



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Division of Law Enforcement

## CRITICAL INCIDENT AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

GENERAL ORDER	EFFECTIVE DATE	RESCINDS/AMENDS	APPLICABILITY
41	June 08, 2020	November 17, 2010	All Members

### References

GO 29

## 1 POLICY

- A** It is the policy of the Division to outline the Commission's response to members who, because of responding to or becoming involved in a critical incident, may be in need of peer counseling or access to mental health services. Public service can often be emotionally demanding and difficult, and members may risk experiencing stress and related emotional difficulties. Some emotional reactions may have a negative impact on personnel performance, and in extreme instances, may present a danger to the welfare and safety of members, their families or the public. Therefore, it is the policy of the Division to provide all commission members and their families with access to peer counseling and/or mental health services.
- B** The Division establishes regional Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Teams that provide access to emotional and psychological support to members. This support and assistance extend to family members when appropriate. Assistance may be accomplished through a broad range of crisis services that include, but are not be limited to:
- (1) Pre-deployment education, preparation, planning and policy development
  - (2) Assessment of the situation and the reactions of personnel
  - (3) Strategic crisis response planning
  - (4) Large group interventions (Rest, Information, and Transition Services and Crisis Management Briefings)
  - (5) Small group interventions (defusing, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing)
  - (6) Individual (one-on-one peer) support services
  - (7) Family support services
  - (8) Follow-up services
  - (9) Referral, when necessary, to professional assistance programs and/or providers
  - (10) Post-incident education
- C** CISM is intended to provide support and assistance during, and in the immediate aftermath of critical incidents. CISM has clearly defined notification and initiation procedures, a structured response, and

post-incident conclusion process. CISM is not intended to provide long-term counseling or other mental health support and is not a substitute for psychotherapy. Members in need of additional assistance shall contact EAP and/or their primary medical care provider.

#### **D Confidentiality**

- (1) Confidentiality is the hallmark of the CISM Team program. Any statements made by involved members to CISM Team members in group and individual interventions will be confidential with the following exceptions:
  - (a) If the member poses a danger to him/herself or others; or
  - (b) If the member has or intends to commit a criminal act.
- (2) Failure by any CISM Team member to maintain confidentiality as required will result in immediate removal from the team and/or disciplinary action.
- (3) Members who have been involved in a violation of law or their oath of office shall not rely upon nor expect peer counseling to serve as a means of relieving or diminishing their real or perceived responsibility. Exceptions to the confidentiality rule will be clearly stated to the participants prior to the beginning of any CISM process.
- (4) CISM members having knowledge of one of the exceptions shall immediately contact the appropriate Regional Commander, who shall notify the Division Director or designee through the chain-of-command.
- (5) It is the policy of the Division to respect the confidentiality of the CISM processes. The Division will not question the individual(s) involved, or CISM team members regarding the facts surrounding a critical incident debriefing, defusing, or the individual(s) involved, or referrals made to a mental health provider.

#### **E Definitions**

- (1) **Critical Incident** – Any situation that causes members to experience unusually strong emotional reactions that could interfere with their ability to function.
- (2) **Family members** – For purposes of this General Order, family members include, but are not limited to, spouse, fiancé, life partner, parents (including step or foster parents), children, or anybody so designated by the member.
- (3) **Critical Incident Stress Debriefing** – A confidential group discussion including members involved in a critical incident and members of the CISM Team. The primary purpose of the debriefing is to mitigate the impact of the critical incident. A debriefing is not an operational critique. Debriefings are usually conducted two to three days after an incident has occurred, and serve to assist team members in providing care, understanding, and educational support to affected members.
- (4) **Defusing** – A shortened, less formal, version of a debriefing, but more immediate in its application. An individual or group meeting between team members and employees involved in a critical incident, which is conducted shortly after an incident. It is the purpose of defusings to provide immediate on-scene support and intervention.
- (5) **Statewide Team Coordinator** – The coordinator is authorized to coordinate the Regional Teams, and has the responsibility of establishing training protocols, selection of members in coordination with the Regional Commanders, and holding regular meetings. The coordinator is chosen by the Division Director.
- (6) **Team Leaders** – Team Leaders work under the authority of the Statewide Team Coordinator and direct the activities of members assigned to their team. A Team Leader may serve as the Statewide Team Coordinator due to the coordinator's absence.

- (7) **Team Members** – Team members assist employees exhibiting signs of distress as a result of their involvement in critical incidents. Team members may be assigned to assist the Incident Commander with stress management.
- (8) **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** – The State of Florida’s Employee Assistance Program is a free employee benefit program intended to help state employees and their household members manage issues that might adversely impact their work performance, health, and well-being. EAP counselors typically provide assessment, support, and if needed, referrals to additional resources. More information on Florida’s EAP can be found on the program website at <https://www.mylifeexpert.com/> or by calling 1-833-746-8337. EAP has Critical Incident Stress Debriefers and other resources available to respond as requested.

## 2 RESPONSIBILITIES

### A Regional Commanders

- (1) Regional Commanders are responsible for establishing a CISM Team in their Region in coordination with the Division’s CISM Statewide Team Coordinator. GHQ is included in the Northwest Region.

### B Statewide Team Coordinator

- (1) The Statewide Team Coordinator is responsible for coordinating team functions and providing any necessary support to the regional CISM teams.
- (2) The Statewide Team Coordinator is responsible for developing and maintaining a selection process for Commission members wishing to serve on a regional CISM team.
- (3) The Statewide Team Coordinator is responsible for organizing appropriate training providers and programs and ensuring that the appropriate training is attended by all regional teams.

### C Team Members

- (1) CISM team members are required to attend and successfully complete training as outlined in the CISM Team manual.
- (2) CISM team members are required to follow incident response procedures as outlined in the CISM team manual.
- (3) CISM team members are required to maintain confidentiality as outlined in the CISM Team manual.

## 3 PROCEDURES

- A Division personnel interested in participating on the CISM team shall notify the Regional Commander or the CISM team statewide coordinator of their interest in becoming a team member. Upon meeting the minimum selection criteria, and when team vacancies exist, potential team members shall be recommended for selection to the respective team’s Regional Commander. The Regional Commander shall have final approval for selection of team members.

### B Critical Incident Stress Management Team Qualifications

- (1) Potential CISM team members must meet the following criteria:
  - (a) Previous experience in law enforcement, corrections, or telecommunications operations and/or have received training in crisis intervention;
  - (b) Strong communication skills, including the ability to be empathetic;
  - (c) Ability to successfully complete team training requirements, including stress-related intervention, and
  - (d) Must have the ability to properly handle people during stressful situations.

- (2) CISM team members are expected to consistently perform above average during normal patrol duties and should be recognized as positive informal leaders in the field. Working just at, near, or below expectations for normal patrol duties, or failure to meet the conditions above are grounds to be removed from the team or to not be accepted to the team.

### **C Recruitment and Selection**

- (1) Participants may be recruited for the following positions:
  - (a) Team Leader
  - (b) Team Member
- (2) Recruitment Process
  - (a) If the applicant meets the minimum qualifications, they may be interviewed and assessed for team suitability, which may include an interview with team members.

### **D Training**

- (1) New CISM team members must complete the training listed below prior to participation in and/or conducting interventions.
  - (a) "Individual Crisis Intervention and Peer Support" class recognized by International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF)
  - (b) "CISM: Group Crisis Intervention" class recognized by ICISF
- (2) CISM team members shall attend additional training as outlined in the CISM Team Manual.
  - (a) "Advanced Group Crisis Intervention" class recognized by ICISF
  - (b) "Suicide Prevention Intervention and Postvention" recognized by ICISF
  - (c) FEMA ICS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System
  - (d) FEMA IS-200.B: ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- (3) **CISM Team Activation and Deployment**
  - (a) CISM team may be activated upon request from Local, State, and Federal agencies, or from within the Division. The affected Regional Commander may authorize team deployments depending upon request.
  - (b) The Division Director or designee can also activate CISM teams as needed to respond to unusual occurrences or critical incidents in consultation with the affected Regional Commander(s).
  - (c) The decision to activate CISM teams depends on the specifics of the request, the CISM team capabilities for responding to the request, and consideration of other law enforcement resources and responsibilities available for responding to request.
- (4) The Statewide or the Regional CISM coordinators shall be notified of, and the CISM teams may be activated for incidents including, but not limited to, those listed below:
  - (a) Death or serious injury occurs to an on-duty member;
  - (b) Death or serious injury occurs to another person through the action of a member (whether on-duty or off-duty);
  - (c) A member becomes involved in any shooting (whether on duty or off duty);
  - (d) Casualties have resulted from any incident;
  - (e) Other law enforcement agencies request the CISM assistance, or
  - (f) Any incident, not listed above, that causes unusual distress to field personnel.

## **E CISM Team Operating Procedures**

- (1) Refer to the CISM team manual for additional information.

### **4 FORMS**

<b>FORM NUMBER</b>	<b>FORM TITLE</b>
FWC/DLE-521	Memorandum Form