



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT
GENERAL ORDERS

SOP 1-10

Effective: 06/27/16 Expires: 12/24/16 Replaces: 05/13/16

1-10 PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

1-10-1 Purpose

This policy describes the opportunity and procedures for department personnel to give and receive support from their peers during stressful times.

1-10-2 Policy

The Department establishes peer support program and peer support network for both sworn and civilian personnel.

The Department recognizes that sworn and civilian personnel are exposed to emotionally disruptive personal and professional experiences during the course of the performance of their duties. These experiences may lead to emotional and/or psychological insult or injury, as well as personal mental or emotional distress, and dissatisfaction. These job stressors also adversely affect the officer or civilian employee's professional and personal well-being. The purpose of the peer support program is to:

- A. Provide a means for immediate peer-driven emotional support during and after personal or professional crisis; or serious illness or injury;
- B. Provide resources including referrals for professional assistance; Develop peer supporters who can identify personal struggles, offer support, and provide guidance; and
- C. Set guidelines for peer support team functions and team member roles.



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1-10-3 Peer Support Roles and Responsibilities

A. Peer Support Coordinator (PSC)

A civilian employee who provides oversight and completes administrative functions for the Peer Support Program such as scheduling of training or meetings, coordination of on-call coverage, maintenance of contact numbers, compiling of program utilization numbers, etc.

B. Peer Support Program Board (PSPB)

The board is responsible for the long-term effective operation of the Peer Support Program (PSP), providing guidance to the PSC, and selecting all Peer Support Team Members. The PSC serves as chair of the PSPB. The PSC is a non-voting member of the PSPB, except in cases of a tie.

C. Peer Support Team Members (team members)

Team members are current law enforcement or civilian personnel, in good standing with the department, who provide peer support as needed (not as mental health professionals, but as individuals who are familiar with, experienced or know the pressures and stresses of the police function. Team members are required to attend department training and quarterly meetings. Team members will provide a contact phone number to facilitate communication.



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1-10-4 Procedures

A. Appointments to the Peer Support Program Board:

1. The Chief of Police or his designee, along with the assistance of the PSC, selects a seven-member Peer Support Board. Members serve a maximum term of two consecutive years, which will be staggered. The board consists of:
 - a. One (1) sworn supervisor (Sergeant or above);
 - b. One (1) sworn Field Services Bureau P1/C;
 - c. One (1) sworn Investigative Unit detective;
 - d. One (1) civilian supervisor;
 - e. One (1) civilian employee;
 - f. One (1) APOA union representative (non-voting member)
 - g. One (1) BSD clinician (advisory only; non-voting member)
2. The PSPB recruits and select team members, based on criteria developed by the PSPB. Criteria include factors such as the applicant's past education, relevant training, maturity, judgment and professional standing in the department.
3. Team members may be removed for cause at any time by the Chief of Police.

B. Peer Support Program Coordinator and Team Member Duties

1. The PSC oversees and assists the Peer Support Program by:
 - a. Maintaining a 24-hour, toll-free hotline and responding to requests for emotional support and assistance from a law enforcement officer, civilian employee or family member;
 - b. Creating and updating an on-call roster for team members;
 - c. Posting the on-call list of team members on bulletin boards at each police building, listing on the APD Webpage, and providing the on-call list to Dispatch Control;
 - d. Routing assistance requests to team members;
 - e. Ensuring team members complete required peer support training;
 - f. Maintaining contact sheet records to review at quarterly team meetings; and
 - g. Compile a quarterly utilization report for the program.
2. The team members respond to peer requests for assistance by:
 - a. Assuring availability for phone call contacts when on-call;
 - b. Providing peer support services during critical incidents when requested by an officer, on-scene supervisor or FIT activation;



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- c. Providing emotional support to officers or employees, or family members in crisis or to those exposed to a critical incident. When using peer support, the caller and the team member may choose to stay in telephonic contact or to meet at a mutually-agreed upon location;
- d. Providing additional follow up resources and referrals for mental health and well-being assistance;
- e. Completing a Confidential Peer Support Contact Sheet for each contact and providing it to the PSPB within 24 hours of contact documenting:
 - i. Name of the team member;
 - ii. Date, time, and length of contact with personnel using program;
 - iii. Summary of needed support;
 - iv. Additional resources requested

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3. Confidentiality is essential to the integrity of this peer support program. Each peer support team member signs a confidentiality agreement. The Confidential Peer Support Contact Sheet is kept in confidence and used only to evaluate and improve the peer support program. The contact sheet will not include identifying information regarding the individual seeking peer support. Team member will not disclose the identity of the caller, or the subject of the call to any departmental supervisor or employee. However, in the following circumstances, the team member is required to report to the on-call Behavioral Sciences Division clinician for guidance on appropriate intervention:
- a. Caller expresses a threat of immediate or reasonably anticipated physical harm to self;
 - b. A threat of immediate or reasonably anticipated threat of physical harm to others;
 - c. There is reasonable suspicion of elder or child abuse;
 - d. An emergency medical response is required;
 - e. Criminal activity is reported; or
 - f. There is reasonable suspicion that domestic violence occurred or is occurring.

When any one of these circumstances occurs, the team member will not continue in a peer support role, but will contact the on-call Behavioral Science Division clinician to follow up with caller.

C. Department Training and In-Service

All team members, regardless of position, will complete the following courses from the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) or equivalent; Team members will not be added to the on-call roster until completing training.

- 1. Individual Crisis Intervention;
- 2. Peer Support;



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3. Ethics and Confidentiality;
4. Group Crisis Intervention; and
5. Advanced Individual Crisis Intervention and Peer Support

The PSPB consults with the Behavioral Science Division regarding recommendations for additional training. Any recommendations for training from BSD or other mental health professionals will be offered to team members as in-service training. PSPB will evaluate and update the training requirements in consultation with the Behavioral Science Division every two years.

PSC will organize and lead training for Team members.

D. PSPB meetings

The PSPB will meet quarterly to review and evaluate the peer support program and any data gathered. Occasionally additional meetings may be needed to carry out the peer support program's responsibilities.