

REFERRING MEMBERS WITH PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Section 9.5 of the CBA codifies a recognition that when behavior and/or performance at work are affected by personal problems, such as mental health or addiction, referral for rehabilitation is more desirable than discipline. You don't have to be a social worker to respond effectively when personal problems endanger a member's job. The Central Labor Rehabilitation Council (31 West 15th Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10011, 212-604-9552, fax 212-604-9550, laborrehab@aol.com) is a resource for training for you, and services and referrals for your members, concerning a full range of personal problems (marital, financial, chemical, etc). Seeing a problem and dealing with it in time can save jobs, families, even lives. When you do recognize a problem, do not:

- Lose objectivity and become judgmental,
- Feed the rumor mill,
- Counsel the person yourself, except as to where to get help, nor
- "Enable" the person to continue or worsen by covering for or overlooking the problem, because of:
 - Friendship,
 - Denial,
 - Belief that you are meddling,
 - Fear of peer retaliation,
 - Hesitancy to get involved,
 - Hope that the problem will pass, or
 - Past performance and history as a good worker.

Needs to be included:

EC members can also often be of help with personal problem but that decision belongs to the member involved. An EC member can often be consulted without the identity of the member being divulged. Our Health Insurance coverage includes treatment for substance abuse, mental health and emotional trauma and EC members can assist delegates or members in finding appropriate help. Remember, always treat personal matters as confidential and inform the member of how you intend to proceed and who you intend to contact first and with the members permission unless you believe that they or another person is in immanent physical danger.