonal conflict;
- concerns about anxiety, depression or other mental health issues relating to the staff member or someone close to them;
- relationship issues;
- family difficulties;

- health matters;
- drug, alcohol or substance abuse;
- gambling or other additions; and
- coping or dealing with grief and/or loss.

## 1.2 Manager Support Service

Specialised and confidential support and advice from the EAP can be accessed by supervisors and managers to assist them in managing workplace issues and challenges.

## 1.3 Wellbeing Resources

Diocesan employees can access a range of resources from the EAP provider to assist with wellbeing, including relaxation and mindfulness meditations, which are available through the AccessEAP website or the EAP in Focus app.

## 2 Key Principles of the EAP Framework

### 2.1 Key principles that apply to the EAP include:

- The EAP is available for all staff members and their immediate families at no cost to them, normally for up to three (3) counselling sessions per 12-month period;
- Access to the EAP is voluntary;
- In most cases staff members will self-refer, however with their agreement or at their request referral can be made by their supervisor, relevant senior officer or Human Resources;
- The EAP is conducted by a professional accredited provider, independent of the Diocese;
- The EAP provider ensures professional counselling is provided by qualified health professionals;
- Confidentiality will be maintained, which means individual details of staff members who attend EAP counselling sessions will not be provided to the Diocese;
- The effective operation of the EAP is monitored, evaluated and reviewed regularly; and
- Quarterly reports are received from the EAP provider that assist the Diocese to support its meeting of the needs of staff and the Diocese. These reports do not contain information that identifies individual staff members that have used the service.

## 3 Access to EAP Services

### 3.1 Eligibility

Staff members and their immediate family members, defined as the partner/spouse or child of the staff member are eligible to access the EAP. Normally, staff members can access up to three (3) one-hour sessions per 12-month period, paid for by the Diocese.

Should additional sessions be required, the provider may refer the staff member to an appropriate external agency or service or a GP (General Practitioner) for ongoing support, or may arrange for the staff member to continue with the provider in a private capacity at the staff member's expense.

In exceptional circumstances, with the recommendation of the counsellor and/or if requested by a Diocesan agency, the Diocesan HR Manager or their delegate may approve up to three (3) additional sessions which will be funded from current EAP contract hours and charged back to the relevant Diocesan agency. Exceptional circumstances would require the counsellor and or Diocesan agency delegate providing an assessment where the counsellor and/or relevant Diocesan agency delegate is confident that up to three additional sessions will provide sufficient support. In all other circumstances, the Diocesan HR Manager or their delegate will ask the

provider to refer the employee to their GP for ongoing external assistance once the three (3) initial sessions have been used.

### 3.2 Attendance at Sessions

Staff members can attend EAP appointments funded by the Diocese during work hours. In this case, the staff member must advise either the nominated supervisor or the relevant senior officer if they are accessing the EAP during working hours, which the supervisor or senior officer is required to keep confidential. Staff also have the option to attend counselling appointments outside of work hours without notifying their supervisor or manager. A minimum of twenty-four (24) hours' notice must be given to the provider if a staff member is unable to attend a scheduled EAP session.

## 4 Accessing EAP

Workers may access EAP by telephoning 1800 818 728.

## 5 Alternatives to the EAP

If you or someone you know **needs help urgently**, please contact:

1. **000 Police, Ambulance or Fire**, or go to the **Emergency Department of your local hospital**;

2. For **helpline support**, call:

131 114	Lifeline Crisis Support and Suicide Prevention
1300 22 4636	Beyondblue
1300 766 177	White Wreath
1300 659 467	Suicide Call Back Service
1300 789 978	Mensline
1800 55 1800	Kids Help Line
1800 011 511	Mental Health Line
1800 184 527	QLife
1300 364 277	Relationships Australia
1800 422 737	Carers Australia
1800 737 732	1800 RESPECT (National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling)

For **non-urgent help** or referral to other services, including special medical practitioners, contact your local GP or medical centre.

## REVISION/ MODIFICATION HISTORY

Date	Version	Current Title	Summary of Changes	Approval Date	Commencement Date
1 May 2020	1	EAP Policy	Initial Policy	15 June 2020	1 July 2020
16 Nov 2020	2	EAP Policy	Addition of clauses 1,2,3	16 Nov 2020	16 Nov 2020

## APPROVAL DATE/ REVISION HISTORY

Approved by: Bishop Gregory Homeming

Date: 15 June 2020

To be revised: 1 July 2023