

Benefits of LEAP Peer Counseling for Dislocated Workers

- 1. Establishes trust** - Union/Peer Counseling maximizes the chances a dislocated worker will reach out for assistance, as they are more likely to trust a union brother or sister than an unknown.
- 2. Reduces isolation** - Workers are less likely to feel isolated or misunderstood, when speaking with a Union/Peer Counselor “who has been there.”
- 3. Normalizes situation** - Guilt and self-blame are greatly minimized by Union/Peer Counseling, because everyone is in the same situation.
- 4. Reinforces benefit of union membership** - Union members often are angry as a result of job loss, and some may blame the union. Union/Peer Counseling ensures a positive experience to carry to their next job.
- 5. Provides access to community services and the AFL-CIO Community Services Network** - Union/Peer Counselors are trained to make appropriate referrals and have the AFL-CIO Community Services as backup if other services are needed;
- 6. Reduces stress, builds self-esteem & develops new coping strategies** - Union/Peer Counseling is a process of mutual self-help, which reduces stress, restores self confidence and reinforces the use of effective coping strategies.
- 7. Restores hope** - Union Peer Counselors are a source of hope, as their situation is proof that there are positive opportunities in the future.
- 8. Provides positive role models** - Union/Peer Counselors are positive role models, demonstrating those qualities needed to manage a difficult transition - strength, thoughtfulness, patience and empathy.
- 9. Advocacy is proven to be an essential element of success for those workers (older, less educated, with chronic health problems, etc.) who may fall through the cracks** - approximately 30% of dislocated workers require individualized support best delivered through Union/Peer Counseling.
- 10. Most importantly, when dislocated workers’ functioning is maximized, they are more likely to understand their options and take advantage of all recommended NJ DLW services available to them through their local One-Stop.**