

FREE GUIDE

What is an EAP?

How Employee Assistance Programs work, what stays confidential, and how to use yours.

The short answer

An **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** is free, confidential counselling paid for by your employer. You contact the EAP provider directly, with no GP referral and no need to tell your manager. Your employer only sees **de-identified usage numbers**, not who used it or why. Many EAPs also cover immediate family. **MeHelp provides EAP services to Australian employers**, and can continue your care when your EAP sessions end.

About 5%

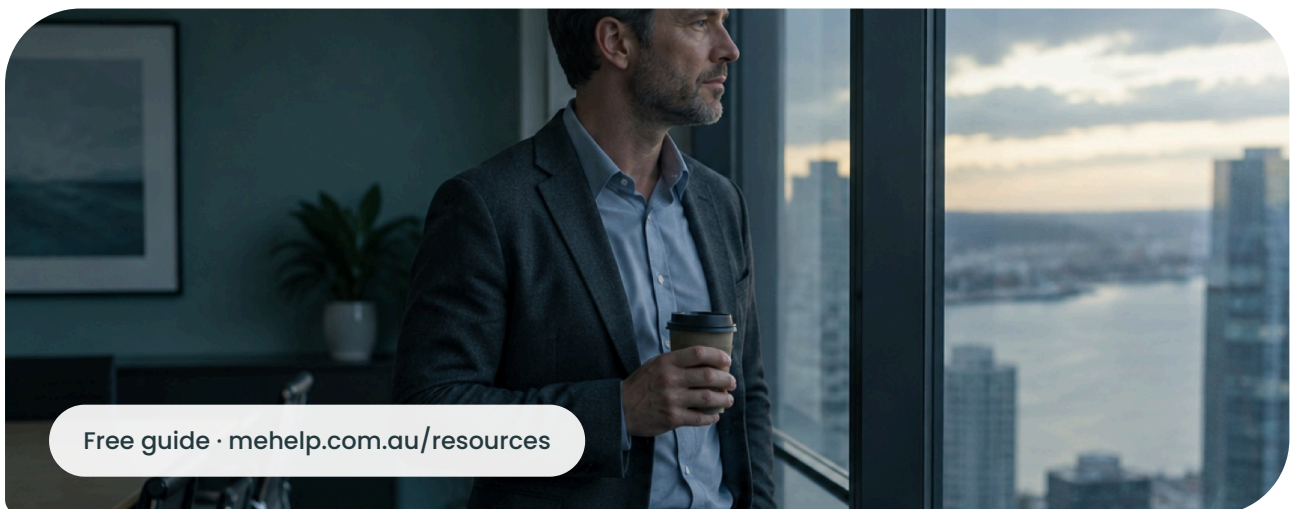
of employees use EAP counselling each year

\$0

cost to you, paid by your employer

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS GUIDE

- What an EAP is and who can use it
- How to find your EAP provider and book
- What your employer can and can't see
- The few situations where confidentiality has limits
- What happens when your EAP sessions run out
- How EAP sits alongside Medicare and WorkCover



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Reviewed by **Phillipa Brown**, registered psychologist and founder of MeHelp. Information current at October 2026. General information only, not individual advice.

How an EAP works

Your employer pays an external provider so staff can get short-term, confidential support for work or personal concerns.

WHO

Staff, often family

Usually all employees. Many EAPs also cover partners and immediate family members.

HOW MANY

Set by your employer

Commonly a few sessions per issue or per year, for example 3 to 6.

WHAT FOR

Work or personal

Stress, relationships, grief, conflict at work, change, or anything weighing on you.

How to use it

1

Find the number

Check your intranet, staff handbook, payslip notes or the posters in the lunch room. You can also ask HR for the provider's details, without saying why.

2

Call or book online

Contact the provider directly. You don't need a GP referral or your manager's approval.

3

Have your sessions

Usually by phone, video or in person. Ask how many sessions you can access and whether family is covered.

What your employer sees

This is the question people ask most. In general, your employer sees numbers, not names.

USUALLY SHARED

De-identified reports

- How many staff used the service
- Broad themes, such as stress or relationships
- Totals, reported in a way that protects identity

NOT SHARED

Your personal details

- Your name or that you called
- What you talked about
- Notes from your sessions

The limits: as with any health service, confidentiality can be broken without consent only in rare situations, such as a serious risk to someone's safety, mandatory reporting obligations, or a court order. Your counsellor will explain this at the start.

When your EAP sessions run out

- Keep going with a MeHelp psychologist, bulk billed with a Mental Health Treatment Plan or privately for \$180 a session.
- You can get a Mental Health Treatment Plan from your GP for Medicare-rebated sessions. EAP sessions are funded by your employer, not Medicare, so they don't use your Medicare sessions.
- If work caused or worsened how you're feeling, MeHelp also provides WorkCover psychology in every state and territory.

For employers: MeHelp provides confidential EAP services to Australian businesses, with phone and video sessions with Ahpra-registered psychologists, Australia-wide. Ask HR whether MeHelp is your provider, or point them to mehelp.com.au/employee-assistance-program.

What people ask us

Will my manager know I used the EAP?

Not from the EAP provider. Your employer gets de-identified statistics only, unless you give consent for something to be shared.

Can my family use my EAP?

Often, yes. Many programs cover partners and immediate family. Check with your provider.

What if I need more sessions than my EAP offers?

EAP is designed for short-term support. You can continue with a MeHelp psychologist under Medicare, with a Mental Health Treatment Plan, or privately. Call 1300 323 411 and we'll arrange it.

Does using EAP affect my Medicare sessions?

No. EAP is paid by your employer, so it doesn't come out of your Medicare allowance.



Prefer to talk it through with a psychologist?

MeHelp is an Australian online psychology practice. Sessions are by phone or video, Australia-wide, and can be bulk billed with a valid Mental Health Treatment Plan and referral. We also accept NDIS, WorkCover, DVA, EAP and private health funding.

MeHelp EAP services at mehelp.com.au/employee-assistance-program

1300 323 411 · info@mehelp.com.au

MeHelp is not a crisis service. If you or someone else is in danger, call 000. For 24-hour support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636. Under 25: Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800.

This guide is general information about the Australian health system. It isn't individual medical, legal or financial advice, and it doesn't replace an assessment by your GP or a psychologist. Government rules and fees change. Figures are current at October 2026; check health.gov.au, servicesaustralia.gov.au or your insurer for the latest. All MeHelp psychologists are registered with Ahpra.