



BRAINTREE POLICE DEPARTMENT
Policy and Procedure
POST-SHOOTING PERSONNEL SUPPORT
AND
CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT
2019-54

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Chief Mark Dubois

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Optional Accreditation Standards: **22.2.3; 22.2.6 a,b,c,d,e,f**

Metro-Lec Critical Incident Stress Management Team

Immediate Contacts

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Employee Assistance Program (EAP): 1-800-333-6624 (www.eapnetwork.com)

I. General Considerations and Guidelines

Law enforcement duties can 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 can cause disabling emotional and physical problems.

It has been found that any action in an official capacity or an officer-involved shooting resulting in death or serious bodily injury to a citizen or a fellow officer may precipitate such stress disorders. It is the responsibility of this Department to provide all personnel

with information on stress disorders and to guide and assist in their deterrence. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines that shall be uniformly applied following any officer or employee involved shooting incident or other action or event that has resulted in death or serious bodily injury, in order to minimize the chances that involved personnel will develop or suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Braintree Police Department to provide immediate medical assistance after any action (less lethal or use of force) in an official capacity or officer/employee involved shooting incident resulting in death or serious bodily injury to safeguard the continued good mental health of all involved personnel. [1.3.5]

III. Definitions

- A. ***Stress Disorder***: An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to short-term severe stress, or the long-term buildup of repetitive and prolonged milder stress. The person must have experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of one's self or others. The person's response to the event(s) will have involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror.
1. ***Acute Stress Disorder***: A category of stress disorder lasting for a minimum of two days and a maximum of four weeks occurring within four weeks of the event(s).
 2. ***Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder***: A category of stress disorder in which the symptoms last more than one month.
- B. ***Any Action or Officer-Involved Shooting Incident***: A line-of-duty or off duty incident where any action or shooting causes death or serious bodily injury to an officer or other person.

IV. Procedure

- A. **Managing Officers at the Scene of Shooting Incident**
1. A supervisor shall be dispatched to the scene of the incident and shall assume primary responsibility in caring for involved personnel.
 2. The supervisor shall make appropriate arrangements for all necessary medical treatment. [1.3.5]

3. During any period where the involved personnel are required to remain on the scene, but has no immediate duties to fulfill, the officer(s) or employee(s) should be taken to a quiet area away from the scene of the incident. A peer support team member or other supportive friend or officer should remain with the involved employee, but should be advised **not** to discuss details of the incident.
4. If involved personnel are not required at the scene, a supervisor should arrange for the officer or employee directly involved in the incident to leave the scene as soon as possible, and be taken to a quiet, secure setting along with a companion officer, chaplain, or a fellow trained in peer support, or one who has also experienced an officer-involved shooting.
5. Where possible, the supervisor shall briefly meet with all involved personnel.
 - a. No caffeine or other stimulants or depressants should be given to the involved personnel unless administered by medical personnel.
 - b. Only minimal, preliminary questions should be asked about the incident. The officer or employee should be advised that a more detailed debriefing will be conducted later (but as soon as possible).
 - c. Explain to all involved personnel that the essential investigation involving a shooting or serious incident shall be conducted by Braintree Police Department (Detective Unit and Professional Standards and Accountability), the Norfolk County District Attorney and the Massachusetts State Police (CPAC) Unit.
 - d. All personnel should be advised **not** to discuss the incident with anyone except a personal attorney, an attorney appointed by the Department, a union representative, or a departmental authorized investigator, until the conclusion of the preliminary investigation.
6. The supervisor shall determine whether the circumstances of the incident require that the officer's or employee's duty weapon be taken for laboratory analysis. Where the duty weapon is taken, the supervisor shall:
 - a. Take custody and make safe weapon(s) in a discrete manner; and
 - b. Replace it with another weapon, or advise the officer/employee that it will be returned or replaced at a later time, as appropriate.
7. Involved personnel should notify their families about the incident as soon as possible. Where an officer or employee is unable to do so, an agency official shall personally notify the officer(s) or employee(s) family, and

arrange for their transportation to the hospital. **[22.2.4]**

8. At all times, when at the scene of the incident, the supervisor should handle the officer/employee and all involved personnel in a manner that acknowledges the stress caused by the incident.

B. Post-Incident Procedures

1. Debriefings shall be held as soon as practical and possible after the incident.
2. Any employee whose action(s) or use of force in an official capacity results in death or serious physical injury will be removed from line-duty assignment and placed on administrative leave, pending an administrative review of the incident by a supervisor not involved in the incident, and an investigation by the District Attorney's investigators, or for such other period of time as the Chief of Police deems necessary. **[1.3.8]**
3. Officers removed from line functions due to use of force involvement shall be sent to a post incident debriefing and, if deemed applicable, counseling. A post-shooting debriefing, using a recognized CISM/Peer Support Unit, should occur within one week of the incident or after an official statement has been provided to law enforcement investigators of the statement is not provided within one week of the incident, with the goals of reducing stress, assessing and normalizing any problematic post-incident reactions, and providing education regarding the management of reactions. This will include all officers/employees directly involved in the incident. **[22.2.3; 22.2.6 b]**
4. The Department strongly encourages the families of sworn members and civilians to take advantage of available counseling services through Peer Support or EAP. **[22.2.4]**
5. Any Department or authorized outside agency investigating the incident shall be conducted as soon and as quickly as practical.
6. The Department should privately brief other department members concerning the incident so that rumors are kept to a minimum. Department members are encouraged to show the involved officers their concern.
7. All personnel involved in a shooting incident or other critical incident should be advised that they are not permitted to speak with the media about the incident. See Departmental Policy on **Media**.
8. In order to protect against harassing or abusive calls, personnel should

be advised to have phone calls answered by another person for several days if their names are released to the public.

9. Personnel directly involved in a shooting incident shall be required to re-qualify with firearms as soon as practical.

C. **Daily Stress Recognition [22.2.6f]**

1. Since some post-traumatic stress disorders may not arise immediately, or the officer/employee may attempt to hide the problem, each supervisor is responsible for monitoring the behavior of officers/employees under their command for symptoms of the disorder.
2. Some symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorders include: **[22.2.6f]**
 - a. A feeling of being numb and avoidance of places, people, and activities that are reminders of the trauma;
 - b. Feeling out of touch with what is going on around them;
 - c. A feeling that this is happening to someone else;
 - d. Increased absenteeism, burnout, and decreased productivity;
 - e. Avoiding other people, including one's family and coworkers;
 - f. Intrusive and recurring thoughts of the event;
 - g. Increased anger and irritability;
 - h. Alcohol/Drug Abuse;
 - i. Sleep problems;
 - j. Difficulty in concentrating; and
 - k. Hyper-vigilance.
3. The Chief of Police may order an officer or employee to seek assistance or counseling from peer support or a mental health specialist upon a reasonable belief that stress may be disrupting the officer or employee's job performance. **[22.2.3; 22.2.6e]**

D. **Training**

The agency shall provide employees with training pertaining to post-traumatic stress disorders and the uniform procedures contained in this policy on a regular basis.

The Peer Support Team is designed to be a confidential consultation and resource for members of the department and is not to be used as an investigation tool. The Peer Support Team will consist of trained sworn personnel able to support members of the department by providing assistance in the areas of personnel and group debriefing, anonymous and confidential peer support, and resilience training. This is not to

interfere in any way with the voluntary use of/or referral to any other related programs or services.

Employee Assistance Program

Policy
Statement
**[22.2.3
22.2.6 a]**

The Braintree Police Department values its employees, and is committed to treating all of its employees, as well as their families, with respect. The department shall make efforts to ensure that any employee or employee's family member who is facing a personal struggle, knows that support is available to them. In an effort to assist employees with the vast array of issues that could adversely affect their professional or private lives, the Town of Braintree provides support services through the Employee Assistance Program.
[22.2.3][22.2.6 a] Review policy: Officer Involved Shooting and Line of Duty Death or Serious Injury.

Policy
**[22.2.3
22.2.6 a,c]**

It is the policy of the BPD to make available confidential **Employee Assistance Programs, (EAPs)**, to any employee who requires such assistance. These programs offer counseling for a variety of issues including, but not limited to, the following:**[22.2.3] [22.2.6 a,c]**
-Injury or death
-Job related stress
-Family problems
-Drug or Alcohol addictions
-Depression
-Post Traumatic Stress and Critical Incident Stress
-Depression
-Financial issues

Accessing
Programs
[22.2.6 b,c]

The Town of Braintree has contracted with EAP Network (www.eapnetwork.com). These programs are confidential, appropriate, and provide timely assessment services. Services may be accessed by any employee in the following manner when needed during business and non-business hours. **[22.2.6 b,c]**
-EAP Network (www.eapnetwork.com) 1-800-333-6624

Miscellaneous
Provisions
[22.2.6 d,e]

Program referrals may be free of charge or covered by most health insurance plans based on the diagnosis, treatment and follow-up needs. **[22.2.6 d]**

Officers should also realize that if an employee is referred to an EAP by the Chief's office due to job performance issues that have caused that employee to be relieved of duty, it may be necessary for that EAP and a doctor of the Town's choosing to clear the employee in a fitness for duty before he/she returns to work. **[22.2.6 e]**

Supervisory
Employee
Referrals
[22.2.6 e,f]

A supervisor or employee who has concerns about an employee may seek out the assistance and directions from the Chief or Deputy Chief, in confidence, to address the issue of concern. This may include, but not limited to work performance, personal issues, hygiene, tardiness, or increase use of sick days. The Chief of Police, based on a review of the facts presented, may order an employee to obtain services. The department supports employees in their efforts to voluntarily address issues of concern.**[22.2.6 e,f]**

Training
[22.2.6 f]

The Chief shall assign training for supervisors of the rank of sergeant and above on the EAP programs. Training may be through the Municipal Police Training Committee or other approved agencies to help supervisors and employees identify behaviors which could indicate the existence of an employee in need of assistance.
[22.2.6 f]