

C'field board votes to keep employee assistance service

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By Lisa Gervais, Assistant Editor

Chesterfield Township employees will continue to have access to employee assistance programs through CARE's WorkLife Solutions.

The township board voted to renew their contract with the company at their Sept. 21 meeting.

The cost of the service is \$4,410 for one year.

"Our focus is to help the employees deal with things going on in their life that impact their performance at work," CARE's WorkLife Solutions Director Brenda Szalka, said.

Szalka added stressors in an employee's personal life can sometimes can effect their work and reflect on a company.

As part of the contract, CARE provides township employees with a variety of confidential services including counseling at no cost to the employee.

"They can come to us for anything at all, something that's going on at work, at home...and they can either call us with a toll free number and just talk to somebody, because sometimes they just need to talk to somebody on the phone," Szalka said.

CARE also offers the township on-site training sessions including stress management, conflict resolutions, leadership training and training on how to improve productivity.

Szalka said they do provide one service she hopes Chesterfield Township will never have to utilize: Critical incident stress responding in the case of traumatic workplace incidents like unexpected death or suicide.

"(It's) to help them process it so they can get back to their level of performance," she said.

At the board meeting, Trustee Michele Ficht asked how many employees utilized the service in the last year.

Treasurer Linda Hartman said although she wasn't extremely familiar with the service, she knew employees had used it.

"Fortunately it's a small amount of employees that need it," she said. "But when they need it, they need it bad."

Szalka said the Macomb County based company provides services for around 50 schools and municipalities in the county.

With municipalities trimming budgets, an employee assistance program might be one of the first services dropped. But Szalka said now more than ever, employees need the resources provided by CARE.

"It's definitely something that should be top of the list," Szalka said.

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