

TUSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Tusla's Health, Wellbeing and EAP Service

Tusla Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)



Health,
Wellbeing
& EAP

What is Tusla's EAP?

Tusla's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is an important shared service element of the human resource structure in Tusla.

There are two parts to the Employee Assistance Services,

1. EAP counselling services
2. Employee assistance programmes both are explained in further detail below.
 1. The EAP counselling services is an independent counselling service provided by a contracted service provider in conjunction with the OGP framework. The EAP counselling Service is monitored and administered by Tusla's Health, Wellbeing & EAP (HWEAP). It plays a key part in the ethos of promoting employee wellness and organisational effectiveness. This is a confidential independent service, that supports employees with psychosocial issues (psychological and social factors that influence mental health). These issues may be personal or work-related, affecting your job performance or home life.
 2. Tusla's Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) provides a wide range of free and confidential support to staff and management designed to assist employees in managing work and life events. The EAP programme is an integral component of the ethos of promoting employee wellness, resilience, critical Incidence support and organisational effectiveness. Tusla's EAP is a work-based support service for staff and the organisation. Tusla's EAP programme offers complete nationwide coverage, meaning employees and teams can easily access the support they need whenever they need it.

Services provided by the EAP programme are listed below;

1. *EAP (Employee Assistance Programme) Counselling Services*
2. *Consultation with managers on staff well-being and psychosocial issues*
3. *Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Response - individual and group support and pre-incident training*
4. *Group Support Sessions*
5. *Digital Wellbeing platform*



1. (EAP) Employee Assistance Programme Counselling Services

The EAP counselling service is a free and confidential support to staff and management designed to assist employees in managing work and life difficulties, which, if left unattended, could adversely affect work performance and/or attendance and quality of life.

The EAP counselling service ensures you get support with professional and personal issues when needed. The EAP counselling service can support you with our solution-focused brief therapy. This means:

- Counsellors work with you to identify the strengths, skills and resources you can use to tackle the issue.
- Therapy focuses on outcomes and goals.
- Sessions focus on solutions to the problem or issue.
- Sessions encourage you to believe that positive change is possible.

When you contact the EAP counselling service, there will be a triage assessment system to ensure you get the required support. Sessions with counsellors can take place over the phone, online or in person, depending on what has been decided between you both.

What kind of issues can I contact the EAP about?

We all experience challenging times or events during our lives. Often these can impact our ability to perform to our full potential.

At times such as these, it may be helpful to avail of a service such as the EAP. Examples of these instances are;

- Work-related issues. (e.g. interpersonal difficulties, harassment, bullying, balancing work with domestic responsibilities).
- Stress.
- Health issues.
- Family and marital issues (domestic violence, separation, relationships, secondary family issues).
- Financial matters (budgeting, debt).
- Substance abuse/addiction (alcohol, drugs etc.).
- Non-substance abuse/addictions (gambling, internet etc.).
- Eating disorders.
- Bereavement (coping with grief/loss and practical information following bereavement).
- Pre-retirement issues/concerns.

This is not an exhaustive list; if anything is bothering you, you can seek the support of the EAP service.

The EAP Service Provides:

- 24/7 confidential telephone support line, available 365 days a year.
- Immediate support available by qualified, experienced counsellors.
- Face-to-face/Structured Telephone/Video counselling service based on Brief Solution Focused Therapy.
- Access to the Inspire Support Hub.

Number of counselling sessions you can have

EAP counselling is usually a short-term service. Depending on the issue, a number of meetings may be required with the EAP, usually 4 to 6 would be considered adequate to help with any issue. Tusla staff can receive six EAP sessions in a rollover calendar year. However, if extra sessions are required this must be agreed with the counsellor. The counsellor will advise on this, and a request is forwarded through the EAP service to the HWEAP Service before it is approved.

Counselling sessions are provided through the contracted provider, the agreement is between the employee and counsellor.

All counsellors are fully qualified and experienced in solution-focused therapy or equivalent and also meet the accreditation requirements of professional bodies such as IACP or equivalent.

Referral to Tusla's EAP

A staff member can self-refer to EAP counselling service by contacting the service directly.

There may be times when line management or HR becomes aware that something is impacting you and/or your performance in the workplace and may refer you to EAP for support.

It is in your interest to avail of the support of the EAP as it provides you with an opportunity to discuss matters confidentially, which might have a bearing on your circumstances.

Where you have been referred by your line manager, confirmation of your attendance/ engagement may be given to the referring party. Should you choose not to avail of the support of the EAP, this will be relayed to the person who referred you.

Referral pathway - 1. (EAP) Employee Assistance Programme Counselling Services

You can access support at any time by calling the Freephone helpline, available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Whatever's on your mind, call free and confidentially on 1800 817435

Self Referral – call: [1800817435](tel:1800817435) – For queries contact: eap@tusla.ie

General Confidentiality Guidelines

The contract is between the Client and the Counsellor. Confidentiality is between the client and the EAP counselling service. Information and personal data disclosed by employees to Tusla EAP remain confidential (exceptions are listed below) and will not be disclosed to a third party outside of Tusla EAP without the prior knowledge and consent of the individual. This is in keeping with normal professional standards concerning confidentiality.

Exceptions to confidentiality are:

- Life-threatening situations to the individual, other parties or the public.
- Where there is a statutory responsibility to report.
- Where required by a court or legal process to do so.
- Where non-disclosure of information could compromise Tusla EAP.
- Where the EAP becomes aware of a possible breach in criminal law, disclosure may be necessary.

2. Consultation with managers on staff well-being and psychosocial issues

Services provided by the EAP programme

Managers making an employee referral to EAP

Managers/supervisors can contact Tusla's Health, Wellbeing & EAP Service if they have concerns about a staff member.

The manager/supervisor will be afforded the opportunity to discuss these concerns in a confidential and supportive environment. The option of referring the staff member to the EAP counselling service can also be discussed. If the manager is following up on a request on behalf of the staff member consent must be provided by the staff member.

Where a manager is addressing work performance, attendance or behavioural issues, referral to the EAP may be an option in helping to improve the situation.

Managers can use the HWEAP and EAP services to get advice on staff wellbeing and welfare issues.

For managers with concerns about their staff's mental health and wish to support same it might be helpful to take the module: *Supporting Your Staff's Mental Health: A Programme* available on ilearn for Managers.

Referral pathway

Please complete the [Manager Referral Form](#) to refer a staff member to the EAP service. Return the completed form to eap@tusla.ie one of the team will contact you.

Manager concern - Manager to complete the **E**mployee **A**ssistance **P**rogramme (EAP) - [Manager Referral Form](#) - submit to eap@tusla.ie - a member of the team will be in contact with you to discuss the referral and requirements.



3. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

Critical Incident Stress Management, or CISM, is an intervention protocol developed specifically for dealing with traumatic events. It is a formal, highly structured, and professionally recognised process for helping those involved in a critical incident to share their experiences and emotions and to learn about stress reactions and symptoms.

It is a confidential, voluntary process, sometimes called 'psychological first aid'. It is not counselling or psychotherapy.

First developed for use with military combat veterans and then civilian first responders (police, fire, ambulance, emergency workers and disaster rescuers), it has now been adapted and used virtually everywhere there is a need to address traumatic impact in people's lives.

What is a critical incident?

Critical incidents are unusually challenging events that have the potential to create significant human distress and can overwhelm one's usual coping mechanisms (Mitchell, 2006, p.20).

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM):

CISM is a specialised programme of Critical Incident techniques that are linked to each other and blended to alleviate the reactions to traumatic experiences.

CISM aims to:

- Minimise the emotional impact of Critical Incidents on staff
- Increase the resistance, resilience and recovery of staff to harmful stress
- Prevent harmful effects on staff by working with and supporting staff at the time of a Critical Incident
- Aid in preventing any chronic effects such as Acute Stress Disorder or Post-Traumatic Stress, using good education, follow-up care, and prompt identification and referral to the EAP as required

CISM targets the response of individuals and groups of individuals to traumatic events rather than the incident or event itself.



Steps to Activating the CISM Process within Tusla

There are two options for initiating CISM support.

1. If there is an incident involving an **individual staff** member, this should be initiated with the on-site CISM peer supporter who should inform HWEAP of the support provided. (A peer supporter is a colleague you work with daily, that has undergone training to support their colleagues following a critical incident. Peer supporters assist in normalising the feelings and emotions following an incident. They follow up with colleagues, CISM Coordinator (HWEAP) and point towards more specialised support if required.) If you don't have a Peer supporter in your area contact eap@tusla.ie and a member of the HWEAP team will be in contact. If you are interested and supported by your line manager in becoming a Tusla Peer to Peer supporter please complete the [Peer to Peer Supporter Form](#) and return it to eap@tusla.ie one of the HWEAP team will be in touch with you.
2. If the incident affects a **number of employees/Team** the line manager should complete the [CISM Activation Form](#) and forward it to eap@tusla.ie for support and activation. HWEAP will then contact the line manager/Senior staff member to discuss the required support.

Referral pathway

Individual referral - Where an incident involves an individual staff member, contact your on-site/local CISM peer supporter. If you do not have access to an on-site/local peer supporter contact eap@tusla.ie with a completed [CISM Activation Form](#)

Team referral - In the event the incident involves a team the manager completes the [CISM Activation Form](#) and forwards it to eap@tusla.ie

Individual referral - Access peer supporter on-site/local or via eap@tusla.ie [CISM Activation Form](#) - a member of the team will be in contact with you to discuss the referral and requirements - For queries contact eap@tusla.ie

Team referral - The manager completes the [CISM Activation Form](#) to eap@tusla.ie - a member of the team will be in contact with you to discuss the referral and requirements - For queries contact eap@tusla.ie

4. Group Support Session

If the report of an incident is outside the CISM response timeframe, HWEAP can provide support to the team with group interventions. If an incident occurs that is of an extreme incidence the Manager can submit a [Group Support Session Form](#) and submit it to eap@tusla.ie. Please note that these incidents will be assessed to ensure that they are meeting the criteria of this intervention.

HWEAP will arrange group counselling sessions and liaise with the EAP service provider and line manager concerned regarding the time, date and venue for group sessions and completion of the Group Support Request form.

Referral pathway

The line manager is required to complete the [Group Support Session Form](#) and submit it to eap@tusla.ie

Group support session – The manager completes the [Group Support Session Form](#) and submits it to eap@tusla.ie - a member of the team will be in contact with you to discuss the referral and requirements - For queries contact eap@tusla.ie



5. Digital Wellbeing Platform

Personal Dashboard/Digital wellbeing;

There is also self-directed support in the form of the Staff Support hub where you can sign up to create your profile, To access the support hub - <https://www.inspiresupporthub.org/> (Employer Password TUSLAHUB). This hub has excellent resources, articles and a personal area of the hub highlighting recommended resources, mood and sleep trackers and a gratitude diary to make space to reflect.

Staff who join will be able to instantly access professional, helpful content to aid them in their personal wellbeing journey as well as:

- A guided self-assessment tool that will pinpoint the content that users will find most beneficial.
- Guided self-study courses underpinned by cognitive behavioural therapy-informed self-assessment.
- Regularly updated ideas to help connect with people, become more active, take notice, keep learning, and give back.
- Online chat to guide users through the hub and refer into the counselling service and employee assistance programme.
- A self-referral option to allow users quick, easy, and confidential access to counselling.
- Personalised dashboards allowing users to track key wellbeing metrics like sleep and mood.



Contact Information

Tusla's Health, Wellbeing & EAP Service

Telephone: 086 1438390

EAP Counselling Service: 1800 817435

Email: eap@tusla.ie

Web: www.tusla.ie/health-wellbeing-and-eap/



- Information for those Affected by Suicide
- Anger Management
- Bereavement
- Conflict Resolution Skills for Managers
- Internet Harassment or Cyber Bullying
- Responding to Difficult Phone Calls
- Effective Communication
- Good Mental Health in the Workplace
- Response to a Critical Incident
- Information on Tusla's EAP Service
- Managing Your Work-Life Balance
- Personal Crisis
- Building Personal Resilience
- Planning for Retirement
- Stress Awareness
- Stress
- Substance Misuse and Addiction
- Information for those in Suicidal Distress
- Tusla Equality Diversity & Inclusion
- Burnout and your EAP Support
- Menopause

www.tusla.ie