

located abroad, the requests should be submitted to the officer responsible for Official Languages Training in the Mission.

1.9 Pre-Posting Workshops

To help you in getting ready for, and coping with, the upcoming move, The Posting Centre (ABMH) offers, in addition to the more official Administrative Briefings, a series of Pre-Posting Workshops dealing with topics such as Your First Posting, Financial Planning, Protocol, Culture Shock, Stress Management, Preparing Your Inventory, Caring for the Elderly, First Aid, etc. These workshops and others are repeated several times during the period from February to June of each year. Publicity regarding the workshops is usually provided by ABMH each February. Just register and come!

1.10 Employee Assistance Program

Have you ever felt the need to talk about your personal problems with someone who is not directly involved? It can be very comforting to know that you can count on a sympathetic ear at a time when you are concerned about personal or work-related matters. That is why the Department has an Employee Assistance Program (ABDA) staffed by three professional counsellors. As part of the Administrative Briefing and your Pre-Posting Briefing rounds, the EAP Counsellors will discuss how their services can be of assistance to you and your family.

What is the Employee Assistance Program?

Many employees have a rather narrow impression about what benefits can be derived from seeking advice or assistance from these people. To set the record straight, the EAP Counsellors provide assistance for all types of personal problems and concerns such as stress, emotional, family, legal, financial and alcohol/drug-related difficulties as well as for work-related problems such as job stress, international conflicts and career reorientation. The EAP Counsellors help by providing assessment, referral, follow-up and short-term counselling services. They also help supervisors and managers deal with employees whose work performance is affected by personal problems or work-related ones.

The EAP Counsellors look forward to meeting employees or members of their families who are getting ready to leave Ottawa or are just passing through en route to the next posting. Much of their work involves helping you identify and deal with stress factors related to working and living abroad.

The personal interactions between EAP Counsellors and foreign service members (employees and dependants alike) are strictly confidential. If you approach them, you can be assured that the fact that you have used the services, the nature of the problem and the content of your conversations with the counsellors will be kept confidential. No EAP files are kept and nothing will be placed on your personal file. To emphasize detachment from the rest of the Bureau of Personnel, two of the three counsellors have offices located behind the Crush Lobby, in Rooms B1-108 and B1-106. The third counsellor's office is located in The Posting Centre (ABMH) in Room D1-166.

You may be wondering what good are these services when you are abroad and perhaps really need them. Well, the services of ABDA (Employee Assistance Program) are available to you whether you are in Ottawa or abroad, so do not hesitate to get in touch with the EAP Counsellors. Perhaps it is an elderly widowed parent who has stopped writing to you or a timid child who, for the first time, is living and attending school away from the family. In such cases, ABDA can help you keep tabs on someone and attempt to ease your fears.

The EAP Counsellor can also provide you with publications that are available for you to take home. Keep ABDA in mind and do not hesitate to write, phone or visit if the need arises.