

HOT SHEET

Volume 9, Issue 7
July 29, 2022



Full-Circle HR



"He's in, but in a very fowl mood."

HR Trends:

- As employers consider adding abortion related travel expenses to their insurance plans, they must also consider whether some of these reimbursements will be taxable income.
- President Biden signed a bill in an effort to protect reproductive healthcare in response to the overturn of Roe v Wade. There is a fact sheet available at [Fact sheet](#).
- Job ads with a COVID vaccine requirement have fallen from 7.1% at the peak of the pandemic to 5.9% as of June 30.
- As of July 12, the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) said employers must show that corona-virus testing is job-related and consistent with business necessity, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Until July 12, worksite COVID-19 testing was permitted without any required justification or assessment.
- The EEOC is suing Hobby Lobby for refusing to allow an employee with multiple mental health issues to bring their service dog to work. While it may not always be clear cut if an employer must allow this, the interactive process does require employers to explore reasonable options in such a case.

Make the Most of Your EAP

Inflation, staffing shortages, COVID, challenges finding child or elder care, political and social unrest, and more have all added to the stress level at home and in the workplace. Your employee assistance program (EAP) can help with navigating all of this. And this benefit is not only quite affordable for the company it also saves employees and their families money when they can access initial support services for financial, legal, mental health, home purchase, and interpersonal challenge needs at no cost to them. During this time of inflation, it is a great asset to have this available for the company and the employee/family. EAPs can also support health and wellness such as smoking

cessation, healthy eating habits, and getting exercise.

Ensure employees fully understand this benefit and that you remind them of it. Open-enrollment is a good time to highlight it. Additionally some EAPs put out newsletters and offer regular webinars. There may be trainings available for your management staff. They may also come onsite for trauma or grief counseling in response to traumatic events that affect the whole organization (often for an additional fee).

The types of referrals to an EAP are self-referral, informal referral (a friend or colleague suggests the EAP), or a mandatory referral for performance or disciplinary issues. These are all confidential—even when it's a

mandatory referral by a manager or HR, they only have knowledge about whether the employee is making and keeping appointments.

If you don't have an EAP, you may be able to get a recommendation from your health insurance broker. Here are some of the considerations that SHRM* recommends when choosing a provider: **•Years of service, references, and current clients.** Do other employers with similar workforces recommend the vendor? **•Service location.** Will the EAP services be available onsite, offsite, or both? **•Ability to provide services to employees in different locations.** Can the provider handle clients who

are not all in the same geographic area? **•Hours of service.** Are services available to employees who are not on the day shift? **•Scope of services.** Does the EAP offer a range of services suitable for your staff? **•Referrals.** Is the vendor able to refer employees to outside resources when they need more or different help than provided by the EAP? **•Follow-up services.** Is there a process for tracking clients' progress and ensuring they continue to get the help they need? **•Credentials and training.** Can the EAP provider show that its professional employees are trained and that they hold appropriate and updated credentials?

Compensation and Benefits in Times of Inflation

Many employers are concerned about salary increases for their staff in a time when it is challenging for wages to keep up with inflation. It is a rarity that employers can give 9.1% increases to keep up (according to surveys 5% or more is the reported expected increase this year).** So, they must think creatively about the total compensation package and about the lower end of the salary structure where employees are most likely to struggle with making ends meet due to inflation. Also, as I listen to financial experts speak, we have to think of this as a temporary situation so that we do not take action that makes it more permanent. So, as employers we should adjust

to the now while knowing that this too will change. What we can do now is include employees in the process by finding out what benefits they value the most. Depending on your size, you could do a formal survey or just ask folks one-on-one or in small groups. Some companies are finding ways to provide discounted day/elder care or pet insurance. Others are raising the starting wage for employees to move it closer to a livable wage. The EAP benefit discussed above is another way to help employees, particularly the financial planning benefit. Where possible, offer an employee discount program. Other considerations could include Phantom Equity where employees get a percentage of the profits at the

end of the quarter or the year; schedule flexibility to address daycare/elder issues; and offering work from home options when possible that help with travel expense and daycare issues. Even in times of inflation, employees do not necessarily leave for compensation reasons. Find out what those other reasons may be and engage them in dialogue about how to address them. This is a long-term response no matter how long inflation stays with us. Increase transparency to foster trust. In order to increase pay transparency it is important to have a structured approach to compensation so that it can be clearly communicated to employees. If you do not

Hate is too great a burden to bear. It injures the hater more than it injures the hated.—Coretta Scott King

already have one in place, this is something that FCHR might assist you with. Some basic steps include: 1. Value each job in that market (you can do this by using external salary data/surveys). 2. Identify your competitive strategy—At Market, Below Market, or Above Market? There are various reasons for each depending on your need to attract new talent, retain existing talent, or your financial position. 3. Define how you will adjust compensation for promotions (with consideration for the external market.) 4. Determine how you maintain internal equity between promotions, new hires, and long-term staff.