

Critical Incident Stress Management Team

Peninsulas EMS Council is host to one of 15 regional Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Teams located throughout Virginia. The PEMS CISM Team is made up of trained, highly qualified volunteers who interact with emergency services personnel to mitigate the stress and trauma effects inherent in providing emergency medical care to our communities.

Examples of critical incidents may include:

- Suicides
- Injury/death of an emergency responder
- Prolonged events
- Injury/death of children
- Mass casualty incidents
- Threats to responder safety
- Natural disasters
- Man-made disasters

A single highly stressful event or series of less stressful events can cause the emergency service professional to suffer stress reaction symptoms. These symptoms may include:

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- Fatigue
- Nausea
- GI upsets
- Memory loss
- Concentration problems
- Problem solving difficulties
- Anxiety
- Fears
- Depression
- Identification with victims
- Nightmares
- Flashbacks
- Fear of repetition of stressful event
- Mood swings
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Changes in eating habits
- Changes in work habits
- Unusual actions or behaviors

[Click here to download a flyer](#) with this information to post in your common areas.

Generally, the CISM Team provides one of three services, depending on the nature of the circumstances:

- A **DEFUSING** is an intervention done within 8 hours of an incident. It is an informational session lasting about 40 minutes. This is ideal if the crew is going on a break and may mitigate some stress related problems early on.
- A **DEBRIEFING** should be requested if stress symptoms continue beyond the first 48-72 hours of the incident. Overwhelming stress symptoms usually occur in the first 24-48 hours following a critical incident. If you or your agency is in need of CISM Team assistance, please contact the Peninsulas CISM Team.
- A **DEMOBILIZATION** is a 20-30 minute informal session used at disasters and incidents that may be extended and have more than 100 responders. It is a step down session that assists a crew or company in transitioning from the scene to normal duty.

The Peninsulas EMS Council's Regional CISM team can be activated whenever it is deemed necessary by an individual or an agency by calling the **24 Hour Team Access Number at 757-220-4356**. If you do not get a response from the page within a reasonable amount of time, please call the PEMS Office at 804-693-6234 or the Team Coordinator at 804-366-7189.

For more information or to submit a [CISM Team Membership application](#) , please contact the staff liaison [here](#).

CISM Team Teleconferencing Information:

To join from computer, tablet or smartphone:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/299395429>

Dial in from phone: (571) 317-3122

Access Code: 299-395-429

2019

03 18 19 PEMS CISM Team Meeting

04 29 19 PEMS CISM Team Meeting (Special Call) Minutes (Draft)

06 17 19 PEMS CISM Team Committee Meeting

Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM) Committee

The PEMS CISM Team policies, procedures and activities are coordinated by the CISM Team Committee. Consisting of CISM Team members and a PEMS staff member who provides administrative and logistical support, the committee meets quarterly to facilitate the CISM Team's business.

Important Links

International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Inc.

6876 Main Street/PO Box 1297, Gloucester, VA 23061; (804) 693-6234 Fax: (804) 693-6277 Secure PII/PHI Fax (804) 302-6073

Office Hours: Weekdays 8:30am until 4:30pm (excluding federal and state holidays)

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