

18.107 PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

Reference:

Procedure 19.106 - Post Shooting Trauma

Purpose:

Provide all Department employees and their families with the opportunity for peer support in times of personal or professional crisis.

This program is not intended to provide officers or civilians who may have violated the law with a method of relieving themselves of real or perceived guilt, nor is it to be construed that a penitent/confessor relationship exists any time a crime is revealed.

Policy:

Communication between a peer support team member and a person in need is considered privileged by the Department except for matters which involve threat to self or others, violations of law, or serious misconduct. If concerns arise, peer support team members will contact the Police Psychologist's Office for guidance and assistance.

Nothing in this procedure negates your duties and responsibilities as a member of the Police Department.

Procedure:

A. Objectives:

1. Provide assistance to any Department employee or family member in time of need.
 - a. Peer support team members are not a resource for the general public.
2. Provide follow up support as long as necessary.
3. Maintain program credibility and integrity.
4. Develop a referral system for persons in need.
5. Maintain an awareness program.
6. Provide periodic training sessions.

B. Program Regulations and Guidelines:

1. Any Department employee or family member may seek assistance from a peer support team member at any time by:

- a. Obtaining names and phone numbers, which are posted in all districts/sections/units.
 - b. Calling Police Communications Section (PCS) to have a team member contacted.
 - 1) If PCS cannot reach a team member, they will assist in locating the Police Psychologist, during and after normal business hours.
 2. It is essential to the continued success of the program that strict confidentiality be maintained between the peer support team member and the person in need, except as noted in the Purpose and Policy sections of this procedure.
 - a. Individual participation in the program is strictly voluntary.
 - 1) Referrals made to the program by any concerned person will prompt a discreet and tactful inquiry by a peer support team member into the problem.
 - b. Nothing discussed, except those matters mentioned in the Policy section, will be divulged to any other Department personnel without written consent of the person in need.
 - c. Discussions between a peer support team member and a person in need will not be recorded for use in administrative or disciplinary proceedings or discussed with Department personnel.
- C. Staffing:
1. The Peer Support Program is and will continue to be staffed by Police Department employees.
 - a. Interested employees should submit membership requests to the Peer Support Coordinator.
 - 1) Selections are made after reviewing these requests and conducting interviews by the Police Psychologist. The Police Chief approves the final selections.
- D. Training:
1. All peer support team members receive in-service training in basic and proper support techniques.
 - a. Additional in-service training is conducted periodically.
- E. Peer Support Team Member Responsibilities:
1. Attend all in-service training.
 2. Render support on a volunteer basis, on or off duty.

3. Develop a sincere rapport with the individual.
4. Maintain confidentiality as adopted by the Peer Support Steering Committee.
5. Agree to be on a Department wide 24 hour availability list.
6. Help individuals identify their own concerns and assist or direct them toward self help or other referral needs.
7. Offer long term support to the individual, as necessary.
8. Follow up on referrals.
9. Consult with the Police Psychologist, as needed.
10. Immediately refer to the Police Psychologist any incidents of threat, violation of law, or serious misconduct.
11. Have specially trained post shooting peer support team members respond to shootings, as specified in Procedure 19.106, Post Shooting Trauma.