

CHANDLER POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS

*Serving with Courage, Pride, and
Dedication*
Subject

100 CISM PROGRAM

Effective

07/07/08

Summary

This policy describes the in-house Critical Incident Stress Management Program (CISM), i.e., peer counseling.

A. PURPOSE

[22.2.5]

1. **TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL INTERVENTION** to lessen the impact of major events on police personnel
2. **TO PROVIDE SUPPORT** to police personnel at the scene or after an encounter with a critical incident

B. POLICY

[33.6.1]

The Critical Incident Stress Management Team and / or chaplain may be called on to address the stress and trauma associated with critical incidents which Police Department employees encounter in the performance of their duties

C. BACKGROUND

THERE ARE UNIQUE STRESSES TO THE POLICE PROFESSION

1. **COMMAND PERSONNEL** should be aware that minimizing exposure time at stressful incidents might result in fewer stress-related problems. This can be accomplished by rotating personnel and by removing initial responding personnel from the scene as soon as possible.
2. **THE DEPARTMENT'S PEER COUNSELING PROGRAM** may be called on to address the stress experienced by department members in critical situations

D. DEFINITIONS

1. **CRITICAL INCIDENT:** An incident that exposes personnel to unusually strong emotional involvement
2. **DEFUSING:** Primarily an information-type meeting that provides an update on the incident, including injuries, as well as a brief review of stress-related symptoms and how to manage them
3. **DEBRIEFING:** A format in which police personnel can discuss their feelings and reactions, thus reducing the stress resulting from exposure to a critical incident
4. **CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT TEAM:** A trained team of peer support personnel supported by one or more mental health professionals

The team is composed of:

Rev

1. **A SUPERVISOR:** The Community Services lieutenant
2. **EMPLOYEES** from a cross section of the department
3. **A PROGRAM COORDINATOR:** Appointed by the Police Chief
4. **A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL** assigned to the team

F. INITIATION OF INTERVENTION

[33.6.1]

1. **THE ON-SCENE SUPERVISOR** will notify the CISM coordinator or a team member of incidents which may qualify as a critical incident and may warrant some kind of intervention
2. **THE ON-SCENE SUPERVISOR OR THE TEAM COORDINATOR** will decide to either call out the whole team or a smaller group to handle the incident or to provide some kind of intervention
3. **THE CISM TEAM** may be activated by the on-scene supervisor for the following incidents:
 - a. The death of a Police Department member
 - b. A mass casualty incident
 - c. Serious injury or death of a citizen resulting from a Police Department operation
4. **THE FOLLOWING INCIDENTS MAY BE DEBRIEFED** at the discretion of the on-scene supervisor or the team coordinator in response to the needs of the employee(s) involved:
 - a. Incidents involving the death of a child or violence to a child
 - b. Serious injury to a member of the department
 - c. Loss of life of a citizen involving a rescue operation following an extraordinary and prolonged expenditure of physical and emotional energy
 - d. Incidents that attract extremely unusual or critical news media coverage
 - e. An incident in which the circumstances were so unusual or sights and sounds so distressing as to produce a high level of immediate or delayed emotional reaction or anxiety
5. **THE CISM TEAM WILL DELAY** their contacts until any initial investigations have been concluded by the Criminal Investigations Bureau

G. DEFUSING/DEBRIEFING

The CISM coordinator will evaluate an incident to determine whether a defusing or a debriefing session will be conducted

1. DEFUSING

- a. Defusing will be conducted within 24 hours of an incident
- b. Only personnel intimately involved in the incident will attend a defusing

2. DEBRIEFING

- a. Should normally be conducted within 72 hours after an incident
- b. Attendance limited to those intimately involved in the incident
- c. Attendance for those involved is **voluntary, but encouraged**
- d. Are **strictly confidential** - no news media, family, or command staff will be invited unless they are involved in the incident

e. Are not critiques of an operation

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Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

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