



PINE HILL POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY MANUAL

TITLE:	Employee Assistance Program Critical Incident Stress Management Program	NEW	REVISED
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OBLIGATION TO REVIEW POLICY AND SEEK ASSISTANCE AS NEEDED

It is the policy of the Pine Hill Police Department that all officers and applicable employees will thoroughly review and fully familiarize themselves with the attached policy and will adhere to the procedures as described in this policy. Any employee shall request assistance from their supervisor if they should be in need of further explanation or training regarding this policy.

CONTINGENCIES AND UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

Officers are occasionally confronted with situations where no written guideline exists and supervisor advice is not readily available. As it would be impossible to address all possible situations with written guidelines, considerable discretion is given to the officer handling the situation.

Faced with the need to make decisions or take an action where no guidelines exist, officers should rely on their experience and training, and the following resources;

1. NJ Attorney General & Camden County Prosecutor's guidelines, memorandums, and directives
2. Departmental General Order, Special Orders, and Training Bulletins
3. New Jersey Title 39 and 2C
4. Current Search and Seizure Directives

The written directives developed by the Pine Hill Police Department are for internal use only, and do not enlarge an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way. They should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of written directives can only be the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in an administrative disciplinary setting.

I. PURPOSE

The Pine Hill Police Department is committed to helping employees when personal problems impact upon their job performance. An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is designed to provide professional consultation, counseling, and referrals for full-time employees and their families who are experiencing personal problems of such significance that satisfactory job performance may be impaired. A "personal problem" is any emotional or behavioral condition that may interfere with an employee's ability to satisfactorily perform his/her assigned job duties.

The Pine Hill Police Department does not wish to intrude into the personal lives of its employees. However, should job performance of an employee become impaired, sound business practice requires that the problem be resolved.

The purpose of this policy is also to provide guidelines that shall be uniformly applied to the management of stress resulting from critical incidents. Providing support following any critical incident will assist in minimizing the chances that involved personnel will suffer from negative physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions that may occur.

Law enforcement duties often expose officers and support personnel to mentally painful and highly stressful situations that cannot be resolved through normal stress coping mechanisms. Unless adequately treated, these situations may cause disabling emotional and physical problems. It has been found that critical incidents such as officer-involved shootings, incidents involving children, serious motor vehicle accidents, line-of-duty deaths/serious injury assaults, and other crimes such as homicides may cause adverse reactions and behaviors in officers and employees.

II. POLICY

It is the desire of the Pine Hill Police Department to manage critical incident stress by providing personnel with an Employee Assistance Program and a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Program. The Critical Incident Stress Management Program shall be utilized to provide personnel with information on reactions to the trauma associated with critical incidents and assist in the deterrence of negative responses. It is the policy of this department to take immediate action after such incidents when necessary to safeguard the continued mental well-being of all involved personnel.

The purpose of the EAP program offered by the Pine Hill Police Department is to assist employees and their families with personal and stress-related issues that may have an impact on work performance or emotional wellbeing in the workplace. The mere furnishing of EAP services is not an admission by the Borough of Pine Hill of a work-related claim for purposes of the New Jersey Workers' Compensation Act. Decisions on compensability of stress claims, like other workers' compensation claims, will be made by the Borough of Pine Hill in consultation with its insurance and legal professionals.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Acute Stress Disorder:** An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to a traumatic event and occurs within 30 days of exposure.
- B. Critical Incidents:** An incident that is unusual, violent and involves a perceived threat to, or actual loss of human life that may overwhelm an individual's normal coping mechanisms and cause extreme psychological distress.
- C. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM):** A formal process used to assist an individual who has been involved in a traumatic event to return to or maintain an effective level of functioning.
- D. Critical Incidents Stress Debriefings:** A formal one-on-one or group discussion conducted by a qualified mental health professional and, where possible, an appropriately trained peer support officer that is designed to assist participants in understanding their emotions and strengthening their coping mechanisms following a critical incident.
- E. EAP Eligible Employee:** All full time sworn officers and Special Law Enforcement Officers. Immediate family members of the eligible employee may also be eligible.
- F. Employee Assistance Program Self Referrals:** Employees who voluntarily participate in the Employee Assistance Program.
- G. Employee Assistance Program Supervisor Referrals:** Employees who are referred to the EAP by a Supervisor but are not required to attend; however, satisfactory work performance is always mandated.
- H. Employee Assistance Program Chief of Police Mandatory Referral:** Employees who are referred to EAP by the Chief of Police and are required to attend.
- I. Immediate Family Member:** Spouse, life partner (cohabitating), and dependent children up to the age of 26.
- J. Involved Personnel:** Any employee who is directly affected by a critical incident. This may include officers, who are on the scene at the time of the incident, those individuals who respond to the scene immediately following the incident, and/or support personnel participating in the response to the incident, such as emergency dispatchers.
- K. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder:** An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to a traumatic event and is diagnosed as such if symptoms persist after 30 days.
- L. Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP):** Any individual who is licensed as a mental health professional and has an in-depth understanding of the law enforcement culture.

IV. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

- A.** An Employee Assistance Program is being provided to assist with counseling for problems that affect or could affect an employee's health, personal life or job performance. For instance, the following problems may be treated by the Employee Assistance Program: marital or family difficulties, parental responsibilities, financial pressures, stress, depression, loss/grief, financial problems, anger management, anxiety, serious illness in the family, alcohol or drug abuse, and more.

- B.** Contacting the Employee Assistance Program
 - 1. The Employee Assistance Program offers 24-hour access to a QMHP to aid the employee or an immediate family member.

 - 2. In the event that an employee identifies behavioral or personal problems as negatively impacting job performance, then the employee may voluntarily and personally seek the services of the Employee Assistance Program by calling 856-342-2280.

 - 3. Employees shall realize that involvement with the EAP or any other health-care counseling or treatment program does not excuse or limit the obligation to meet established police department policies and standards for job performance.

- C.** There is no cost to an employee for the first five visits with a QMHP. Frequently, problems are resolved within the five sessions, but when continued treatment is deemed necessary, referrals will be provided. The employee is responsible for the cost of continued treatment, however, the employee may be able to process claims in accordance with the terms and conditions of their health insurance plan.

- D.** Referrals
 - 1. Employee Assistance Program Self Referrals
 - a.** Employees are encouraged to seek assistance on their own initiative before problems begin to affect their work. Early resolution of personal problems is in the best interest of the employee, often their families, and the Pine Hill Police Department.

 - b.** These issues may or may not affect job performance.

 - 2. Employee Assistance Program Supervisors Referral
 - a.** An employee is responsible for and shall be held accountable for fulfilling the requirements of their job description; it is the manager's responsibility to identify and attempt to correct unsatisfactory work performance. As part of a comprehensive performance improvement plan, a Supervisor can make a referral to the Employee Assistance Program. The employee is NOT obligated to follow through with the Supervisor recommendation; however the employee is still accountable for satisfactory work performance and can be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the company's policies and procedures should work performance not improve.

VII. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Supervisors

1. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring and notifying employees of unsatisfactory job performance in accordance with department policies and procedures.
2. When it is determined or reasonably believed that an employee's job performance is being negatively impacted by behavioral, organizational, or personal problems, a mandatory supervisory referral shall be made to the Employee Assistance Program.
3. A work performance referral will be made by the requesting supervisor by preparing a memo in original only and forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief of Police or his designee. No indication of the referral shall be noted in the employee's personnel file or any police department record not specifically intended for such purpose.

B. Employees

1. Employees are responsible for maintaining satisfactory job performance.
2. In the event that an employee identifies behavioral or personal problems as negatively impacting job performance, then the employee may voluntarily and personally seek the services of the Employee Assistance Program by calling 856-342-2280.
3. Employees shall realize that involvement with the EAP or any other health-care counseling or treatment program does not excuse or limit the obligation to meet established police department policies and standards for job performance.
4. While Pine Hill Police Department encourages employees to use the services of the Employee Assistance Program when necessary, nothing in this policy precludes Pine Hill Police Department or its management team from requiring satisfactory job performance at all times and conformance to Pine Hill Police Department's policies and procedures.

VIII. CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM) PROGRAM

A. CISM Program

1. Immediate response following a critical incident where it is reasonable to believe that involved personnel may experience physical, cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioral reactions to a critical incident, the department shall provide personnel with the proper mental health resources which may include one or more of the following:
 - a. Referral to the Employees Assistance Program
 - b. Activation of a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)
 - c. Referral to a Police Chaplain
 - d. Notice given to a Police Chaplain
 - e. Administrative leave for remainder of work shift as authorized by the Chief of Police.

2. Where possible, the supervisor shall briefly meet with involved personnel to:
 - a. Ask supportive questions concerning the critical incident;
 - b. Discuss any standard investigations that will occur concerning the incident and;
 - c. Advise the involved personnel that they may seek legal counsel if necessary.
3. At all times, when at the scene of an incident, the supervisor should interact with all involved personnel in a manner that acknowledges the potential stress caused by the incident and refrain from passing judgment regarding the critical incident or the reactions of individuals.

B. Post-Incident Procedures

1. The Duty Sergeant or OIC shall notify the Operations Lieutenant to discuss the need to initiate a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing or other services of a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing. The Operations Lieutenant in consultation with the Chief of Police shall initiate a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing.
2. When determined necessary, all involved personnel shall be encouraged to attend a one-on-one and/or group debriefing provided by the department's QMHP, or other professional as appropriate as soon as reasonably possible. After a QMHP or other person(s) meets with the involved personnel, and with the involved personnel's understanding and release, the department shall be advised of:
 - a. Whether it would be in the best interest of certain individuals to have time off work
 - b. The best continued course of counseling and intervention
3. Follow up counseling services should be made available as necessary to every individual who was involved in the critical incident. This follow-up may be conducted by the Employees Assistance Program or Workers Comp Professionals as directed by the Chief of Police.
4. In order to promote trust and encourage the use of Critical Incident Stress Management services, all one-on-one debriefings and other individual counseling sessions shall be kept confidential and shall not have any bearing on the involved personnel's fitness-for-duty evaluation. Any information provided to the QMPH will be used solely for return-to-work status recommendations. Whenever possible, the QMPH involved in the Critical Incident Stress Management program should not conduct this department's fitness-for-duty examinations.
5. The Pine Hill Police Department strongly encourages the families of the involved personnel to take advantage of the Employees Assistance Program, It is recommended that family/relationship joint counseling services be offered to the involved personnel and their families or significant others whenever possible.

6. Any department investigation of the incident shall be conducted as soon as practical. The Pine Hill Police Department shall make every effort to expedite the completion of any administrative or criminal investigation with the understanding that it can decrease the negative distress reactions that the involved personnel may experience.
7. The Critical Incident Stress Debriefing will be required whenever an employee of this department is involved in a use of force incident involving the discharge of a firearm or use of force that involves significant injury to any person. It shall also be used on an individual case basis with consideration given to the shock and human tragedy involved in the investigation. In certain situations, the employee's immediate family members may wish to use this service in order to aide and deal with the emotional suffering of the employee. Members of this department shall never consider an employee's use of this program as a sign of weakness and shall remain supportive at all times.

C. Employee Responsibilities

1. If at any time an employee is involved in an investigation that cause the employee emotional trauma, that employee should convey the concern to his or her supervisor.
2. Since each person is affected emotionally in different ways by human tragedy, it may go unnoticed. An employee suffering from emotional trauma should make sure of the resources available to him or her under this policy.

IX. DAILY STRESS RECOGNITION

- A.** Physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions or problems may not arise immediately. In addition, involved personnel may attempt to hide their negative responses to the critical incident. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring the behaviors of personnel for any adverse reactions or symptoms.

1. All personnel are encouraged to understand the warning signs associated with a person who may be under stress or anxiety and must report their concerns to their immediate supervisor at any time they have concerns about an employee's wellbeing or mental health.
2. Appendix A of this contains a list of some indications that may be present of a person who is experiencing stress that may require the Employees Assistance Program or Critical Incident Stress Management Program services.

B. Training

1. This department shall provide employees with training pertaining to the negative physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioral reactions that may occur following a critical incident and the uniform procedures contained in this policy.
2. Supervisors and administrators shall be trained to identify physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioral reactions to critical incidents.

3. Supervisors are responsible for making available to their personnel information about the department's peer support, chaplains, and mental health services.

X. OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

- A. Nothing in this policy shall prevent or deter an officer from contacting Cop 2 Cop at 1-866-COP2COP (267-2267)
- B. Nothing in this policy shall prevent or deter an officer from contacting a Pine Hill Police Chaplain.
- C. Any other available services as appropriate.

APPENDIX A

POTENTIAL SIGNS OF A TROUBLED EMPLOYEE

The following is a list to assist personnel and help supervisors to identify employees who may be suffering from a chronic problem. These problems may include substance abuse, mental illness, anxiety, stress, etc.

CHANGES IN:

1. Absenteeism
 - a. Multiple instances of unauthorized leave
 - b. Excessive sick leave
 - c. Frequent Monday and/or Friday absences
 - d. Repeated absences, particularly if they follow a pattern
 - e. Excessive tardiness, especially on Monday mornings or in returning from lunch
 - f. Leaving work early
 - g. Peculiar and increasingly improbable excuses for absences
 - h. Higher absenteeism rate than other employees for colds, flu, gastritis, etc.
 - i. Frequent unscheduled short-term absences (with or without medical explanation)
2. "On-the-job" Absenteeism
 - a. Continued absences from office or post more than job requires
 - b. Frequent trips to water fountain or rest room
 - c. Long coffee breaks
 - d. Physical illness on the job
3. High Accident Rate (and consequently, more accident claims)
 - a. Accidents on the job
 - b. Accidents off the job
 - c. Frequent trips to company medical facility (nurse, etc.)
4. Difficulty in Concentration
 - a. Assignments and tasks take more time
 - b. Hand tremor when concentrating
5. Confusion
 - a. Difficulty in recalling instructions, details, etc.
 - b. Jobs take more time
 - c. Difficulty in recalling own mistakes

POTENTIAL SIGNS OF A TROUBLED EMPLOYEE (continued)

6. Erratic Work Patterns
 - a. Alternate periods of high and low productivity
7. Physical Appearance
 - a. Coming to/returning to work in an obviously abnormal condition
8. Generally Lowered Job Efficiency
 - a. Misses deadlines
 - b. Mistakes due to inattention or poor judgment
 - c. Wasting materials
 - d. Making bad decisions
 - e. Complaints from co-workers
 - f. Improbable excuses for poor performance
 - g. Resistance to change
9. Poor Employee Relationships on the Job
 - a. Overreaction to real or imagined criticism
 - b. Wide Swings in morale and mood
 - c. Borrowing money from co-workers
 - d. Unreasonable resentments
 - e. Avoids Co-workers
10. Attitude
 - a. Increased cynicism
 - b. Expressing cold, callous or hostile feelings about others