



Virginia Department of State Police

General Order ADM 14.03

Post Traumatic Stress

Purpose: To describe the psychological counseling available for employees involved in a critical incident.

1. It is the Department's policy to afford employees professional psychiatric evaluation immediately following involvement in any traumatic incident, as well as provide evaluation if an employee shows stress which may affect his/her performance.
2. For the purpose of this policy, a traumatic incident is defined as any incident or action which may result in emotional or psychological anguish. Incidents include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Incidents involving the use of deadly force which may or may not result in serious injury or death;
 - b. situations in which employees are fired upon;
 - c. motor vehicle crashes involving serious injury or death;
 - d. participation in undercover operations for extended periods of time; and
 - e. participation in incidents resulting in the death or injury of a fellow employee.
3. A supervisor, upon learning that an employee has been involved in a use of deadly force, seriously injured in the line of duty, or involved in another traumatic incident will immediately notify his/her Division Commander and the CISM Coordinator.
 - a. In addition to any mandatory CISM activation which may be required, the Division Commander or his/her designee will, as soon as possible, meet with the employee and advise him/her of the psychological counseling available under this policy. Employees who have been involved in a traumatic incident that resulted in death to any person will be required to have a psychological evaluation to determine how well he/she has accepted the emotional trauma. In all other cases, it shall be left to the judgment of the Division Commander or his/her designee whether such evaluation and counseling is warranted; however, such counseling will be made available if the employee requests it.

- b. In all cases where psychological evaluation and/or counseling is requested by the employee, the Division Commander or designee will inform the Bureau Director/Deputy Director who will make arrangements through the Human Resource Director.
4. With the concurrence of the engaged psychiatrist or psychologist, Division Commanders will arrange for any desired private meeting between the affected employee and other employees with similar experience or a Department chaplain.
5. Psychological counseling will be made available to family members of employees who are killed in the line of duty.
 - a. The Human Resource Director will arrange as soon as possible to meet with the spouse or next of kin of sworn employees killed in the line of duty to discuss benefit entitlements.
 - b. At this meeting, the spouse and/or child will be advised of the Department's policy to provide psychological counseling to immediate family members (spouse or children) if they feel a need for such counseling. The Department will cover all costs relating to the evaluation and initial treatment. Thereafter, if further treatment is indicated, the Department's psychiatrist will refer the family member to a psychiatrist or psychologist of their choice.
6. The first visit to the psychiatrist will not be charged against the employee's leave balances. However, in the event the psychiatrist determines the employee is unable to return to duty, the employee must file an Employee Injury Report (SP-1). Pending approval of the claim under Workers' Compensation, employees should charge any absence after the initial visit according to the appropriate sick leave plan, or other personal leave such as annual leave, compensatory leave, overtime leave, or leave without pay, as appropriate.
7. This policy will not affect any policy relating to the investigation of any use of force or other matter in which an employee is injured, but is intended to supplement those policies. The evaluations described are not for the purpose of critique of the traumatic incident, but are solely concerned with the emotional aftermath.