

# GREELEY POLICE DEPARTMENT

General Order 351.00

Reviewed: 01/18

## 351.00 CRITICAL INCIDENT NOTIFICATIONS-PEER SUPPORT TEAM

The purpose of this order is to prepare the department in the event of a critical incident, or trauma-laden event involving department personnel for the provision of non-involved personnel notification, peer support, psychological support, and health and welfare logistical support at the scene.

A critical or traumatic incident is any situation in which an agency member confronts a trauma-laden event. Such incidents may include shootings, fights, transportation accidents of a brutal nature, or instances of personal injury.

- It is the policy of this department to provide notification to on and off duty personnel of an on going or recently concluded critical incident involving line of duty critical injury to a department member, line of duty critical injury to a department member with poor prognosis of survival, or line of duty death of a department member.
- It is the policy of this department to provide Peer Support to any department member adversely affected as a result of any critical incident mentioned in section 351.01 of this order.
- It is the policy of this department to provide psychological support for any member of the department adversely affected as a result of any critical incident mentioned in section A of this order.
- It is the policy of this department to provide health and welfare logistical support to department members involved in active long or short duration critical events whether or not the event involves injury to or the death of a department member.

### 351.01 Notification of on and off duty personnel:

- It shall be the responsibility of the Operations Division Commander or on-call commander, once notified of a critical incident involving a line of duty critical injury or death of a department member, to begin the process of agency personnel notifications. As all members are issued either a pager or cell phone with paging capabilities these notifications will be made through the paging system or by telephone if the paging system is unavailable. Radio communications will not be utilized for this purpose. Liaison with the immediate family of the victim member(s) must be completed prior to these notifications. The page will include a phone number for officers and civilian employees to call for questions. An officer or non-sworn employee will be assigned to man the phone for the number provided.

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### 351.02 Provision/Notification of Critical Incident Peer Support (CIPS):

- A supervisor shall be dispatched to the scene of the event and shall assume primary responsibility in caring for the involved personnel. If an on-scene supervisor is involved in the event, another supervisor may be dispatched to assume this care responsibility.
- The supervisor shall make appropriate arrangements for all necessary medical treatment and comply with the provisions of General Order 519.00 (Death-Serious Injury Post Incident), if appropriate.
- When appropriate, the supervisor will determine if Peer Support services are requested by any involved personnel and will notify the on duty Watch Commander that Peer Support services will be required.
- The on duty Watch Commander will notify the Peer Support Coordinator of the need for Peer Support services and will arrange a place for the meeting to take place.
- Notification should be considered for any incident that produces strong emotional reactions or distress or has the potential to affect an employee's work performance.
- The affected employee will be relieved from his/her work station as soon as possible and provided the services of the CIPS Team at the arranged location. If requested, arrangement will be made through the Team to contact the employee's family.
- Involved officers should be provided with the opportunity to speak with their family members as soon as possible. It is best for the officers themselves to contact their families. It is therefore prudent that no contact be made with family members before the officers have had this opportunity. Family members who wish to be with injured officers should be offered transportation in lieu of driving themselves. Officers not involved in the incident, but on duty, should attempt to contact their families and advise them that a shooting incident has occurred but that they were not involved/injured.
- Peer support team members will provide their direct contact information to all officers involved to serve as a contact for family members that have questions or concerns while their loved one may be unavailable during interviews, etc.
- Notification of and requesting the response of the department's contracted psychologist during an officer involved shooting shall be handled by an on-duty supervisor. CIPS Team members shall notify the psychologist after being directly contacted by an employee concerning a request for assistance.

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- Employees may contact one of the peer support volunteers any time about any personal or job-related stress problem. Peer support is for all kinds of stress, not just critical incidents. Peer support counselors are available for assistance to anyone at any time. No referrals are necessary.

### 351.03 Provision of Police Psychologist support: (See also G.O 519.00 (Death-Serious Injury Post Incident))

- Any employee whose actions or use of force in an incident which results in serious injury or death to another shall be relieved from a line assignment and may be placed on administrative leave. Any employee who is involved in an incident that results in personal injury may also be relieved from a line assignment and placed on administrative leave pending counseling from an agency-provided psychologist. The assignment of leave in either circumstance shall not imply or indicate that the employee has acted improperly or is being punished.
- The decision to provide the employee the services of an agency provided psychologist will be the responsibility of division commander.
- In incidents where officers are injured or killed, or an officer severely injures or kills a subject, a psychologist shall be called to respond. Any Peer Support Team member or supervisor may make such a request. The person making the call shall notify the incident commander

### 351.04 Logistical support during a critical incident:

- If not already on scene, a supervisor will be dispatched to all scenes of critical incidents.
- The supervisor will be responsible for operations during the incident and may call in support as required in his/her judgment.
- If the incident is of long duration health and welfare support in the form of food, water, and sanitary services may be required by on-scene agency personnel.
- Involved officers should be encouraged to step immediately away from the scene and any media attention and be sensitively transitioned to a safe and supportive environment. Above all, officers should not be isolated and should be accompanied by supportive peers, preferably an officer that has an established rapport with them; or if an officer's preferred escort is not available, a Peer Support team member should be assigned to them. It should be made clear that this is for the benefit of the officer and should not be done in a way that suggests

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they are being punished. The escort should immediately clarify their role upon arriving (i.e. assist with contacting loved ones, get food/drink as needed, etc.)

- The on-scene supervisor will contact or arrange for a designee to contact the Victim's Advocates Coordinator to arrange for these support services.

### 351.05 Establishment of the Team:

- Critical Incident/Peer Support Team membership will be appointed by the Chief of Police and may consist of both sworn and civilian employees. The selection process for team membership will be conducted as described in General Order 335.05 Specialized Assignment.
- The Team Coordinator will be selected by a vote of the team membership.
- In the absence of the team coordinator, a sergeant or lieutenant on the team will serve as the team coordinator.
- The Department contracts with a psychologist who coordinates and clinically supervises the activities of the CIPS Team members.
- CIPS Team membership is considered to be a collateral assignment with no maximum term of service.

### 351.06 The Role of the CIPS Team Member:

- The CIPS employee's role is to screen, support and act as a bridge toward professional assistance by providing confidential support, assistance and referrals to minimize the negative effect of on or off duty critical incidents and stress.
- When requested, the members of the CIPS Team are responsible for meeting preliminary emotional and psychological needs of employees.
- After obtaining input from the affected employee, a team member may request the assistance of the department's contracted psychologist. The team member will contact a sworn supervisor, who is a member of the team, and make the request. The supervisor will arrange a meeting with the department-contracted psychologist. If a CIPS sworn supervisor is not available the watch commander will be notified of the request.
- Employees experiencing post-incident trauma may volunteer to meet with the team. The involved employee will be able to choose from the members of the team who will be at the meeting.

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- The proceedings are confidential and will not be taped or written down. Prior to this meeting, CIPS Team members should advise all persons with whom they interact in a support role of the limitations of confidentiality.
- The purpose of these meetings is to support the employee while talking about his or her feelings concerning the situation, not just discuss what happened. It is also to help the employee realize that the perceptual distortions and emotional reactions are normal. The team is a support group.
- As post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) may not arise immediately, each supervisor is responsible for monitoring the behavior of unit members for symptoms of the disorder. Because of this, the agency may decide to provide psychological services to involved personnel prior to the onset of symptoms immediately following a critical incident. Peer support is a voluntary, confidential employee assistance program that uses trained, volunteer police and civilian employees as peer support personnel. The peer support personnel are supported by a licensed psychologist who is contracted by the department. Employees not wishing to use the services of the volunteer peer support program may also obtain psychological services through the City of Greeley Employee Assistance Plan.
- If a CIPS team member is involved in a critical incident in any capacity where the CIPS team is activated, they will not be able to function in a Peer Support role for others employees involved in the incident.
- CIPS team members who are department supervisors shall avoid functioning in a peer support capacity when dealing with employees in their chain command.

### 351.07 Ethics and Confidentiality:

- The Critical Incident/Peer Support Team, under the direct supervision of a designated training/counseling psychologist, shall observe the ethical principles of psychologists, and is bound by the Code of Conduct as published by the American Psychological Association.
- Information discussed in counseling, consulting, or peer support relationships shall not be made available during administrative or criminal investigations without the consent of the employee.
- An intentional violation of the team confidentiality standard by any team member is seen as a serious breach of trust and is cause for an immediate removal from the team. Unintentional violations of the team confidentiality standard will be reviewed on an individual case basis.

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### 351.08 Procedures after a critical incident:

- The employee will be relieved from his/her workstation as soon as possible and if requested will be provided the services of the CIPS Team. Arrangements will be made to facilitate contact with his/her family.
- In the case of sworn employees at the scene of an incident, the officer should be removed from the area and accompanied by another officer or a supervisor to the station. Once at the station, the officer or supervisor accompanying the affected employee will remain with him/her until a supervisor has had an opportunity to notify the CIPS Team Leader or other appropriate resource. (Note: Communications between personal friends/associates not affiliated with the CIPS Team may not be confidential, and thus discoverable in future court hearings.)
- The officer should be left with a member of the CIPS Team or any other person of his/her choosing to provide support for the officer.
- After the initial situation has been controlled, a member of the CIPS Team, a Sergeant/Lieutenant/Captain, or a member of the department identified by the involved officer(s), should make arrangements to have the involved officer contact the officer's family. The involved officer and the person assisting should provide the family information about the post-incident procedures which will follow. The designated person will remain available to the officer and his/her family to answer questions and to handle reasonable needs of the family. In instances of severe injury or death, the person designated as the contact person on the employee's in-line-of-duty-death form will assume responsibility for transporting the injured/deceased officer's spouse to the hospital, the Department, or other locations as necessary.
- A member of Command Staff will also maintain contact with the officer's family.
- The officer shall attend a confidential debriefing with the department psychologist as soon as possible after a deadly force incident or any other traumatic or stressful experience as deemed necessary per General Order 519.00. This debriefing should occur as soon as practical. Another meeting with the psychologist will be required prior to reinstatement to duty. At the employee's discretion, he/she may attend the confidential debriefings with or without his/her family present.
- A member of the CIPS Team may be requested to meet with the employee at the direction of the department training/counseling psychologist.
- The officer shall be placed on administrative leave with pay when directly involved in a deadly force incident. This leave may also be authorized in the case of other traumatic or overly stressful experiences. At the option of the Chief

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of Police or his designee, temporary reassignments may be authorized with clearance from the psychologist, in lieu of leave. The duration of this assignment shall be evaluated on an individual basis.

- It is recommended that officers involved in a shooting or deadly force incident be given administrative leave with pay. If emotional or physical difficulties remain for an officer following an initial administrative leave period, officers and the department will work together to consider temporary reassignments or continued administrative leave with pay.
- The Critical Incident/Peer Support lieutenant will work with the involved officer's chain of command regarding administrative leave with pay and when the employee will return to duty.
- If through the psychologist's evaluation process or through future adverse behavior or physical impairments of the employee, family counseling is deemed necessary, the family counseling should be coordinated by the employee. The employee should access services through the City of Greeley Employee Assistance Plan or through the employee's health insurance plan.

### 351.09 Training:

- The training in stress management is an essential part of awareness and availability to new and experienced officers alike. The Critical Incident/Peer Support Team Coordinator, in conjunction with the Training Unit, shall provide the necessary new employee any in-service training sessions concerning causes, symptoms, and methods of dealing with stress to ensure departmental awareness.
- The Critical Incident/Peer Support Team Coordinator, in conjunction with the Training Coordinator, shall insure that training is made available to the members of the Critical Incident/Peer Support Team. This can be accomplished through the use of professional services available at colleges, hospitals, private sector, etc., as well as through police service training schools and departmental in-service training.
- Team members should be knowledgeable about critical incidents. Employees will be eligible who have been involved in post shooting trauma and have dealt with and resolved their own situations.
- Team members will receive formal classroom training relating to stress management, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD), Critical Incident Debriefings, and Peer Counseling after formal appointment.

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Authorized by Jerry Garner, Chief of Police

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Signature Jerry Garner

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