


LEESBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS AND GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL		
General Order Number: 136	Section: ADMINISTRATION	Effective Date: JULY 2019
Title: EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES		
Accreditation Standards: N/A		
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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy to outline the Department’s response to employees requiring mental health services.

II. GENERAL POLICY

The Leesburg Police Department recognizes that a wide range of stressors, both personal and professional may adversely affect an employee’s physical health and well-being. Examples of the effects of such stressors include but are not limited to, alcohol and/or drug abuse, marital or family distress and emotional difficulties, which may lead to an employee entering a personal crisis. Additionally, contending with the day-to-day stressors of a Police Department employee experiencing critical and/or tragic incidents can be confusing, debilitating and destructive. In many instances, employees will overcome these stressors and their effects independently or with the assistance of friends, family or coworkers. However, in other cases those efforts are ineffective.

The Leesburg Police Department believes it is in the best interest of the employee, the employee’s family, the Department and the general public to provide services to assist with coping with such stressors and their effects.

In extreme instances, an employee’s mental health may present a danger to the welfare and safety of the employee, their families, the general public and coworkers. Therefore, it is the policy of the Leesburg Police Department, and the Town of Leesburg, to provide all personnel with access to mental health services to help them preempt and resolve mental health crises and, under emergency conditions, to take those measures necessary in the provision of mental health services to ensure the well-being and safety of employees and the general public.

III. DEFINITIONS

Peer Support Team Member: A specially trained Department employee who is a member of the Peer Support Team.

Department Chaplain: An authorized Department volunteer religious leader or counselor.

Mental Health Professional: A licensed professional, social or mental health caseworker, counselor, psychotherapist, psychologist or psychiatrist authorized by the Department.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Confidential professional mental health assistance for problems or issues that are affecting an employee personally or at work that are provided free of charge as a benefit to all employees. EAP services include assessment and referral to appropriate resources and are available to the employee and his/her immediate family.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Peer Support

1. The Peer Support Team will provide confidential informal counseling or referral to professional service providers. The qualifications, training, activities and management of the Peer Support Team is governed by the Peer Support General Order.
- B. Department Chaplain
1. Department Chaplains will provide confidential informal counselling and religious guidance. The process to become an authorized Department Chaplain is governed by the Chaplain Policy General Order.
- C. Professional Mental Health Services
1. Mental health service providers are available to all employees and their families as allowed by the EAP and/or insurance coverage. Use of these services shall be treated in the same manner as any other work-related illness or disability.
 2. The services of mental health professionals may be invoked by employee self-referral, referral of a supervisor or Peer Support Team Member through the Chief of Police or mandated following life-threatening, traumatic experiences.
 3. Supervisory personnel are responsible for continuously monitoring personnel performance and behavior and shall be alert to behavioral indicators that suggest emotional problems. These include, but are not limited to,
 - a. uncharacteristic or repeated citizen complaints, particularly those related to excessive force;
 - b. abrupt changes in prescribed officer response or behavior such as excessive tardiness, absenteeism, abnormal impatience, irritability or aggressiveness, or repeated instances of overreaction or failure to act in the line of duty;
 - c. irrational or bizarre thoughts or actions,
 - d. unexplained changes in work habits or patterns of leave usage;
 - e. erratic mood swings; and
 - f. indications of alcohol or drug abuse.
 4. Supervisory personnel who observe or receive information regarding the above types of behavior shall consult with the employee for an explanation and when necessary, may confer with Peer Support Team Members, EAP, Human Resources (HR), or mental health professionals for guidance.
 5. Where circumstances indicate, the supervisor shall suggest a voluntary self-referral to the employee. Where emotional impairment/dysfunction is suspected, either prior to or following these consultations, supervisory personnel may consult with superiors or HR to determine whether an administrative referral to mental health professionals is warranted.
 6. Under emergency conditions, when an employee's behavior constitutes a significant danger to himself or others, a supervisor may order immediate referral for mental health evaluation. The mental health professional shall be contacted for instructions prior to referral. Transportation shall be provided for the subject officer.
 7. In instances where the supervisor believes that an employee is experiencing serious or debilitating emotional or psychological problems, the supervisor shall direct that the employee be interviewed by an agency-authorized mental health service provider.
 - a. A copy of the written referral order (memorandum) shall be forwarded to the subject officer, to the mental health service provider and to the Chief of Police.
 - b. The supervisor shall take all necessary steps to ensure the confidentiality of the referral order and its contents and shall restrict access to those persons with a legitimate need to know.
 8. The mental health professional shall:
 - a. maintain the confidentiality of all communications concerning the referral and its findings;
 - b. acknowledge receipt of the order and advise whether the officer responded; and
 - c. advise the Chief of Police concerning the employee's fitness for duty and provide recommendations for assignment.
 9. Following the mental health assessment, an employee may be returned to the original duty assignment, reassigned to alternative duty, placed on temporary light duty or placed on administrative leave as deemed appropriate.
 - a. An employee's work status shall be reevaluated every 30 days while under the care of a mental health professional or until such care has been terminated.
 - b. An employee may be returned to regular duty, his/her work assignment may be modified or s/he may be temporarily or permanently relieved from duty at any time in accordance with

recommendations of the mental health professional. The employee's powers of arrest may also be terminated or suspended in accordance with the above recommendations.

- c. Reinstatement to regular duty of any employee requires the affirmative recommendation of an agency-authorized psychologist/psychiatrist.
10. Job security and promotional opportunities shall not be jeopardized by an employee solely for having participated in psychological counseling services. However, failure to seek treatment to correct deficiencies in job performance may reduce or eliminate promotional consideration or jeopardize continued employment.