

Annapolis Police Department



GENERAL ORDER

Number: N.10

Issue Date: April 2017

TO: All Personnel

SUBJECT: CISM Unit

PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines for the participation in the Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM). It will outline the procedures for the utilization of the CISM Team and provide applicable terms and definitions.

GOAL

To develop and implement a Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM) for implementation of a mental health/stress management element. This will provide a holistic mind, body, and spirit approach to wellness and create happier and healthier employees better able to meet the demands of their profession.

CISM is designed to be a confidential consultation and resource for members *and is not be used as an investigative tool*. The team will consist of trained sworn and non-sworn Police Department personnel who will be able to support members by providing assistance in three specific areas:

1. Personal and group debriefing, demobilization, defusing, and post critical incident seminars in the wake of critical incidents and events.
2. Anonymous and confidential peer support designed to provide a comfortable outlet for employee stress and act as a vehicle for securing additional assistance if required.
3. Resilience training designed to provide employees continuing education and techniques for stress management throughout their careers and beyond.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Annapolis Police Department (APD) to assist members who become involved in highly stressful events which can disrupt their health, performance, personality, or relationships. To support this policy, the APD will maintain a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team.

DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident - Any situation faced by members that cause them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions and which has the potential to interfere with the ability to function either at the scene or at a later time. All that is necessary is that the incident, regardless of the type, generates unusually strong feelings in members.

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing - A formal Critical Incident Stress Management Debriefing (CISD) is a group discussion of a traumatic experience. These confidential meetings typically occur within a reasonable time of the incident. Although a CISD is usually held within three days, the specific timing depends on a number of factors. CISM Team members must judge the timing of the CISD meeting on a case by case basis.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) - A comprehensive, systematic, and multi-component approach to managing traumatic stress within an organization.

Critical Incident Stress Management Team - A group of trained agency members, approved and supported by the Chief, consisting of a coordinator, peer support providers, and a mental health professional able to sustain sanctioned Critical Incident Stress Debriefings, One to One Support, and Resiliency services to the agency members.

Defusing - A brief, small group process conducted by CISM Team members, at their discretion, within hours of a traumatic experience.

Demobilization - A brief set of supportive comments and instructions provided to a group of personnel immediately after they disengage from their first exposure to a major incident, such as a disaster.

Family Support Services - A set of interventions which may be utilized by the CISM Team members to provide a range of crisis support services to families of members.

Follow-up Services - Contact with members following initial services provided by a CISM Team member.

Individual Support - One-on-one support available to members with any Peer Support Provider, about any topic that is of concern to the member, such as work related deaths, or more personal issues; divorce, illness, disability, career concerns, family relationships or financial.

Peer Support Providers - Members of the Agency who are trained through an approved CISM course. These members should be able to identify the normal stress reactions associated with critical incidents.

Mental Health Professional - A CISM trained licensed social worker, psychologist, psychiatrist or other licensed professional counselor.

Post Incident Education - CISM information sessions provided to APD members in the aftermath of a particular distressing critical incident.

Pre-Incident Education - CISM information provided to recruit classes and during in-service education programs for APD members.

Referral - Recommendations made by members of the CISM Team to the Agency members suggesting contact with the EAP, chaplains, or other mental health providers.

Team Coordinator - CISM team member assigned with primary oversight and administrative functions of the CISM. The Coordinator is nominated by team members and approved by the Chief. Nominations for coordinator will occur every 24 months at the start of the new calendar year or in the event of an immediate vacancy.

I. General Provisions

- A. CISM will not interfere with any on-going criminal or internal investigation.
- B. This policy is not to interfere in any way with the voluntary use of or referral to any other related programs or services.

II. Entry into the CISM Team

The CISM Team is open to all officers, regardless of rank, seniority or assignment. Officers, who are interested in becoming a CISM Team member and choose to volunteer as a Peer Support Team member, must submit their request through their chain-of-command to the Peer Support Team Coordinators.

- A. Interviews with the Team Coordinators will be required prior to appointment to the CISM Team. Names of suitable Team members will be provided to the Chief of Police for his approval. It is desired to have the CISM Team, as a whole, be a reflection of the rank, gender and cultural diversity of the Department.
- B. Serving on the Team is a voluntary assignment and officers may resign from the Team at any time. Officers may be removed from the Team by either Team Coordinators or the Chief of Police if their duties, assignments, or other reason creates an inability to function with the Team. Resignation or removal from the Team shall not be viewed as a failure on the part of the Team member.

- C. Specifically, the requesting member's most recent performance evaluation must be rated as satisfactory in all factors with no disciplinary action pending. The member must receive a letter of recommendation from their immediate supervisor. The member must submit a letter of interest to the selection board.
- D. Prospective Peer Support Team members must be willing to meet the following criteria:
 - 1. Be willing to respond as often as needed within the course of normal duties.
 - 2. Agree to maintain confidentiality within the course of normal duties.
 - 3. Be empathetic and possess interpersonal and communication skills.
 - 4. Must successfully complete the selection process.
 - 5. Must attend and successfully complete an approved Peer Support/CISM training course.
 - 6. Must participate in on-going training.

III. **Confidentiality and Responsibility**

Members who choose to use CISM services must be made aware that no special legal privilege is extended to peer support providers such as in the case of doctors and patient or attorneys and clients. The Agency and Team members must agree to actively protect confidentiality in order to sustain program viability. It is the duty of management, the team coordinator, and peer support providers to ensure agency members understand all conversations and sessions are strictly confidential with the exception of:

- A. Information indicating imminent harm to the member or others, child abuse or that prevents serious crimes.
- B. Information shared between peer support providers enabling other team members to garner assistance and experience from one another. These discussions shall be general in nature, shall not include names or other unnecessary identifiers, and shall not be discussed outside of closed team sessions.
- C. Allegations of team member confidentiality violations to include the divulgence of sensitive information after the member's tenure with the team will result in:
 - a. The immediate suspension of member's operational status until issue resolution.
 - b. The initiation of an internal investigation.
 - c. A sustained complaint shall result in the immediate removal of an active team member and may lead to additional administrative charges and/or sanctions.

D. The following information, even if obtained through participation on the CISM Team, must be disclosed to the Chief of Police.

1. Threats of suicide/homicide.
2. Admission or threats of criminal activity.
3. Admissions of Child Abuse.

Except in instances where disclosure is required, APD will **NOT** seek any information from a CISM team member about any service they provide.

Note: When functioning as CISM Team members on a critical incident, Team members should not simultaneously hold investigative, administrative or disciplinary roles in the incident.

IV. Team Demographics and Functions

A. The team will be composed of volunteer Annapolis Police Department members not including a coordinator and licensed mental health care provider. Members must be in a non-probationary status, have at least 5 years law enforcement experience, in good standing with the Department, and be well adjusted in their personal lives.

B. Duties:

1. Members shall provide CISD services, peer support, and resiliency functions and presentations as determined by the Administrative Division.
2. Coordinator shall maintain a team roster, schedule and oversee training, provide general administrative and oversight functions, interface with internal and external interested parties, and provide an annual report to the Chief.

C. Training:

1. All training will be provided by recognized professional organizations and individuals working in the CISM field.
2. Initial training will consist of a basic course conducted by recognized CISM instructors and approved by the Training Office.
3. Yearly training will be conducted in accordance with Annapolis Police Department protocols and accepted CISM conventions and procedures currently recognized by experts in the field. At a minimum, formal team meetings and sustainment trainings will be conducted on a quarterly basis.

D. Resignation/Removal from the Team:

1. While the member's ability to give a two-year commitment to the team will be of significant importance to initial selection, team participation is voluntary. A member can leave at any time without administrative sanctions with the exception of removal for confidentiality violations.
2. The member can be removed from the team for performance issues such as consistent failure to train, failure to respond to requests for assistance, or the inability to perform basic peer support functions delineated by training and the Terms and Conditions agreement. The removal process will be initiated by the CISM Team Coordinator with recommendations forwarded to the Chief for final disposition.
3. Additionally, performance issues in the member's regular duties or circumstances in which the Team Coordinators and/or Chief's determines team membership conflicts or degrades the operation of the Agency may result in a member's removal from the team.

V. **RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEAM MEMBERS**

- A. Shall sign a confidentiality agreement as part of appointment to the CISM team.
- B. Shall notify the Coordinator immediately of issues that may impair or affect their ability to operate as peer support provider.
- C. Shall recognize they are NOT mental health providers and operate within the limits of their training.
- D. Shall not take notes or otherwise document the session.
- E. Shall immediately make notification to the Coordinator and affected party's command of emergent or criminal issues as described previously in this order.
- F. The CISM Team member will also provide peer support to individual members of APD involving critical stress incidents. This individual support is not limited to critical stress incidents. Members may contact CISM team members at any time for support on any issue that is of concern to the member.
- G. If a member presents an issue outside of the CISM Team scope of expertise, the CISM Team member will recommend the member seek other available resources.

VI. Team Notification Procedures for Critical Incidents

- A. The Team Coordinators shall be responsible for maintaining and updating current contact rosters.
- B. Initial notification shall be made by the Watch Commander or Duty Officer to the on-call Peer Support Provider.
- C. Notification and CISM Team response shall be mandatory for:
 - 1. Police involved shooting or other force applications resulting in death or grave injury.
 - 2. Line of duty death.
 - 3. Serious injury to members in the performance of their duties.
- D. A Commander or Duty Officer may also contact the CISM Team Coordinator or designee for incidents involving:
 - 1. suicide of a member
 - 2. mass casualty incidents
 - 3. death of children
 - 4. a personally threatening incident to a member
 - 5. a prolonged incident that ends in loss of life
 - 6. any incident that produces a usually high level of stress
- E. Upon notification, the Peer Support member will contact the other on-call team member and CISM Coordinator, respond to the designated location, and report to the Commander/Supervisor in charge of the incident. Regardless of rank, the Peer Support Provider exercises no command authority when performing team duties. The provider should avoid direct involvement in the incident and concentrate attention on assisting members. If at all possible, the provider(s) should wear plain clothes in lieu of a uniform.
- F. Once the Peer Support Provider(s) make contact with the supervisor in charge of the incident, a determination as to what CISM services and resources will be made.

VII. ONE ON ONE CONTACTS

- A. Any member of the agency may approach any Peer Support Provider **AT ANYTIME**. Individual support conducted during off-duty time is encouraged but such meetings are purely voluntary on the part of the support person and the individual requesting the meeting.
- B. A Peer Support Provider may be contacted by any member of the Agency during the member's normal tour of duty. The contact is strictly voluntary and is usually initiated by the Agency member.

C. A Peer Support Provider may approach members of the Agency to offer assistance. If this is prompted by information received from a concerned member, the member must understand that they will receive no specific information other than acknowledge regarding the referral.

D. Peer Support is not part of any formal Employee Assistance Program (EAP) referral or any administrative action taken by the Agency. While peer support may be requested in conjunction with the (EAP), it is not a replacement.

VIII. **DEMOBILIZATION**

Demobilization may be used once, immediately after members have been removed from the scene of a disaster. Attendance at demobilization may be mandated by APD, however active participation cannot be required.

A. The CISM Team will provide the members with information on critical incident stress and what they expect in the weeks following the incident.

B. This process will last approximately ten (10) minutes and will be immediately followed by an opportunity for the members to rest, eat and drink some refreshments.

IX. **DEFUSING**

During incidents of intense stress, defusing may be provided to small groups. These will be conducted by CISM Team members. Attendance at a defusing may be mandated by the Department, however active participation cannot be required.

A. The defusing will be held within 8-12 hours of the incident.

B. After the defusing, Team members will make a determination as to whether any additional steps are required.

C. The lead CISM Team Member will contact the lead clinician assigned to the Team within 12 hours of the defusing. The purpose of this contact is to determine if any additional services need to be offered to those involved in the incident.

X. **CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS DEBRIEFINGS**

A. When debriefings are necessary, they will be provided in accordance with the procedures established by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF). Attendance at a debriefing demobilization may be mandated by the Department, however active participation cannot be required.

- B. Debriefings will be made available for all members involved in the incident. All persons involved in the incident have a valuable contribution to make to the recovery process. Every attempt shall be made to conduct the debriefing during the member's regularly scheduled shift. Members attending debriefings who are not on duty are eligible for Comp time or overtime compensation in accordance with the APD's overtime policy. CISM Team members will collect overtime slips and turn them in to a Team Coordinator, who will submit them for approval. On occasion, members of the APD CISM Team may be asked to participate in a debriefing with members of the Department of Fire and Rescue Services.

XI. **FOLLOW UP SERVICE**

Shall be provided in accordance with training guidelines and may include mental health or other professionals deemed appropriate or requested by CISM providers and affected members.

Major Scott Baker
Acting Chief