
GENERAL ORDER

FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT



SUBJECT: INCIDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	NUMBER: 430.4
CANCELS ORDER DATED: 4-1-13	ISSUE DATE: 4-1-14

I. PURPOSE

This General Order is issued for the purpose of providing guidelines to all Department members as to the various resources provided by Incident Support Services (ISS). The goal of the program is to provide information, education, and overall support to Department personnel. This includes an integrated approach involving multiple resources in response to employees involved in traumatic events such as shootings, cruiser accidents, and other critical incidents.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of this agency to immediately provide a comprehensive array of services to employees who are involved in traumatic incidents and ensure that follow-up and appropriate after-care is included. Assistance and support shall also be provided as appropriate to all employees on a routine basis to promote overall emotional and psychological wellness.

III. DEFINITIONS

Incident Support Services (ISS): A comprehensive array of employee support services, including the Peer Support Team, Department psychologists, police chaplains, Family Assistance Support Team (FAST), Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and other contracted services designed to help law enforcement officers, employees, and family members maintain their professional and personal wellness during and following critical incidents. All incident support services are coordinated by the commander of the Administrative Support Bureau (ASB). In the event that the ASB commander is unavailable the Personnel Resources Division (PRD) director will oversee the ISS.

Peer Support Team members: Departmental personnel who are specifically trained to respond to traumatic situations in order to provide emotional support to those employees directly involved and any other employees affected.

Peer Support Team commanders: Specific commanders who are responsible for direct oversight of the team and coordination of response to critical incidents and any other cases which involve the use of peer members.

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Police Psychologist: Contracted psychologists available around-the-clock, in order to provide psychological and emotional assistance to employees on a regular basis.

Police Chaplains: Clergy members who have received training in their own religion and general training certifying them as a police chaplain. They are assigned to district stations, divisions, bureaus, or may be at-large members who voluntarily provide employees with emotional and spiritual support, both during and after a critical incident.

Police Chaplain Coordinator: Responsible for the daily oversight/operations of the chaplains, at the direction of the ISS commander.

Critical Incident: Sudden, powerful and often traumatic event that falls outside the range of ordinary human experiences. This can include, but is not limited to line of duty death or serious injury of a departmental employee, officer-involved shooting, life threatening assaults, or other events that may impact employees' psychological and emotional wellness (e.g., crash scenes, scenes of major crimes, etc.).

IV. POLICE PSYCHOLOGIST

A. The primary goal of the police psychologist is to assist employees in maintaining overall emotional wellness as it relates to their work environment. He responds to critical incidents at the direction of the ASB commander in order to assist officers in dealing with the various stressors associated with such incidents and also provide assistance to employees who are in crisis due to other stressors/factors.

The police psychologist is also responsible for developing and providing ongoing training and education for all employees and members of the ISS team.

B. Duties

1. The police psychologist shall perform advanced-level professional clinical work and provide direct clinical prevention and mental health treatment services, to include: crisis intervention, psychological assessments, testing, evaluation, diagnosis, psychotherapeutic treatment, and coordination of services for all employees and retired law enforcement officers.

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2. During and following critical incidents, the psychologist shall ensure the psychological well-being of affected employee(s), provide individual evaluation of involved employee(s) psychological/emotional state, and provide a clinical assessment of employee's ability to return to work. The psychologist shall also coordinate and provide post-critical incident psycho-educational information and support regarding stress and trauma for employees, and ensure squads/units receive appropriate follow-up care and coordination of services.
3. The police psychologist is also responsible for the following general clinical services:
 - a) Care modalities, which may include individual, family, and group therapies.
 - b) Facilitates referrals to conjunctive and/or alternative care services, when appropriate.
 - c) Develops, implements, and evaluates psychological/emotional wellness and prevention programs (e.g., seminars, stress management workshops, self-care strategies, and reentry programs for returning military veterans).
 - d) Provides appropriate comfort and grief counseling to family and Department members in serious injury or death cases involving employees.
 - e) Offers post-incident evaluation of officers' and employees' morale, mindset, and psychological/emotional status.
 - f) Advises and assists the Department in implementing appropriate interventions to help maintain employees' psychological and emotional integrity.
4. The ISS police psychologists shall not become involved in "Fit for Duty" cases. A contracted psychologist from a separate company specializing in "fit for duty" shall provide appropriate evaluation and testing for these types of cases.

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5. Confidentiality parameters will be reviewed with each employee who seeks assistance or who is required to have contact with a police psychologist. Respecting privacy is paramount; therefore all psychologists will follow applicable laws and ethical guidelines to ensure that appropriate assistance is granted. However, there are several conditions under which confidential information may be released to the ASB commander or designee. Psychologists are required to release confidential information when there is a risk of serious harm to self or others, or there is a suspicion of child or elderly abuse. Confidential information can also be released at the request of the employee with a signed release, or in response to a court order.
6. Commanders shall contact the ASB Commander if they need further guidance on the roles/responsibilities of the police psychologists or need assistance determining the level of assistance needed in a particular case.

Commanders and supervisors should give special consideration to the use of police psychologists during administrative investigations when the employee is relieved of duty. Employees involved in crisis situations, such as those relieved of duty, are likely to experience stress and challenges in their personal and professional lives. At times, employees may be reluctant to seek professional help for a myriad of reasons.

The ISS police psychologists do not conduct "fit for duty" examinations; rather, the police psychologists' role is to assist the employee in navigating a difficult time in their life. As noted above in paragraph 4, a contracted psychologist from a separate company specializing in "fit for duty" shall be utilized by the commander of ASB or the Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB), as approved by the Chief of Police, for any "fit for duty" case. Although the relieved employee will not be required to meet with a police psychologist in every relief of duty case, commanders and supervisors shall inform the employee of their services at the time of the relief of duty.

7. The ISS psychologists are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. During regular business hours, employees may contact ISS police psychologists directly to request assistance via telephone or Outlook. The ISS police psychologists and the

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weekend on-call psychologists are available after hours; however, approval must first be sought from the ASB commander or PRD director.

V. PEER SUPPORT TEAM

- A. The Peer Support Team will consist of a volunteer representative from each station or section, and will be selected by the Peer Support Team commanders and supervisors, with approval by the ASB commander. The Peer Support Team commanders will report directly to the ASB commander or designee on matters concerning the program. Peer Support Team members will be trained in areas pertinent to critical incidents and will be required to attend several training sessions each year.
- B. The Peer Support Team will provide the following services:
 - 1. Immediate support services as needed when responding to the scene of a critical incident, to include providing confidential support to affected employee(s), contacting family members, arranging transportation, providing food, etc.
 - 2. Critical incident education, as appropriate.
 - 3. Act as liaison with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and provide assistance to the police psychologist, chaplains, etc.
 - 4. Participate in debriefing and diffusing sessions with affected employees, along with the Criminal Investigations Bureau (CIB) and Internal Affairs (IAB), when appropriate. Assist the Department's psychologists with follow-up as directed after an incident.
 - 5. Coordinate long term assistance at the direction of peer command.
- C. The Peer Support on-call commander shall be notified promptly of any critical incident involving a Fairfax County employee and determine the level of response needed from Peer Support.
- D. Commanders or first line supervisors who need assistance from Peer Support due to an immediate incident or for employee related issues shall

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make the request through the Department of Public Safety Communications Center (DPSC) or the police liaison commander (PLC). DPSC staff or the PLC shall contact the Peer Support on-call commander and relay the information for appropriate follow up. This does not preclude any departmental employee from informally contacting any Peer Support Team member for personal assistance. DPSC/PLC will maintain a current on-call roster for Peer Support commanders and supervisors in order to assure timely and accurate notifications.

VI. POLICE CHAPLAINS

- A. The Fairfax County Police Department's Chaplain Unit operates at the direction of the Chief of Police and is overseen by the ISS commander. It is a non-standing, specialized unit whose members are assigned to a district station, division, bureau, or designated as at-large members. Police chaplains are considered to be honorary members of command staff. A chaplain coordinator is designated to assist with oversight of the daily operations of the Police Chaplain Unit.
- B. Members of the Chaplain Unit shall have the following qualifications:
 - 1. A police chaplain must be ordained, invested or a certified member of the clergy in good standing of a recognized religious denomination with at least three years of full-time experience in the ministry.
 - 2. A police chaplain should be available to serve on a 24-hour, on-call basis, determined and governed by the ISS Commander.
 - 3. A police chaplain may not have any convictions of a criminal offense, or any record of having previously engaged in criminal conduct. All chaplains shall successfully pass a background check before being assigned to the unit.
 - 4. A police chaplain must possess a valid driver's license.
- C. The ISS commander and the Chief of Police must approve all police chaplains.

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- D. Police chaplains will assist employees when requested by the ISS commander, Chaplain Unit coordinator, or other command or supervisory level officer, by providing emotional and spiritual support and guidance to the injured, ill, or distressed. This does not preclude an employee from contacting a police chaplain directly for assistance or support. Chaplains typically provide support for the following events:
1. Officer-Involved Shootings
 2. Line of Duty Death or Injury
 3. Off-Duty Deaths, when requested
 4. Traffic Crashes
 5. Incidents involving children (e.g., deaths, school violence, etc.)
 6. Community disasters
 7. Opening and/or closing prayers at police ceremonies.
- E. Police chaplains are available to all employees and/or their families for counseling and/or spiritual support during times of crisis. Employees or family members may contact the police chaplain directly on personal need for services. The Chaplain Unit will not take the place of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), but will serve to augment such programs. Situations that fall outside the scope and ability of a police chaplain shall be referred to the proper resource for further assistance, or to the Department's psychologists.
- F. Police chaplains may assist with officiating at religious services, such as weddings, funerals, etc.
- G. Police chaplains will periodically meet with their respective station/bureau commander and attend roll calls and ride-alongs in order to develop partnerships with employees.
- H. Police chaplains will attend regular meetings with the Chaplain Unit coordinator.

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- I. Request for police chaplain services as a result of operational needs will be by the authorization of any supervisor. The applicable supervisor will make personal contact with the Chaplain Unit coordinator, or a station police chaplain via telephone or pager, or refer notification to the DPSC.

VII. TYPES OF INCIDENTS

The ISS commander along with the Peer Support Team, psychologist, and chaplains shall provide a coordinated response to the following incidents:

- A. Any incident which results in the death or serious injury of a person by a Department employee.
- B. Any incident in which an employee is killed or seriously injured in the line of duty.
- C. Any critical incident that the on-scene supervisor, duty officer, or ISS commander deems appropriate.
- D. Death, serious injury, or medical emergency that occurs off duty.
- E. Requests from other public safety agencies, as approved by the Chief of Police or the ISS commander.

VIII. NOTIFICATION AND RESPONSE

- A. The ISS commander, on-call Peer Support commander, and the on-call Peer Support supervisor shall be notified when a critical incident occurs involving an employee, and shall direct resources and make additional notifications as appropriate.
- B. The ISS commander will coordinate with the Peer Support commander, Department psychologist and Chaplain Unit coordinator regarding appropriate response and determine the initial response. The Peer Support commander will coordinate with the Peer Support supervisor to ensure the appropriate number of Peer Support Team members are sent to the involved officer(s) location. Peer Support members already on duty will be sent immediately, and other on-call team members paged as needed.

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Investigations of deadly force shall be handled in accordance with SOP 12-045.

- C. First Report of Injury Paperwork: Officers involved in critical incidents shall have the "Employer's First Report of Injury" submitted on their behalf in order to facilitate any future claims involving Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This paperwork shall be completed by the PRD director and submitted to the adjuster that is retained by Risk Management. No action on the part of the affected officer(s) or supervisors is required.

IX. CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. Each Peer Support Team member will treat each contact with the utmost level of confidentiality. Unauthorized disclosure of information concerning specific incidents or employee involvement in such incidents learned as a result of Peer Support Team intervention shall not occur unless such disclosure is required by exigent circumstances, ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction, or at the direction of the Chief of Police.
- B. Peer Support Team members involved in a criminal or serious administrative incident or investigation shall not be assigned to provide assistance as a Peer Support Team member until the matter is resolved. Members are required to advise a peer support supervisor or commander if they become involved in a serious criminal or administrative investigation.
- C. Peer Support Team members shall not be routinely interviewed by investigative authorities concerning matters in which they obtained information as a direct result of their assignment as a Peer Support Team member. Absent exigent circumstances, requests to interview Peer Support Team members shall be directed to the Chief of Police.
- D. Employees receiving Peer Support Team services shall be advised as to the limits of this confidentiality prior to any discussion.

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X. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS REFERENCE

VLEPSC
ADM.
23.04

This General Order becomes effective April 1, 2014, and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subject.

ISSUED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Chief of Police

County Executive