



TRAUMATIC INCIDENT COUNSELING

INDEX CODE: 403
EFFECTIVE DATE: 10-12-09

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I. DEFINITION

A traumatic incident is defined as a situation, event, or circumstance where a person is seriously injured or fatally wounded by a police officer or in the presence of a police officer. Traumatic incidents include incidents such as police involved shootings, serious or fatal accidents involving or witnessed by the officer, or some other serious or dramatic incident which may have a negative impact or detrimental effect on the employee's psychological, emotional, or physical well-being.

A traumatic incident involving a civilian employee is defined as a situation, event, or circumstance where the civilian employee is seriously injured or where a civilian employee observes or participates in an incident which has, or may have, a negative impact or detrimental effect on the employee's psychological, emotional, or physical well being.

II. POLICY

The health and welfare of sworn and civilian employees are of the utmost importance to the Department. *Any employee, whose action(s) or use of force in an official capacity results in death or serious physical injury, must be removed from line-duty assignment. Psychological counseling will be provided and required for employees involved in traumatic incidents. When deemed necessary, traumatic incident counseling may also be extended to the immediate family of the involved employee.*

III. IMPLEMENTATION

A. Only the Department-contracted psychologist will be contacted to provide traumatic incident counseling under this Index Code. The 24-hour telephone number to contact the Department-contracted psychologist is maintained by the Communications Section.

B. Consultation with the Department psychologist is mandatory. There will be no cost to the employee for mandatory psychological counseling.

C. The involved employee is guaranteed the highest level of confidentiality consistent with professional, ethical standards. This means that any information given to the psychologist may not be transferred to any employee within the Department or to anyone outside of the Department without written consent by the involved employee. An exception to this is where there is clear, immediate physical danger to the employee or others, in which case the psychologist must immediately notify the employee's supervisor or an appropriate ranking officer or manager.

D. The psychologist will provide a prompt verbal report, followed by a written report, to the Police Personnel Manager or the employee's supervisor as to when the employee may return to regular duty.

E. *Upon receipt of the department psychologist's recommendation, a command level review will be conducted.* The scope of that review will be determined by the highest-ranking officer or civilian manager of that employee's command. Lieutenants and above may also, in the best interest of the department and/or employee, remove other employees from line-duty assignments who witnessed such actions.

Approval of the department psychologist and affected employee's bureau commander is required before a full duty release. When a return to full duty date is established, the affected commander will e-mail the Staff Inspections Unit and the Personnel Manager with that information.

F. Additional information on Traumatic Incident Counseling and other crisis intervention programs may be found in Index Code 306 (Non-Punitive Diversion and Evaluation Programs).

IV. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A. It is the responsibility of the affected employee's immediate supervisor to set an appointment for the employee with a Departmentally-contracted psychologist. The appointment will be set within 72 hours of the incident and will be documented in the original incident report or a supplemental report.

B. A Workers' Compensation – First Report of Injury Form must be completed if an employee is sent for or requests traumatic counseling. This report must be completed even if there are no physical injuries.

C. The department psychologist, police chaplains, and/or the Mobile Crisis Unit are available to respond to a traumatic incident if a police employee needs immediate counseling. An on-scene patrol supervisor of the rank of Lieutenant or above should make this determination. If the presence of either or both of these counselors is required at the scene, the supervisor should notify the Communications Section to contact them.

D. The supervisor who arranges either for on-scene or post-incident counseling will advise *the Staff Inspections Unit and the Police Personnel Manager, via e-mail, of the appointment, all personnel involved and a brief synopsis of the circumstances.*

IV. PROPONENT UNIT: Personnel Section.

V. CANCELLATION: This directive cancels Index Code 403, dated 02-26-07, and memo on Traumatic Incident Counseling, dated 01-16-96.