

# SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

<b>CHAPTER TITLE:</b> FIELD OPERATIONS NOTIFICATION AND ACTIVATION	<b>ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:</b>	<b>DATE 3/21/2016</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b> ASSISTANCE TO EMPLOYEES	<b>APPROVED:</b>	

## 782. ASSISTANCE TO EMPLOYEES

Recognizing that employees, by virtue of their profession, encounter situations of a traumatic or critical nature that may result in their suffering emotional or psychological trauma, the sheriff's office will assist employees, and their families when necessary, by providing non-professional peer support services and/or referral information for professional counseling.

### DEFINITIONS

**Traumatic Event** - Any incident which could cause severe physical or mental injury, usually due to an external agent.

**Peer Support Program** - A voluntary employee assistance program, which is designed to assist in the identification and resolution of employee concerns, and offers assistance and appropriate resource information to employees during times of personal and professional problems, which may adversely affect an employee's personal or professional well-being or job performance .

**Peer Support Program Advisor** - The Support Services Division chief will provide program guidance and administrative assistance as may be necessary in support of the Peer Support Program.

**Peer Support Program Coordinator** - The Professional Development Section lieutenant will coordinate the Peer Support Program and be responsible for administering the program to include assigning and supervising peer supporters in the performance of their duties associated with the support and referral program.

**Peer Supporter** - An employee who, by virtue of prior experience, training or interest, has expressed a desire and has been selected to provide support for peers.

**Mentor Program** - A component of the Peer Support Program in which identified employees are assigned as mentors to new or newly assigned employees.

**Monthly Peer Support Contact Summary** - The statistical form submitted by peer supporters to the peer support coordinator listing the amount and type of peer contacts made each month.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Traumatic Event**

Traumatic events may include, but are not limited to:

- employee involved in the use of deadly force
- assault on an employee involving a deadly weapon
- hostage situation where an employee is a victim
- injury, illness or death of an employee or family member of an employee
- assisting family members with an employee's death
- catastrophic incidents such as an airplane crash, flood or fatal accident
- investigations involving death, such as 'SIDS'
- substance abuse
- marital, relationship, health, family, financial, employment, or other personal problems

Whenever an employee is involved in a highly traumatic or stressful experience, certain mental and physiological reactions take place. Oftentimes the stress can be so severe that much of the trauma is internalized to avoid the immediate mental anguish. The sheriff's office will provide assistance for dealing with the after-effects of traumatic events experienced by employees, specifically their physical, mental and emotional health.

When a Sheriff's Office employee is involved in an on-duty traumatic event, the employee's immediate supervisor will respond and be cognizant of the emotional well-being of the employee. The supervisor or other designated individual within the employee's chain of command will provide for the level of support required by the employee and the situation. The support may vary from event to event and employee to employee but should include the following, at a minimum:

- remain with the employee during the time immediately following the event
- provide the employee a psychological break from the scene, or position, as soon as possible
- provide sincere expressions of concern for the employee's well-being
- provide the employee with a reasonable recovery period before proceeding with official activities directly associated with the event
- assist the employee in making any contact they deem necessary
- inform the employee of services and program available to assist the employee and family members in dealing with the trauma and psychological impacts of the event
- summon the level of assistance immediately requested by the employee
- advise the employee of the availability of administrative leave in the immediate aftermath of the event
- make timely notification to the Peer Support Program coordinator of the event and employee involved
- provide for a debriefing within close but reasonable proximity to the event

To assist personnel in dealing with the effects of stress associated with critical incidents, stress recognition training will be provided.

### **Peer Support Program**

The peer support program is designed to:

- provide emotional support during and after times of personal or professional crisis to employees who express a need for assistance, or for whom supervisory staff feel could benefit from program involvement
- promote trust, allow anonymity and preserve confidentiality for employees utilizing the program

- develop peer support personnel who can identify personal conflicts and provide guidance or referral to professional or alternate resources as required
- provide personnel to listen, assess, and whenever necessary refer for professional assistance to employees and their families during times of trauma, grief or other personal and professional problems

For a current list of Peer Supporters, click [\[HERE\]](#).

### Peer Support Program Coordinator

The Peer Support Program coordinator will function as the primary liaison between the peer supporters, the program advisor and the sheriff.

#### *Responsibilities*

The peer support coordinator will be responsible for:

- general supervision of the program
- recruiting and coordinating the screening of peer support applicants
- ensure all employees are aware of the program through watch briefing presentations, written memorandums or other literature about the program as may be developed
- preparing and disseminating to all employees a current referral list of professional counseling services approved by the sheriff's office
- identifying and coordinating the appropriate training for the selected peer supporters, and documenting and maintaining all records pertinent to such training
- maintaining monthly statistical data of reported contacts by peer support staff for program evaluation purposes and forwarding it to the program advisor
- acting as the liaison for peer support referrals, and being responsible for assigning peer supporters to assist employees consistent with the particular need
- providing guidance and assistance to peer supporter personnel when problems or questions arise
- ensuring that in situations where an employee needs protection under the Privileged Communication Statute, referrals are made only to the sheriff's office psychologist
- developing resources to assist employees when problems are identified
- perform the tasks associated with the referral program in conjunction with his normal assigned duties
- make mentor/trainee assignments, or delegate this process to the mentors to make the connections

### Peer Supporter Selection Process

Through a competitive process, a sufficient number of interested employees, will be selected to perform the duties as peer supporters.

Peer supporters will be employees with three or more continuous years of service, and not currently on disciplinary probation.

Eligible, employees will submit a letter of interest to the peer support coordinator through their chain-of-command detailing their reason for wanting to become a peer supporter, qualifications, training, and experience which they feel would be beneficial to the program.

The peer support coordinator will forward the letters of interest to the peer support advisor who will make recommendations for selection as peer supporters.

Following a review which may include an oral interview, peer review, and/or supervisor review employees will be eligible for appointment as a peer supporter.

Peer supporters will successfully complete a 40 hour basic training course as determined by the peer support

coordinator. Refresher training may occur when the need is identified and the training is available.

### Peer Support Applicant Criteria

Peer support applicants must be willing to meet the following criteria:

- agree to maintain confidentiality within the guidelines provided in this policy
- be empathetic and possess interpersonal and communication skills
- be motivated and willing to manage time effectively in order to have a minimal impact on their normal duties
- be willing to attend any required initial and on-going training, as well as scheduled meetings

### Peer Supporter Responsibilities

Peer supporter responsibilities will include:

- advising peers seeking assistance that a peer supporter is not exempt from laws, rules, regulations, directives, or orders; but that any exchange of information not in violation will be confidential
- advising a peer that any acts of self-injury or injury to others cannot go unreported
- advising other parties seeking information about discussions shared between a peer and peer supporter that that information is confidential
- providing short-term supportive assistance and or referral, for employees involved in the Peer Support Program, within the scope of their ability, knowledge and training
- making additional referral for assistance when deemed appropriate
- maintaining contact with the program coordinator regarding program activities and statistical data on program contacts for purposes of program evaluation, including the submission of a 'Monthly Peer Support Contact Summary' regarding support contacts made with employees
- establishing contact with, and offering assistance to, those employees who self-refer, or are referred by supervisory personnel
- responding at any hour if necessary, when contacted by the program coordinator, and intervention is requested or needed
- responding to the scene of a critical incident if requested by the incident commander, watch commander, peer support coordinator, peer support advisor, or sheriff
- notifying the program coordinator should the peer supporter voluntarily withdraw from participation abiding by the program policies and objectives or be removed from program participation
- notifying the program coordinator should a conflict of interest arise

### **Mentor Program**

The mentor program is a formal program designed to assist and support employees during their employment transition within the organization. The goal of the mentor program is to enhance employee retention, increase employee moral and provide support to employees as they acclimate into their new assignment.

Participation in the mentor program is voluntary.

A mentor's role can include, but will not be limited to:

- teacher
- motivator
- guide
- advisor
- role model

- confidant

The mentors role is separate from that of supervision and field training instruction.

Career mentoring is not a formal part of the mentor program, however employees seeking career mentorship can contact the peer support coordinator for guidance.

Once an employee has enrolled in the mentor program, they will be contacted by their assigned mentor to initiate introductions. Introductions should occur as soon as practical following the participants' hire/transfer date.

All mentorship activities will occur during normally scheduled work hours, unless otherwise approved by the peer support coordinator. To every extent possible, mentoring will not conflict with normal duties and/or training.

The duration of the mentoring relationship will be based on the needs of the participant, and will be dictated by the participant.

All peer support rules and confidentiality requirements apply to the mentor program.

### **Referral Program**

The referral program is established to assist employees in dealing with problems which are the result of domestic, financial, health, other personal problems, or job related difficulties, and to enable the employee to recognize and resolve the unfavorable reactions to that emotion or stress .

Referrals may occur as follows:

- An employee or family member may self-refer to the designated EAP provider, or they may personally contact any peer supporter, or the peer support coordinator for referral to either professional counseling or a peer supporter. Any employee aware of another employee who may need assistance can initiate a referral by contacting any peer supporter, program coordinator or supervisor. The referred employee will be contacted to assess their receptiveness to peer support intervention.
- Supervisory personnel have the authority and responsibility to recommend a peer supporter to employees when appropriate. It must be understood that this support is voluntary and that an employee cannot be ordered to participate. The employee will be assured that the consultation has been arranged solely for his benefit and will be confidential.
- Referrals will not be used as disciplinary sanction.
- A family member or associate of the employee may make a referral, in which case, the employee's participation is voluntary.

### **Victim Services Assistance - Emotional Support for Office Staff and Family**

The Victim Services Unit will utilize their skills to respond to sheriff office personnel or immediate family who are in need of emotional support. This contact will be short term and limited to issues such as illness, severe injury or death in the family. This contact may be requested by the employee's supervisor, the employee himself/herself, or the employee's peers. During regular business hours, requests should be made to the Victim Services Unit coordinator who will assign contact to a unit advocate. All after hours emergency requests will be made through dispatch to the appropriate advocate on call. Advocates will offer crisis intervention and referrals as needed. Sympathy cards and attendance at funeral services are other ways the Victim Services Unit can offer support.

### **Professional Counseling**

Under certain circumstances, a division chief may direct an employee to contact the sheriff's office psychologist for professional counseling.

The psychologist will make a recommendation to the division chief as to the length of time the employee should remain in consultation.

If the determination of the need for professional intervention is precipitated by a specific incident, the employee will normally be relieved of his regularly assigned duties for at least twenty-four hours following the incident.

Recognizing the sensitivity and confidential nature of this service, the employee's records relative to it will be under the strict control of the sheriff's office psychologist.

<b>SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE</b>		
<b>CHAPTER TITLE:</b> ROLE AND AUTHORITY USE OF FORCE	<b>ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:</b> N/A	<b>DATE 6/24/2014</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b> DEPUTY-INVOLVED SHOOTINGS	APPROVED:	

### **237. DEPUTY-INVOLVED SHOOTINGS**

Law enforcement duties can expose officers 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 impacts. Deputy-involved shootings resulting in the death of or serious bodily injury to a citizen or a fellow officer may cause adverse reactions and behaviors in the deputy.

This policy will provide guidelines that will be uniformly applied following any deputy-involved shooting incident, in order to minimize the chance that deputies will suffer from the negative emotional and psychological reactions that can occur after the use of deadly force in an on- or off-duty confrontation.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

**Acute Stress Disorder** - An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to a traumatic event and occurs within 30 days of exposure.

**Agency Briefing** - An informational administrative report on what happened during the deputy-involved shooting.

**Companion Deputy** - A deputy assigned to provide emotional support and assistance to another deputy following a deputy-involved shooting. The assigned deputy is normally a member of the Sheriff's Office Peer Support Program, but may also be a deputy who has had a similar experience, is a close friend, or both.

**Debriefings** - In the context of this policy, a formal process that is conducted by a qualified mental health professional to address the psychological and emotional effects of the deputy-involved shooting.

**Deputy** - In the context of this policy, a deputy who has discharged his or her firearm.

**Deputy-Involved Shooting Incident** - An incident where a deputized employee of the County Sheriff's Office fires his or her weapon in the course of his or her duties. This is not limited to causing serious bodily injury to a deputy or other person. It can include firing the weapon accidentally, or missing the intended target during the shooting.

**Peer Support Program** - A formal group of individuals consisting of approved members who have undergone training in peer support methods.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder** - An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to a traumatic event and is diagnosed as such if symptoms persist after 30 days.

**Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP)** - Any individual who is licensed as a mental health professional and has an in-depth understanding of the law enforcement culture.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Use of Force or Action Resulting in Death or Serious Bodily Injury to any Person**

#### Handling of Deputies at Scene of Shooting Incident

##### *Watch Supervisor Responsibilities*

A watch supervisor will be dispatched to the scene of the incident, and will assume primary responsibility for the deputy or deputies. Communicating emotional support and reassurance is paramount.

The watch supervisor will make appropriate arrangements for all necessary medical treatment.

The watch supervisor will ensure that:

- the deputy is offered food and water to satisfy his or her basic needs as soon as possible
- as soon as reasonably possible following the incident, the deputy will be allowed to notify his or her family by telephone
- the deputy will refrain from discussing details of the incident with their family
- use of social media, in any form, during this time is strictly prohibited
- during any period where the deputy is required to remain on scene, but has no immediate duties to fulfill, he or she will be removed from the immediate vicinity to a quiet area

At all times, when at the scene of the incident, the watch supervisor should handle the involved deputy in a manner that acknowledges the stress caused by the incident and refrain from passing judgment regarding the shooting.

##### *Watch Commander Responsibilities*

The on-duty watch commander will obtain the deputy's Critical Incident Information Sheet

As outlined on the Critical Incident Information Sheet, the watch commander will make the previously chosen

notification to an agency-approved Peer Support Program team member, companion deputy, other supportive friend or chaplain. Upon arrival, that person should remain with the deputy, but should be advised not to discuss details of the incident. If the deputy has an immediate need to talk about the shooting incident, he or she should be encouraged to do so with those who have legal, privileged confidentiality.

Until the deputy's weapon is relinquished to the investigative entity, the deputy and the weapon will remain in the presence of a designated employee.

The watch commander will make notification to the firearms training coordinator of the incident and request a response with a weapon matching that of the involved deputy or deputies. This is in preparation for the deputy relinquishing his or her weapon to the involved investigating entity.

The watch commander will make notification to the on-call Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) board member for arrangement of legal representation for the deputy. If the deputy is not a member of the FOP, the deputy will be allowed to make arrangements for legal representation.

### Preliminary Investigation

Where possible, the watch supervisor on scene will meet with the deputy. Any standard criminal or administrative investigations that will occur concerning the incident should be explained to and discussed with the deputy.

The deputy should be advised that he or she may seek legal counsel at any time.

Questions specific to the incident should be limited to a one time explanation of what happened.

The deputy should be advised not to discuss the incident with anyone except a personal attorney, agency investigator, or QMHP until the conclusion of the preliminary investigation.

### Deputy Injury/Death

When an involved shooting incident results in deputy injury, an agency official and another member of the sheriff's office (preferably an individual with personal knowledge of the deputy and his or her family), will personally notify the deputy's family and arrange for their transportation to the hospital or other location as required.

If a deputy is transported to a hospital, a companion deputy will accompany the deputy in the ambulance or will meet the deputy upon arrival. The companion deputy will provide all reasonable support to the deputy and act as a liaison between the deputy and the hospital, until the liaison specified on the deputy's Critical Incident Information Sheet can arrive.

The sheriff's office will offer to assign a member of the peer support team to the deputy's family for security, support, and management of media inquiries and visitors.

### Post-Incident Procedures

#### *Administrative Leave*

The deputy will be placed on mandatory administrative leave with pay in accordance with Policy and Procedure Manual, but will remain available for any necessary administrative investigations during the defined time frame of Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is important that the deputy and the public understand the leave period is not a disciplinary suspension.

### *Deputy De-briefing/Counseling/Mental Health Services*

The deputy will be required to attend a one-on-one or group debriefing provided by the agency's QMHP as soon as reasonably possible following the incident. After the QMHP meets with the deputy, and with the deputy's understanding, the sheriff's office will be advised of:

- whether it would be in the deputy's best interest to have additional leave
- the best continued course of counseling and intervention

Follow-up counseling services should be made available to the deputy and his or her family. The initial follow-up should be face-to-face.

The family of the deputy is strongly encouraged to take advantage of available sheriff's office mental health and counseling services. It is recommended that family/relationship joint counseling services be offered to the deputy and his or her family, or significant other whenever possible.

In order to promote trust and encourage the use of mental health and counseling services, all one-on-one debriefings and other individual counseling sessions will be kept confidential. Any information provided to the QMHP will be used solely for return-to-work status recommendations.

### *Agency De-briefing*

As soon as reasonably possible, an agency briefing concerning the incident should occur so that rumors are kept to a minimum. Sheriff's office employees will be encouraged to demonstrate their concern for the involved personnel.

### *Internal Investigation*

Any agency investigation of the incident will be conducted as soon as practical. This office will make every effort to expedite the completion of any administrative or criminal investigations with the understanding that it can decrease the negative distress reactions that the deputy may experience. The deputy should be informed of the progress and any outcomes of the investigation on a regular basis.

### *Media Relations*

The deputy should be advised that he or she is not permitted to speak with the media about the incident. The deputy will refer all inquiries from the media to a sheriff's office public information officer.

### *Return to Work*

During the post-incident time period and administrative leave, a County Sheriff's Office liaison will be assigned to communicate a minimum of once a week to the involved employee(s). This liaison will also be responsible for coordinating the required training sessions for the employee's return to work, as well as obtaining any equipment needs that the employee requires prior to returning.

Prior to returning to work, the involved employee will be required to qualify with his or her own service weapon in accordance agency policy. This qualification will be a private session with a sheriff's office range instructor, so as not to impact the employee any further than necessary.

### Daily Stress Recognition

Physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions or problems may not arise immediately, or the deputy may attempt to hide his or her problems. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring the behaviors of unit members for any adverse reactions or symptoms and will continually make available to their unit members information about the agency's peer support, chaplaincy, and mental health programs.

A supervisor may order a deputy to seek assistance or counseling from a QMHP upon a reasonable belief that stress may be disrupting the deputy's job performance.

### Training

Sheriff's office employees will receive training pertaining to post-shooting reactions and behaviors, as well as standard procedures contained within this policy. Sheriff's office supervisors will be trained to identify post-shooting trauma reactions and behaviors.

# SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

<b>CHAPTER TITLE: ROLE AND AUTHORITY USE OF FORCE</b>	<b>ACCREDITATION STANDARDS: N/A</b>	<b>DATE 6/24/2014</b>
<b>SUBJECT:  DEPUTY-INVOLVED SHOOTINGS</b>	<b>APPROVED:</b>	

## 237. DEPUTY-INVOLVED SHOOTINGS

Law enforcement duties can expose officers 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 impacts. Deputy-involved shootings resulting in the death of or serious bodily injury to a citizen or a fellow officer may cause adverse reactions and behaviors in the deputy.

This policy will provide guidelines that will be uniformly applied following any deputy-involved shooting incident, in order to minimize the chance that deputies will suffer from the negative emotional and psychological reactions that can occur after the use of deadly force in an on- or off-duty confrontation.

### DEFINITIONS

**Acute Stress Disorder** - An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to a traumatic event and occurs within 30 days of exposure.

**Agency Briefing** - An informational administrative report on what happened during the deputy-involved shooting.

**Companion Deputy** - A deputy assigned to provide emotional support and assistance to another deputy following a deputy-involved shooting. The assigned deputy is normally a member of the Sheriff's Office Peer Support Program, but may also be a deputy who has had a similar experience, is a close friend, or both.

**Debriefings** - In the context of this policy, a formal process that is conducted by a qualified mental health professional to address the psychological and emotional effects of the deputy-involved shooting.

**Deputy** - In the context of this policy, a deputy who has discharged his or her firearm.

**Deputy-Involved Shooting Incident** - An incident where a deputized employee of the County Sheriff's Office fires his or her weapon in the course of his or her duties. This is not limited to causing serious bodily injury to a deputy or other person. It can include firing the weapon accidentally, or missing the intended target during the shooting.

**Peer Support Program** - A formal group of individuals consisting of approved members who have undergone training in peer support methods.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder** - An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to a traumatic event and is diagnosed as such if symptoms persist after 30 days.

**Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP)** - Any individual who is licensed as a mental health professional and has an in-depth understanding of the law enforcement culture.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Use of Force or Action Resulting in Death or Serious Bodily Injury to any Person**

#### Handling of Deputies at Scene of Shooting Incident

##### *Watch Supervisor Responsibilities*

A watch supervisor will be dispatched to the scene of the incident, and will assume primary responsibility for the deputy or deputies. Communicating emotional support and reassurance is paramount.

The watch supervisor will make appropriate arrangements for all necessary medical treatment.

The watch supervisor will ensure that:

- the deputy is offered food and water to satisfy his or her basic needs as soon as possible
- as soon as reasonably possible following the incident, the deputy will be allowed to notify his or her family by telephone
- the deputy will refrain from discussing details of the incident with their family
- use of social media, in any form, during this time is strictly prohibited
- during any period where the deputy is required to remain on scene, but has no immediate duties to fulfill, he or she will be removed from the immediate vicinity to a quiet area

At all times, when at the scene of the incident, the watch supervisor should handle the involved deputy in a manner that acknowledges the stress caused by the incident and refrain from passing judgment regarding the shooting.

##### *Watch Commander Responsibilities*

The on-duty watch commander will obtain the deputy's Critical Incident Information Sheet.

As outlined on the Critical Incident Information Sheet, the watch commander will make the previously chosen notification to an agency-approved Peer Support Program team member, companion deputy, other supportive friend or chaplain. Upon arrival, that person should remain with the deputy, but should be advised not to discuss details of the incident. If the deputy has an immediate need to talk about the shooting incident, he or she should be encouraged to do so with those who have legal, privileged confidentiality.

Until the deputy's weapon is relinquished to the investigative entity, the deputy and the weapon will remain in the presence of a designated employee.

The watch commander will make notification to the firearms training coordinator of the incident and request a response with a weapon matching that of the involved deputy or deputies. This is in preparation for the deputy relinquishing his or her weapon to the involved investigating entity.

The watch commander will make notification to the on-call Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) board member for arrangement of legal representation for the deputy. If the deputy is not a member of the FOP, the deputy will be allowed to make arrangements for legal representation.

### Preliminary Investigation

Where possible, the watch supervisor on scene will meet with the deputy. Any standard criminal or administrative investigations that will occur concerning the incident should be explained to and discussed with the deputy.

The deputy should be advised that he or she may seek legal counsel at any time.

Questions specific to the incident should be limited to a one time explanation of what happened.

The deputy should be advised not to discuss the incident with anyone except a personal attorney, agency investigator, or QMHP until the conclusion of the preliminary investigation.

### Deputy Injury/Death

When an involved shooting incident results in deputy injury, an agency official and another member of the sheriff's office (preferably an individual with personal knowledge of the deputy and his or her family), will personally notify the deputy's family and arrange for their transportation to the hospital or other location as required.

If a deputy is transported to a hospital, a companion deputy will accompany the deputy in the ambulance or will meet the deputy upon arrival. The companion deputy will provide all reasonable support to the deputy and act as a liaison between the deputy and the hospital, until the liaison specified on the deputy's Critical Incident Information Sheet can arrive.

The sheriff's office will offer to assign a member of the peer support team to the deputy's family for security, support, and management of media inquiries and visitors.

When an involved shooting incident results in deputy death, procedures directed by the agency.

### Post-Incident Procedures

#### *Administrative Leave*

The deputy will be placed on mandatory administrative leave with pay in accordance with agency Policy and Procedure. but will remain available for any necessary administrative investigations during the defined time frame of Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is important that the deputy and the public understand the leave period is not a disciplinary suspension.

#### *Deputy De-briefing/Counseling/Mental Health Services*

The deputy will be required to attend a one-on-one or group debriefing provided by the agency's QMHP as soon as reasonably possible following the incident. After the QMHP meets with the deputy, and with the deputy's understanding, the sheriff's office will be advised of:

- whether it would be in the deputy's best interest to have additional leave
- the best continued course of counseling and intervention

Follow-up counseling services should be made available to the deputy and his or her family. The initial follow-up should be face-to-face.

The family of the deputy is strongly encouraged to take advantage of available sheriff's office mental health and counseling services. It is recommended that family/relationship joint counseling services be offered to the deputy and his or her family, or significant other whenever possible.

In order to promote trust and encourage the use of mental health and counseling services, all one-on-one debriefings and other individual counseling sessions will be kept confidential. Any information provided to the QMHP will be used solely for return-to-work status recommendations.

#### *Agency De-briefing*

As soon as reasonably possible, an agency briefing concerning the incident should occur so that rumors are kept to a minimum. Sheriff's office employees will be encouraged to demonstrate their concern for the involved personnel.

#### *Internal Investigation*

Any agency investigation of the incident will be conducted as soon as practical. This office will make every effort to expedite the completion of any administrative or criminal investigations with the understanding that it can decrease the negative distress reactions that the deputy may experience. The deputy should be informed of the progress and any outcomes of the investigation on a regular basis.

#### *Media Relations*

The deputy should be advised that he or she is not permitted to speak with the media about the incident. The deputy will refer all inquiries from the media to a sheriff's office public information officer.

#### *Return to Work*

During the post-incident time period and administrative leave, a County Sheriff's Office liaison will be assigned to communicate a minimum of once a week to the involved employee(s). This liaison will also be responsible for coordinating the required training sessions for the employee's return to work, as well as obtaining any equipment needs that the employee requires prior to returning.

Prior to returning to work, the involved employee will be required to qualify with their own service weapon in accordance with agency policy. This qualification will be a private session with a sheriff's office range instructor, so as not to impact the employee any further than necessary.

#### Daily Stress Recognition

Physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions or problems may not arise immediately, or the deputy may attempt to hide his or her problems. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring the behaviors of unit members for any adverse reactions or symptoms and will continually make available to their unit members information about the agency's peer support, chaplaincy, and mental health programs.

A supervisor may order a deputy to seek assistance or counseling from a QMHP upon a reasonable belief that stress may be disrupting the deputy's job performance.

#### Training

In accordance with agency policy, sheriff's office employees will receive training pertaining to post-shooting reactions and behaviors, as well as standard procedures contained within this policy. Sheriff's office supervisors will be trained to identify post-shooting trauma reactions and behaviors.

## SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

<b>CHAPTER TITLE:</b> FIELD OPERATIONS NOTIFICATION AND ACTIVATION	<b>ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:</b> LE 55.2.3, 55.2.6	<b>DATE 11/29/2017</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>  LINE OF DUTY DEATH	APPROVED:	

### 783. LINE OF DUTY DEATH

It is the policy of the sheriff's office to provide liaison assistance to the immediate survivors of a sheriff's office employee who dies in the line of duty, and to provide tangible and emotional support to the surviving family.

#### DEFINITIONS

**Benefits Coordinator** - The employee responsible for coordinating the administration of benefits to the family.

**Family Support Advocate** - The employee responsible for serving in a long term liaison and support capacity for the surviving family.

**Funeral Liaison** - The employee assigned as a facilitator between the family and the sheriff's office with regards to the funeral.

**Hospital Liaison** - The employee responsible for activities at the hospital in the immediate aftermath of the incident.

**Line of Duty Death** - The death of sworn and/or non-sworn staff by felonious or accidental means during the course of performing law enforcement functions, whether on or off duty.

**Line of Duty Death Response Team** - A multi-agency team of law enforcement professionals and others who specialize in a variety of skills and responsibilities established to provide assistance to any requesting agency assistance involved with a line of duty death.

**Line of Duty Death Team Members** - Employees identified with knowledge and skills that are selected by staff to participate in the Line of Duty Response Team as required. Employees are selected after expressing interest in participation and appointed after a staff review.

**Notification Officer** - The employee responsible for notification to survivors.

**Survivors** - Immediate family members of the deceased employee, to include spouse, children, parents, siblings, fiancé/fiancée and/or significant others.

**Sheriff's Office Liaison** - The employee assigned as a facilitator between the family and the sheriff's office.

## **PROCEDURES**

The following procedures will be adhered to in cases of line of duty deaths and in cases of critically injured employees with poor prognosis of survival. The procedures should be followed whenever possible, with the understanding that the wishes of the family take precedence over the desires of the sheriff's office. Employees providing services and assistance to family members and survivors will take all possible measures to accommodate their needs, wishes and desires, but should not make promises to family members that they are not sure can be met.

The deceased employee's name will not be released to the media or other parties before immediate survivors living in the area are notified.

The sheriff or undersheriff will designate an employee to inform the immediate family of the employee's condition or death. If they are not immediately available, the senior ranking officer or supervisor in the employee's chain of command will make the appointment.

### Notification

Notification of the immediate family should be made as soon as possible, and, if possible, coincidental with command notifications.

Notification of survivors in the immediate area will be made in person and, whenever appropriate, with another person. Whenever the health of immediate survivors is a concern, emergency medical services personnel will be requested to stand by.

If the opportunity to get the family to the hospital prior to the employee's death exists, the notification officer will inform the hospital liaison that the family is on its way. In such cases, immediate transportation should be provided for survivors, rather than waiting for any other members of the sheriff's office delegation to arrive. If the employee has died, notification should be made to the survivors in as forthright and empathetic a manner as possible.

Communication of information concerning the employee and the incident will, whenever possible, be restricted to the telephone to avoid interception by the media or others. Should the media obtain the employee's name prematurely, the public information officer will request that the information be withheld until proper notification of survivors can be made.

### Responsibilities

#### *Notification Officer*

The notification officer will be responsible for identification of additional survivors outside the area and will make any notifications as desired by the immediate family. Such notifications will be made by contacting the law enforcement agency in that jurisdiction and requesting that a personal notification be made.

The notification officer will submit a written report to the sheriff specifying the identity, time and place of survivors notified.

#### *Public Information Officer*

The public information officer (PIO) will be responsible for coordinating all notification and response to the media. Due to the immediate demands upon the PIO, the hospital liaison may provide assistance in coordinating media

attention at the hospital.

The public information officer will assist family members in dealing with general media inquiries and inform them of limitations on what they can say specifically to the media. The PIO will also ensure that members of the sheriff's office are aware of restrictions regarding release of any information that could undermine future legal proceedings.

The PIO will provide liaison with the media to include coordination of any statements and press conferences.

### *Hospital Liaison*

Whenever possible, the sheriff will join the family at the hospital in order to emphasize the sheriff's office support. The next highest ranking officer to arrive at the hospital will serve as, or designate, the hospital liaison who will be responsible for coordinating the arrival of immediate survivors, sheriff's office personnel and others, and will assume the following responsibilities:

- arrange for waiting facilities for immediate survivors and, in the absence of the public information officer, a press staging area
  - the desires of the surviving family members should be followed with regard to their accessibility to other employees and friends
- ensure that medical personnel provide pertinent medical information on the employee's condition to the family before any other parties
- assist family members, in accordance with their desires, in gaining access to the injured or deceased employee
- provide hospital personnel with all necessary information on billing for medical services
  - the hospital liaison should ensure that all medical bills are directed to the Business Office, and that they are not forwarded to the employee's family or other survivors
- arrange transportation for the family and other survivors upon their departure from the hospital
- ensure that the immediate family members are provided with appropriate assistance at the hospital

### **Additional Assignments**

Designated sheriff's office employees will begin serving in the following capacities:

- sheriff's office liaison
- funeral liaison
- benefits coordinator
- family support advocate

Each of these assignments will be made in writing to the sheriff's office personnel and the surviving family members will be informed of those designated.

In addition, the sheriff or designee will:

- make additional personnel assignments to assist in handling incoming phone calls and inquiries to direct the public to appropriate personnel
- ensure that the Victim Services Unit is activated to assist surviving family members and facilitate the family's access to psychological services
- ensure that other employees are provided the opportunity to participate in critical incident stress debriefings

### Responsibilities

### *Sheriff's Office Liaison*

The sheriff's office liaison will serve as the facilitator between the family and the sheriff's office. The liaison will normally be a command officer, which will allow for expedited services in employment of sheriff's office resources and the delegation of assignments. The sheriff's office liaison will work closely with the funeral liaison to ensure that the needs and requests of the family are fulfilled. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

- providing oversight of travel and lodging arrangements for out-of-town family members
- identifying alternative churches and reception halls that will accommodate the law enforcement funeral
  - these alternatives will be presented to the family, who will make the final determination
- coordinating all official law enforcement notifications and arrangements to include:
  - the honor guard
  - pallbearers
  - traffic control
  - liaison with visiting law enforcement agencies
- ensuring that security checks of the survivors' residence are initiated immediately following the incident, and for as long as reasonably necessary thereafter

### *Funeral Liaison*

The funeral liaison acts as facilitator between the decedent employee's family and the sheriff's office during the funeral. The funeral liaison is responsible for:

- meeting with family members and explaining their responsibilities to them
- being available to the family prior to and throughout the funeral
- ensuring that the needs and wishes of the family come before those of the sheriff's office
- assisting the family in working with the funeral director regarding funeral arrangements
- relaying any information to the family concerning the circumstances of the decedent employee's death and appropriate information regarding any investigation
- determining the need for travel arrangements for out-of-town family members and any other special needs of the family during the funeral
  - reporting this information to the sheriff's office liaison
- briefing the family members on the procedures involved in the law enforcement funeral

### *Benefits Coordinator*

The Support Services Division chief will serve as the benefits coordinator, and is responsible for:

- ensuring that the workers' compensation claims and related paperwork are filed
- presenting information on all benefits available to the family
- documenting inquiries and interest in donations to the family and establishing a mechanism for receipt of such contributions, as appropriate
- preparing all documentation of benefits and payments due survivors to include the nature and amount of benefits to be received by each beneficiary, the schedule of payments and the name of a contact person or facilitator at each benefit or payment office
- filing all benefits paperwork and maintaining contact with the family to ensure that benefits are being received
  - a copy of benefits documentation should be provided to all survivors affected and explained to each
- advising the surviving family of the role of law enforcement associations and organizations and the nature of support programs that they sponsor for law enforcement survivors

### *Family Support Advocate*

A member of the Victim Services Unit will be appointed as the family support advocate, and will serve in a long term liaison and support capacity for the surviving family. Their duties include:

- providing contact with surviving family members to keep them abreast of criminal proceedings relating to the death
- accompanying surviving family members to criminal proceedings, explaining the nature of the proceedings and introducing them to prosecutors and other persons as required
- identifying all support services available to family members and working on their behalf to secure any services necessary
- maintaining routine contact with family members to provide companionship and emotional support and maintain an ongoing relationship between the sheriff's office and the immediate family
- relaying the concerns and needs of the family to those individuals or organizations that may provide assistance, and encouraging others to visit and help as necessary

#### *Line of Duty Death Response Team*

The Line of Duty Death Response Team is a multi-agency team of law enforcement professionals and others who possess a variety of skills and responsibilities to include:

- Special Event Planning
- Logistics
- Honor Guard and Ceremonial Acumen
- Security
- Chaplaincy/ Religious Support
- Family Liaison
- Family Financial Benefits
- Staff Peer Support

The agency will appoint and authorize personnel to participate with the Line of Duty Death Response Team based upon skills and interest required for this type of critical incident. Event participation will vary in length by task and assignment. Participating staff will be used on a case by case basis, determined by the needs of the affected agency.

This is a voluntary assignment wherein no additional compensation, other than their regular salary, will be authorized.