



Help Starts Here.

Washington State Employee Assistance Program

Taking Care of Your Mental Health & Wellbeing During Election Season

We recognize that as the upcoming elections draw near, it's common to experience heightened emotions and stress related to political polarization and conflict. The constant barrage of news, social media debates, and the uncertainty of the outcomes can lead to greater emotional and mental strain. It's crucial to recognize these feelings and take proactive steps to manage them.

State and public employees who support the needs of Washington communities may be looking for ways to maximize their overall health and wellbeing over the next several weeks and months.

Begin by setting boundaries with news consumption and social media use, ensuring you're not overwhelmed by the constant stream of information. Practicing mindfulness and stress-relief techniques, such as meditation, deep-breathing exercises, and physical activity, can also help maintain mental equilibrium.

Connecting with friends and family who share your values and engaging in meaningful, non-political conversations can provide a supportive environment that fosters emotional resilience.

Focusing on community engagement and constructive dialogue can reduce feelings of isolation and division. Volunteering for local causes, attending community events, or participating in discussions that prioritize understanding can shift your focus from national tensions to positive, local impacts.

Remember, it's okay to step back and take a break from the political fray to protect your mental health and wellbeing. By prioritizing self-care and constructive interaction, you can navigate the election season with a clearer mind and a calmer spirit, contributing to a more peaceful and balanced community atmosphere.

To support our colleagues in these efforts, the Washington State EAP offers the below resources. Their inclusion is not intended to reflect a particular importance over other resources, nor is the intent to endorse any views expressed or products or services offered.

Resources on the Web

- [The Psychological Impact of an Election Year | Psychology Today](#)
- [How to Manage Election Anxiety: Shots - Health News: NPR](#)
- [How to Protect Your Brain from Election Stress](#)
- [Election Stress: Tips to Manage Anxious Feelings About Politics](#)
- [Americans are Stressed About Politics](#)
- [When is Political Polarization Good and When Does It Go Bad?](#)
- [Seeing People as Individuals Reduces Political Hostility](#)
- [Awe Experiences Decrease Political Polarization](#)
- [UCLA Critical Media Literacy Research Guide](#)
- [Update: Partisan Gaps Expand Most on Government Power, Climate](#)



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Resources (Continued)

- [Politics in the Workplace: How Managers Can Keep the Peace](#)
- [Navigating Politics in the Workplace During a Divisive Political Year](#)
- [Knowledge is Power: Fighting Misinformation, Disinformation, and Junk News](#)
- [How to Support LGBTQ+ Young People Ahead of the 2024 Election](#)
- [Digital Wellbeing Lessons for Kids, grades K-12](#)
- [Explaining the News to Our Kids](#)

Special Considerations

Substance Use

Stress can result in unhealthy ways of coping, including alcohol and substance use. Below are some resources to get support.

- [Alcohol and Substance Use](#) (CDC)
- [Rethinking Drinking](#) (National Institutes of Health)

Mental Health

The below resources provide support when you or someone you care for is in crisis.

- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) – **call 988**
- [Crisis Text Line](#) – to Connect with a Crisis Counselor, **text “Heal” to 741741**

Some Suggestions for the Days Ahead

- Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings
- Identify what is not in your control
- Attend to the things in your control
- Set boundaries around social media and news consumption
- Minimize toxic interactions
- Seek out and use supportive resources
- Eat healthy foods; Be physically active; Get sufficient rest

Washington State EAP is accessible, free, and confidential.
Contact us today at **877.313.4455** or **eap.wa.gov**