

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing

SECTION III 4.0 – 4.1

July 1, 2011

Approved by R. Dale Horne – Fire Chief

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4.0 PURPOSE:

- a. A Critical Incident is an event outside the range of usual human experience, which has the potential to easily overcome a person's normal ability to cope with stress. It may produce a negative psychological response in a person who was involved in or witnessed such an incident. The Anderson Fire Department recognizes the importance of Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) and will offer the services as outlined below.

4.1 PROCEDURE:

- a. The Chaplain of the Anderson Fire Department shall oversee program implementation for the Critical Incident Stress Management Program.
- b. Anytime a member feels (s)he has experienced a stressful line-of-duty event, that individual is strongly encouraged to contact their immediate supervisor to discuss the event.
 - 1) Members may by-pass the chain of command during these events and directly contact Chief Officers or the Chaplain.
- c. Officers should closely monitor their personnel following stressful line-of-duty events.
- d. CISD is a group or individual meeting with a trained counselor to discuss a traumatic event in a non-threatening and structured manner.
 - 1) A CISD session shall be offered to any and all individuals involved in a critical incident. Employees whose job becomes affected by stress factors relating to a critical incident may be required to attend a CISD session.
 - 2) CISD shall be performed within 24-72 hrs. of the occurrence of the critical incident, if at all possible.
 - 3) CISD shall be performed in a comfortable location
 - 4) A follow-up debriefing shall be performed from 24-48 hrs. after the initial debriefing. Additional contact will be maintained for 90 days after the follow up debriefing.
- e. The CISD shall be administered using the IFEEL method:
 - 1) Introduction - individuals are assured that everything discussed will be kept confidential.
 - 2) Factual Phase – Individuals discuss actual details of the critical incident.
 - 3) Emotional phase – The group members discuss their reactions and feelings about what has occurred.

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- 4) Experiential phase – The members are encouraged to discuss any mental, psychological or emotional symptoms they experienced during the incident.
 - 5) Learning phase – The counselor helps the member sort out their feelings. Members learn the stages of grief and the symptoms of anxiety.
 - 6) Re-entry – The debriefers evaluate information discussed in the meeting and offer suggestions as to how the participants can deal with the stresses and actually help them form a plan for returning to their job.
- f. The City of Anderson also offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that provides confidential counseling for not only job related issues but personal issues as well such as financial and legal concerns, family relations, and similar topics. A free brochure material is available at the City of Anderson Personnel Office.

<u>Implemented</u>	<u>April 5, 2000</u>	<u>Jack Abraham</u>
<u>Revised</u>	<u>July 1, 2010</u>	<u>R. Dale Horne</u>
<u>Revised</u>	<u>July 1, 2011</u>	<u>R. Dale Horne</u>