



CITY OF MADISON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



Peer Support Program

Eff. Date 02/07/2023

Purpose

Due to the stresses faced by first responders throughout the course of their careers, the Madison Police Department established its Peer Support Team in 2006 in order to provide support and linkage to resources for commissioned personnel. The purpose of the Peer Support Program (PSP) is to provide a core group of personnel who are trained to provide support, information, and referral to employees and family members who are seeking assistance related to a critical incident, day-to-day work stress, or personal life stress.

Program Structure

Oversight of the Peer Support Program will be the responsibility of a designated Program Administrator at the rank of Captain, a designated Program Coordinator at the rank of Lieutenant, and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Manager. One or two Peer Support Officers (PSO) will be selected to serve as back-up contacts to the PSP Coordinator, who may not always be available.

Role of the Program Administrator (Captain)

1. The Program Administrator will collaborate with the Program Coordinator (Lieutenant) and the EAP Manager to ensure the success and quality of the MPD Peer Support Team and EAP services.
2. The Program Administrator does not play a role in the day-to-day work and interactions of the Peer Support Program, but instead provides necessary peripheral support, advocacy and periodic updates to the Chief and to other Management personnel as necessary.
3. No information is provided to the Program Administrator that will contain identifiable information on personnel who receive services from the Peer Support Program or from the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) debriefing services.

Role of the Program Coordinator (Lieutenant)

1. Work with City EAP/CISM staff to facilitate program use and assure adherence to program guidelines.
2. In collaboration with the EAP Manager, supervise Peer Support Officers (PSOs) and overall program implementation and utilization.
3. Work with City EAP/CISM staff to provide ongoing training for PSOs, as well as other department training on EAP/CISM programs.
4. Coordinate regular meetings and share timely information with PSOs.

Role of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Manager

1. Work in collaboration with the Program Coordinator on the operations of the Peer Support Program.
2. Ensure that the Peer Support Program follows the professional standards and guidelines of the Employee Assistance Program.
3. Consult with PSP Coordinator and/or PSO(s) assigned after a critical incident to determine appropriate level of response or to delegate this task to available EAP Specialist.
4. Plan new PSO recruitment and training every three years in collaboration with the Program Coordinator and other EAP staff.
5. Provide consultation to the MPD Management Team on officer wellness related issues, resources, policies, and critical incident response.

Role of the Peer Support Officer (PSO)

1. The PSO serves as a confidential support person for employees and their families seeking information on EAP resources for issues such as work or personal stress, emotional stress, addictions, financial stress, relationship difficulties, family concerns, or any other behavioral health concern.
2. The PSO is trained to provide confidential assistance to co-workers through supportive listening and providing appropriate referrals and/or resources when necessary. PSOs will not provide therapy or counseling.
3. The PSO may also serve as the first point of contact for the Officer in Charge (OIC) when a critical incident has occurred. Upon notification, the PSO reviews the incident, coordinates contact between the involved employee(s) and the responding CISM provider, and makes arrangements for follow-up as appropriate.
4. In the event of an MPD Line of Duty Death, a PSO will perform the role of the Family Liaison Officer. The PSO will be assigned and report to the Peer Support Commander (Coordinator). The PSO will work with the survivors of the officer killed in the line of duty, for the purposes of coordinating communication between the survivors and the involved agency related to funeral arrangements, benefits, and investigative updates.

Expectations of a Peer Support Officer (PSO)

- Convey trust, provide anonymity, and assure confidentiality to officers seeking assistance as outlined below.
- Be available for peer contact and be willing to provide support on a voluntary basis.
- Be a potential first point of contact to initiate Critical Incident Response.
- Complete all necessary paperwork for the purpose of documenting program utilization.
- Attend mandatory orientation and refresher trainings.
- Commit to three years of peer support service, with the option to continue on a yearly basis upon completion of the three-year term.

PSO Confidentiality Guidelines

Any contact with a Peer Support Officer is confidential. Here is what that means:

- A PSO will not generally disclose whether or not they have been in contact with a member of the MPD seeking peer support services.
- When a PSO needs to consult on a particular contact, they will not generally disclose the identity of the contact and will use non-identifiable language, even when consulting with another peer support officer.
- If a PSO needs to consult more specifically on a contact, they will consult with the EAP to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.
- Any documentation of a PSO contact will not generally include the name or other identifiable information, and will be provided directly to the EAP.

Peer Support Officers are not afforded the same legal privilege regarding confidentiality that the EAP/CISM Staff and external EAP Providers receive. There is no guarantee that a court, whether civil or criminal, will not under some circumstances be able to order either the individual seeking assistance through the Peer Support Program, or a Peer Support Officer to whom the individual spoke, to disclose any conversations which may have taken place, unless the Peer Support Officer has a confidentiality privilege under Chapter 905 of the Wis. Stats. (Clergy, etc.).

When needed, a PSO will remind their peers when consulting that their status as a PSO does not supersede their requirements as a police officer. As an example, if a PSO believes a peer is about to disclose

information about an Officer Involved Critical Incident (OICI) during the investigatory process (per Officer Involved Deaths and Other Critical Incidents standard operating procedure), or is seeking help for domestic violence (per S.S. 968.075 WI Domestic Abuse Law), the PSO will state the limits of their confidentiality and make a referral to the EAP.

EAP Confidentiality Guidelines

Peer Support works closely with EAP personnel who are also governed by confidentiality guidelines; please refer to the EAP SOP for those guidelines.

Selection Process

Peer Support Officers (PSOs) are selected based on self-nomination and/or nominations from their peers.

Written nominations will be submitted to a selection committee that is comprised of representation from each of the following: the Program Coordinator, a Madison Professional Police Officers Association (MPPOA Representative), one EAP/CISM Staff, and one current Peer Support Officer.

Each officer receiving a nomination or nominating themselves, must complete a written Interest Questionnaire to assist in the selection process. During the selection process, the selection committee will select the PSO based on the following criteria:

1. Information provided on the Peer Nomination Form
2. Responses to the Interest Questionnaire
3. Need for representation of various ranks and/or work groups

Term of PSO Appointment

Minimum terms of appointment will be **three years** with an option to continue each year following.

PSO Code of Ethics and Removal from Position

During the PSO orientation training, each PSO reviews and signs a Code of Ethics. Signing the code demonstrates that the officer has read, understood, and agrees to abide by the EAP/PSO Code of Ethics. If the PSO should fail to comply with any one or several of the outlined ethical responsibilities, or for other related reasons, it is at the discretion of the EAP Manager in consultation with designated MPD personnel assigned to program oversight, to remove that officer from their role as a Peer Support Officer in the Peer Support Program.

PSO Training Requirements

- All PSOs are required to complete a 2-day PSO Orientation Training.
- At least two update meetings per year may be convened by the MPD Peer Support Program Coordinator and EAP/CISM Staff, as needed.

Evaluation of the PSP Program

Periodically, a department-wide survey will be conducted to assess satisfaction with Peer Support Contacts and use of EAP/CISM services. This information will be compiled and stored with the EAP/CISM Staff.

Reporting Requirements

1. Every PSO contact requires that the Peer Support/EAP Contact Data Utilization Form be completed and submitted to the EAP Office. This form does not contain any identifying information, but only general demographics, problem areas presented, and referral information if applicable.
2. No records will be maintained by the PSO.

3. No reference to any PSO contact will be placed in an employee's personnel file.

Original SOP: 02/07/2023