

	PEER SUPPORT TEAM GUIDELINES		2015revB
	AUTHORED BY: Engineer Tyler Drage	FESSAM # 7G.4	EFFECTIVE DATE: 05/23/2014
	APPROVED BY: Fire Chief Mark Miller <i>Mark Miller</i>		REVISION DATE: 05/23/2017

Procedure:

Any employee may request psychological or peer support services by contacting the Coordinator or a peer support team member.

Psychological Services - Overview

The Authority offers a variety of psychological services to Authority personnel and their families, including:

- Facilitated group support and debriefings
- Direct individual, couple and family counseling
- Training in psychologically pertinent programs
- New-hire support programs
- Trauma intervention programs
- Clinical supervision and on-going training for PST members

Psychological Services - Critical Incident

The Coordinator will determine the appropriate support services to provide, including the type, extent and duration of such services during and following a critical incident.

Peer Support Team

The Authority will maintain a Peer Support Team (PST) to provide support for all Authority members and their immediate family. The PST functions as specified in the PST Operational Guidelines. The PST will operate under the clinical supervision of the Coordinator. PST members shall receive ongoing in-service training consistent with the PST mission. If a PST member has a known or potential conflict of interest with a particular incident or person, the member must report it to the Coordinator as soon as the member realizes the conflict.

Appointment to the Peer Support Team

PST members are selected in accordance with existing policy for collateral assignments and are appointed by the fire chief.

Removal from the Peer Support Team

The fire chief may remove any member from the Peer Support Team. The Team Leader, in consultation with the Coordinator, may request that the fire chief remove from the Peer Support Team any member who has been determined to have acted in violation of law, Authority policy, or the PST Operational Guidelines. Such a request may also be presented in any other circumstances wherein a team member has been determined to have acted in a manner which undermines the credibility or foundational ethical principles of the Peer Support Team.

Peer Support Confidentiality

Information presented or received during a PST individual or group support intervention or critical incident debriefing which are in compliance with 13-90-107(1)(m) § C.R.S., other Colorado Revised Statutes, and the PST Operational Guidelines are not subject to disclosure in State court proceedings or any administrative investigation, except as required by law.

PST-Facilitated Debriefing

Any employee may request that a PST-facilitated debriefing be convened following a critical incident. The appropriateness of such a debriefing will be determined by the Coordinator. If a PST-facilitated debriefing is determined to be unwarranted, other PST support interventions may be implemented. Participation in such debriefings is voluntary.

On-Scene Critical Incident Response by Peer Support Team

Personnel involved in a critical incident may request the PST or a specific PST member to respond for peer support. If the requested PST member is on-duty, supervisors should make a reasonable effort to make the PST member available to respond. PST members called out to function in their role as PST members will provide peer support for involved employees and will not be utilized in an operational role on the incident scene.

Reporting Requirements

The Team Leader and the Public Safety Human Services Coordinator are responsible for regular reporting at the program level so that individual confidentiality is protected. These reports shall be submitted to the Public Safety Administrative Director.

Revision History:

Version A revised by Tyler Drage to current template.

3/20/15 Update to current format, no changes in content.

References:

Firefighter Peer Support Team Manual, 2nd edition. Jack Digliani, PhD

Definitions:

Critical Incident as used in this policy is an incident wherein a person was exposed to events which may be outside the normal range of experience or may create an adverse effect on the person.

A **clinical critical incident debriefing** is a group meeting facilitated by the Coordinator.

A **PST critical incident debriefing** is a group meeting approved by the Coordinator and facilitated by the Peer Support Team (PST). The group may include PST members, the person(s) involved in the critical incident and his/her family members and other personnel involved in the incident. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for all persons involved in a critical incident to discuss their feelings and perspectives regarding the critical incident.

Public Safety Human Services Coordinator (Coordinator) means any licensed mental health professional on contract with or employed by the City or Authority to provide psychological services to Authority personnel and their families. The Coordinator is the clinical supervisor for the Authority's Peer Support Team.

Peer Support means support and debriefing for employees and their families experiencing personal and/or work-related stress and also to provide support during and following critical or traumatic work-related incidents.

Peer Support Team (PST) is a group of employees and volunteers specially trained in peer support skills and designated by the fire chief to be assigned to the team. PST is further defined by 13-90-107(m)(II)(a.5) § C.R.S., as amended.

Coordinator Confidentiality is as prescribed in professional ethics, state statutes (13-90-107(1)(g) § C.R.S. and 12-43-218 § C.R.S., as amended) and other applicable laws.