P.O. 247 Troopers and Employees Assistance Program (TEAP)			
Effective From:	01/25/2019	Effective To:	Current

P.O. 247 – Troopers and Employees Assistance Program (TEAP)

1. PURPOSE
   - i) The Louisiana State Police recognizes that as an emergency response agency, its employees are subjected to unusually stressful situations and critical incidents that may induce certain emotional and physical reactions in those employees and their families. Therefore, it is the policy of the Louisiana State Police to provide Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) and Peer Support along with other assistance and services to employees and their immediate family members to help them through times of personal or professional crisis.
   - ii) Nothing in this policy shall prohibit or restrict any employee from seeking assistance through the Human Resources Employee Assistance Program (EAP,) other related health care providers, or other support services.
2. OBJECTIVES
   - i) To provide employees with information about the effects of stress and trauma and healthy ways to manage the effects.
   - ii) To reduce the short-term and long-term emotional and physical stress suffered by employees who are involved in critical incidents.
   - iii) To provide a safe environment where employees can speak with someone about their issues in confidence to either clarify concerns or explore other available resources.
   - iv) To ensure that proper assistance is provided to spouses and immediate family members of employees that have been involved in critical incidents.
3. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
   - i) Statewide Program Administrator
   - ii) Troop / Region Area Coordinators
   - iii) Troop / Regional Teams
   - iv) Chaplains
   - v) Mental Health Professional
4. ASSISTANCE SERVICES
   - i) Pre-Incident and Post-Incident Education
   - ii) Peer Support
   - iii) Rest Information and Transition Services
   - iv) Defusing
   - v) Critical Incident Stress Debriefings
   - vi) Family Support Services
   - vii) Resource and Referral Network
5. DEFINITIONS
   - i) Statewide Program Administrator: The administrator will be selected by and work under the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. The administrator shall hold the rank of Sergeant or above, be trained in the CISM process either by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF,) or the Southern Law Enforcement Foundation (SLEF). The administrator will be responsible for overseeing the Department's CISM, Peer Support, and Chaplain Programs, and be available for CISM-related matters 24 hours a day, 7 days a week anywhere in the state, and perform other duties as directed.

ii) Troop / Region Area Coordinator: A volunteer from the respective Troop / Region CISM team who has at least five (5) years of law enforcement experience, is trained in the CISM process either by ICISF, SLEF, or RCTA, and served as a CISM team member for at least two (2) years. The coordinator will also be available for CISM response on a 24 hours / 7 days a week basis anywhere in their respective Troop / Region area or anywhere in the state, and perform other duties as directed by the Statewide Program Administrator.

iii) Troop / Region Team Member: A commissioned or non-commissioned volunteer employed by the Department a minimum of two (2) years, trained in the CISM process by ICISF, or SLEF. The team member will be available for peer support response on a 24 hour / 7 day a week basis anywhere in their respective Troop / Region area and perform other duties as directed by the Statewide Program Administrator or Troop / Region Area Coordinator.

iv) Chaplain: A non-compensated, volunteer member of the clergy who has a minimum of three (3) years of experience in the ministry and in good standing with their ministry.

v) Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM): A comprehensive range of integrated services, procedures, and intervention strategies to include education and awareness designed to mitigate the effects of exposure to a critical incident or critical incident stress.

vi) Critical Incident: Any event that has an impact sufficient enough to overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of either an individual or a group.

vii) Critical Incident Stress: An unusually strong emotional reaction that has the potential to prevent the individual from maintaining their normal duties and responsibilities within their work, social, and family environments. The reaction may be immediate or delayed.

viii) Critical Incident Stress Debriefing: A confidential discussion conducted by CISM team members following a critical incident, usually held within 24 – 72 hours, with those involved in the incident to provide support, education and an outlet for views and emotions associated with the event. Critical Incident Stress Debriefings are designed to provide support for the employee involved and are not counseling or operational critiques of the incident.

ix) Rest Information and Transition Services (RITS): A brief intervention conducted by CISM team members immediately after a disaster or major incident that provides a transition period from the major incident back to the normal work routine. RITS is reserved for large scale events that are on-going (usually more than 8 hours). RITS generally lasts approximately 30 minutes.

x) Defusing: A brief, confidential discussion held between those involved in a critical incident and a member of the CISM Team. Defusing usually takes place within 1 to 4 hours after the event and usually lasts 30 to 45 minutes. This can be an individual or a group process. The purpose of a defusing is to educate employees of possible stress reactions and the need for proper care of themselves. It is suggested that CISM team members consult with a mental health professional before and after a defusing.

xi) Family / Office Debriefing: A general group debriefing consisting of affected employees, co-workers, or family members, held after the critical incident stress debriefing. Debriefings shall include peer support team members, a chaplain(s,) and licensed mental health professional(s) who have received training in the CISM process.

xii) Human Resources Employee Assistance Program: The Department's Human Resources section provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that works in concert with CISM / Peer Support to provide employees a list of mental health providers and / or treatment centers that are covered under the employee's insurance.

xiii) Immediate Family: Includes the employee's spouse, children, parents of the employee or spouse, siblings of the employee or spouse, or any person for which the employee or spouse has care-giver responsibilities.

xiv) Mandated Reporting Situation: A situation when any member of the CISM Program determines there is significant indication the employee poses a serious threat to themselves or others, reveals involvement in a felony crime, or any information related to child abuse, elder abuse, or other information that is required to be reported by law. In such instances, the affected team member is mandated to breach confidentiality for the purposes of providing emergency intervention, to report felony criminal activity, or to comply with law.

xv) Mental Health Professional: A volunteer, in good standing and licensed in the State of Louisiana, who will assist CISM team members during the CISM process.

xvi) Peer Support: A process in which individuals are trained to recognize various symptoms and problems to assist their co-workers through listening, understanding, and providing appropriate referrals when necessary. The peer support process is a preventative and early detection mechanism to help individuals deal with personal problems before they become more serious. This process can be done face-to-face or over the telephone.

6. RESPONSIBILITES

i) Statewide Program Administrator:
   a) Shall research topics related to latest trends / methods of CISM and Peer Support and ensure policy is updated accordingly.
   b) Coordinate CISM and Peer Support related training opportunities and conduct team meetings.
   c) Work with each Troop / Region Area Coordinator to ensure proper staffing of peer support teams.
   d) Prepare and teach classes on a variety of topics related to the Troopers / Employees Assistance Program, CISM, and peer support.
   e) Provide peer support to individuals and maintain dialogue with personnel who may be on leave for an extended amount of time due to injury / illness.
   f) Provide CISM procedures to other law enforcement officers and law enforcement agencies upon request and make appropriate referrals when issues exceed parameters of CISM.

ii) Troop / Region Area Coordinators:
   a) Oversee the Troop / Region CISM teams and coordinate with the Statewide Program Administrator on events / needs in their respective area.
   b) Conduct team meetings and ensure the Peer Support team roster is current in their respective area.
   c) Assist the Statewide Program Administrator with preparing and teaching classes on a variety of topics related to the Troopers / Employees Assistance Program, CISM, and Peer Support.
   d) Provide peer support to individuals, conduct debriefings as needed, and maintain dialogue with personnel who may be on leave for an extended amount of time due to injury / illness.
   e) Provide CISM procedures to other agencies, and make appropriate referrals when issues exceed the parameters of CISM.

iii) Troop / Region Team Members:
   a) Shall be trained in CISM procedures as taught by SLEF or ICISF standards.
   b) Keep Troop / Region Area Coordinator aware of issues that require follow-up.
   c) Maintain dialogue with personnel who may be on leave for an extended amount of time due to injury / illness.
   d) Provide CISM procedures to other agencies and make appropriate referrals when issues exceed the parameters of CISM.

iv) Chaplain:
   a) Provide assistance to CISM team members during any CISM process.
   b) Complete CISM training offered by either ICISF or SLEF before participating in the CISM process.
   c) Communicate with the Statewide Program Administrator, Troop / Region Commander, or Troop / Region Area Coordinator regarding any assistance needs.

v) Mental Health Professional:
   a) Provide assistance to CISM team members during the CISM process or any other matters that may involve oversight from a mental health professional.
   b) Complete CISM training offered by either ICISF or SLEF.
   c) Work with the Statewide Program Administrator to help develop training programs or information guides for CISM team members and Department employees.

7. SELECTION PROCESS OF CISM AND PEER SUPPORT TEAM MEMBERS

i) CISM and Peer Support Troop / Region Team Members, commissioned or non-commissioned, shall be volunteers and currently in good standing with the agency.

ii) Considerations for selection include, but are not limited to, previous education and training, resolved traumatic experiences, and desirable personal qualities such as maturity, sound judgment, personal and professional ethics, and credibility.

iii) Persons interested in joining the team should notify their supervisors and the Troop / Region Area Coordinator who will notify the Statewide Program Administrator.

iv) The interested employee shall submit the following to the Statewide Program Administrator for review:
   a) A letter of interest that should include reason(s) for wanting to volunteer, years of law enforcement service, any training or education received related to peer support / CISM or other related fields, and any critical incidents (direct / indirect or personal / professional) the employee may have been involved in, listing the incident itself and the month of occurrence.
   b) Personnel will be selected by the Statewide Program Administrator and the Troop / Region Area Coordinator, with final approval for membership on the team by the Superintendent or designee.

8. CISM AND PEER SUPPORT TEAM MEMBER SEPARATION

i) Breach of confidentiality, failure to attend training, or loss of one's good standing with the Department will be considerations for permanent or temporary separation from the program.

ii) An individual can voluntarily request removal from the program.

iii) As needed, Troop / Region CISM and Peer Support Team Members can take up to six (6) months leave of absence and are encouraged to do so when personal issues or obligations require it. If a team member takes a leave of absence, their position will not be filled unless the team member decides not to return.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

i) The success of any CISM / Peer Support Program depends upon affected employees feeling free to express their emotions and vent without such communications becoming common knowledge. Defusings or Debriefings shall not be the subject or focus of an administrative investigation, and responding team members shall not be questioned about involvement or knowledge of such sessions.

ii) All participants in the LSP TEAP shall maintain strict confidentiality of all communication(s) received from individuals involved in Critical Incident Stress Debriefings, One-on-one Intervention, Demobilization, and Defusing.

iii) Any discussions with LSP CISM Team Members while he or she is acting in a peer support role shall be confidential and not subject to disclosure as described in Code of Evidence Article 518 Trained Peer Support Privilege Communications.

iv) Any violations of this could be subject to an administrative investigation and disciplinary action by the Department.

v) Exceptions to the confidentiality rule are as follows:

a) A communication reveals the intended commission of a crime or harmful act and such disclosure is determined to be necessary by the trained peer support member to protect any person from a clear, imminent risk of serious mental or physical harm or injury, or to forestall a serious threat to the public;

b) Any information related to child abuse, elder abuse, or other information that is required to be reported by law;

c) A crime has been committed and divulged;

d) With voluntary, written consent of the employee explicitly waiving their right of confidentiality; or

e) As necessary to communicate within the Peer Support Team Members to facilitate adequate support.

f) Any immediate safety threat shall be reported to the On-Duty Troop / Section Supervisor.

10. NOTIFICATION / ACTIVATION PROCESS

i) TEAP team provides emotional support for Department employees involved in critical incidents.

ii) Team members shall not become involved in any administrative and / or criminal investigation related to the critical incident.

iii) TEAP team members shall not assign responsibility or blame upon any employee and will refrain from any discussion involving responsibility or blame.

iv) Time spent by team members responding to critical incidents shall be considered time worked.

v) Upon being contacted, a team member shall notify his immediate supervisor as soon as practical about the activation.

vi) At no time shall the TEAP team members be utilized as a method to deter misconduct, generate internal complaints, or to impose discipline.

vii) The Troop / Section Commander or his designee shall contact the Troop / Region Area Coordinator or Statewide Program Administrator for TEAP assistance for the following events:

a) Death or serious injury to any Department employee, occurring on or off-duty.

b) Death or serious injury to another as a result of contact with an employee, occurring on or off-duty.

c) Members involved in incidents involving the use of deadly force occurring on or off-duty.

d) Mass casualty incidents.

e) Cases involving the death or serious injury of children.

f) Cases of sexual abuse involving children.

g) Crashes involving death or serious injuries to any Law Enforcement Officer, EMS personnel, or Fire Department personnel.

h) Any other incident deemed appropriate by the Shift Commander.

viii) An affected employee, co-worker, peer support team member or supervisor may request peer support to respond in the aftermath of a critical incident. Requests are to be made to the appropriate Troop / Region Area Coordinator or the Statewide Program Administrator.

ix) TEAP team members may not provide CISM support to anyone with whom they have a close, personal relationship.

11. INTERNAL AFFAIRS INVESTIGATIONS AND / OR COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS

i) Employees involved in any internal affairs investigations and / or complaint investigations that would like assistance in dealing with stress related issues arising from the investigation or inquiry may utilize CISM services. TEAP team members will not discuss the details of the allegation of misconduct and will terminate any discussion about the details of the internal affairs investigation and / or complaint.

ii) TEAP team members will not provide legal advice or comment on the investigation but will assist employees in dealing with the corresponding stress. If any TEAP team members are involved in the investigation, those team members cannot be involved in any CISM services. At no time shall any TEAP team member assign responsibility or blame upon any employee, and will refrain from any discussion involving responsibility or blame.

12. ACTIVITY REPORTING

i) TEAP team members shall not take notes during any CISM related activities.

ii) An activity report will be generated to capture the name of the CISM team member, date of CISM activity, type of CISM activity provided, number of personnel (victims) involved in CISM activity, number of CISM volunteers utilized, number of hours, and a brief synopsis to explain the reason for response.

iii) The synopsis shall not contain names of anyone involved in the CISM activity.

13. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

i) Safe Call Now:

Safe Call Now is a resource for public safety employees to speak confidentially with officers, former law enforcement officers, public safety professionals and / or mental healthcare providers who are familiar with your line of work. Safe Call Now is a confidential, comprehensive, 24-hour crisis referral service for all public safety employees, all emergency services personnel and their family members nationwide. Website: www.safecallnow.org Contact number: 206-459-3020.

ii) National Police Suicide Foundation:

The National Police Suicide Foundation's dedicated mission is to provide training programs on suicide awareness and prevention that establish a standard of care and promote employee wellness and support services. Website: www.psf.org, Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 Days a week, Dr. Robert Douglas Cell: (443) 889-5666, Office: (302) 536-1214 or Toll Free: 1-866-276-4615.

iii) Veterans Crisis Line:

The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat online, or send a text message to 838255 to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.

iv) National Alliance on Mental Illness:

NAMI along with national network of local and state organizations have partnered with law enforcement agencies on Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) programs, which help law enforcement cope with difficult calls for service and increase safety in these situations for officers, individuals in crisis and bystanders. CALL THE NAMI HELPLINE 800-950-6264 M-F, 10 AM - 6 PM ET or info@nami.org or Text "NAMI" to 741741.

v) Concerns of Police Survivors:
C.O.P.S. provides resources to help officers rebuild their shattered lives. C.O.P.S. offers training and assistance to law enforcement agencies nationwide on how to respond to the tragic loss of a member of the law enforcement profession. National website: https://nationalcops.org, Louisiana Chapter website: https://www.la-cops.org.

vi) National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
The Lifeline provides 24 / 7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. Website: https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org, HOTLINE # 1-800-273-8255.

vii) Psychology Today:
An online resource that employees can use to find a therapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist. Website: www.psychologytoday.com.

viii) Good Therapy:
An online resource that employees can use to find a therapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist. Website: www.goodtherapy.org.

ix) Institute for Responder Wellness:
The Institute for Responder Wellness, contact number: 1 (844) 577-7233 or website: www.instituteforresponderwellness.com, is a complete continuum of care that provides premier modalities of healing to first responders struggling with issues that impact their personal and professional lives. If you are experiencing anxiety, depression, sleeplessness, anger, stress, acute stress, organizational stress, post-traumatic stress disorder, post-traumatic stress injury, substance abuse, self-medicating, suicidal thoughts, divorce, violent outbursts, psychological disorders, or compassion fatigue, the Institute for Responder Wellness can help.

x) Southern Law Enforcement Foundation:
The Southern Law Enforcement Foundation, www.selfoundation.com, is a non-profit organization in Louisiana that provides Basic Critical Incident Stress Management training to first responders. Training is provided at no cost to the agency.

xi) International Critical Incident Stress Foundation:
The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF), www.icisf.org, is an organization that provides leadership, education, training, consultation, and support services in comprehensive crisis intervention and disaster behavioral health services to the emergency response professions, other organizations, and communities worldwide. Any emergency service organization or individual connected with an emergency service may use the 24-hour emergency hotline (410) 313-2473 for assistance or information. There are costs associated with ICISF training.