

San Bernardino Sheriff's Department

3/1400. NO TITLE (NEW)

1400. PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM. Critical incidents often precipitate feelings of anger, guilt, and disillusionment. These feelings are natural and should be expected as part of the psychological and physiological phenomena that occur during such an event.

Unfortunately, these natural reactions are seldom understood or acknowledged. They can, if not immediately addressed, lead to inappropriate behavior and poor performance.

- In an effort to minimize these effects, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department has developed a Peer Support Program. This is comprised of individuals who have themselves experienced the consequences of a critical incident.

With the Peer Support Program in existence, all members of the Department are encouraged to contact a member of the program or a supervisor when he becomes aware of an individual who is in need of assistance.

3.1400.0 Peer Support Program

1405. CONFIDENTIALITY. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department recognizes as "confidential information" all the dialogue between members of the Peer Support Team and those individuals involved in a critical incident.

Exceptions to confidentiality include the following:

- Danger to self.
- Danger to others.
- Suspected child abuse.
- Narcotics offenses.

- Domestic violence.
- Elder abuse.
- In other cases where law or Department policy requires disclosure.
- Where disclosure is requested by the peer.

Section 3.1405.0

Confidentiality

1415. RESPONSIBILITY. The Peer Support Program shall provide immediate and ongoing assistance under the following conditions:

- When employees of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department have been involved in a shooting incident that results in death or injury, whether on or off duty.
- When employees of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department have been involved in any incident that results in an emotional impact. This includes any event that falls into the category of a critical incident.

Section 3.1415.0

Responsibility

1420. PROGRAM STRUCTURE. The Peer Support Program is comprised of department personnel. These individuals have specialized ongoing training in assisting others and their families in dealing with the immediate adverse psychological reactions to critical incidents. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Shooting incidents.
- Suicides.
- Serious traffic accidents.
- Homicides.

The Peer Support Program shall consist of an on-call roster of teams that rotate monthly. All members on call shall be available by telephone or beeper twenty-four (24) hours per day during their on-call periods. The team supervisor shall be responsible for maintaining the roster in a continuously updated status.

Section 3.1420.0

Program Structure

1430. PEER SUPPORT TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES. When activated, the responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Liaison with all other involved investigative personnel as required.
- Assessing the need for additional team members.
- Activation of other resources and liaison with the involved individuals family.
- Consultation with the appropriate counseling agency.

Section 3.1430.0

Peer Support Team Responsibilities