



4.7.25 Mental Health Leave for Peace Officers

Chapter 4 - General Personnel	Original Effective Date: May 2022
Section: 4.7 Work and Leave Administration	Date Last Reviewed:
Responsible Entity: Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer; Chief of Police	Date Last Revised:

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance with regards to granting mental health leave for commissioned Peace Officers (Officers) who while acting in the line of duty experience a traumatic event.

II. Scope

This policy shall apply to all commissioned Officers, whether employed full-time or part-time, who experience a traumatic event while acting in the course of their employment. A traumatic event includes, but is not limited to the following:

- A. Fatal Accident;
- B. Homicide;
- C. Suicide;
- D. Line of duty death or suicide of a department employee;
- E. In-custody death;
- F. Use of force resulting in death or serious bodily injury;
- G. An incident in which the Officer, while acting in a law enforcement capacity suffers or is threatened serious bodily injury by another person(s);
- H. Participation in recovery efforts related to natural disaster (hurricane, flood, fire, tornado, or earthquake; or
- I. Participation in recovery efforts related to a terrorist attack.

III. Policy

- A. Officers who experience a traumatic event while acting in the line of duty, may request and shall be granted mental health leave and if applicable, run concurrent with leave under the federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). All requests for mental health leave will be approved with those needing to know for time and attendance records.

This policy does not replace the potential need for administrative leave, which differs from mental health leave. A decision to place an Officer on administrative leave related to a critical incident is and shall remain separate from a mental health leave request.

An Officer will retain all benefits while on approved mental health leave, including eligibility for paid holidays.

B. Request and Approval Process

1. The initiating request must be submitted to the Chief of Police or designee. The Officer must submit a Medical Leave Request form marked as "FMLA" for "Serious Condition of Employment".
2. The first three (3) days may be granted as paid days upon the Chief of Police's authority or designee and approved based on knowledge of the event.
3. All extensions, if needed, shall be made in coordination with UTPD's HR Partner and HR-Leave Administrator to maintain consistency and confidentiality. Documentation must be provided indicating a need to extend the mental health leave.
 - a. Medical certification need only show that counseling is underway by a licensed Mental Health Professional or clinician.
 - b. Extensions will run concurrent with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), when applicable.
 - c. Extensions may be granted as paid days, in increments of five (5) working days, for up to twenty (20) working days. This is prorated based on the Officer's full time equivalent (FTE). For example, .5 FTE is eligible for up to 15 days.
 - d. Extensions will be granted based on licensed Mental Health Professional or clinician statements evidencing need for continuance.
 - e. The Officer is not required to use Paid Time Off or Extended Illness Bank (EIB) for approved extensions.

IV. Definitions

When used in this document, the following words have the meaning set forth below unless a different meaning is required by context.

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Peace Officer– any police officer, full or part-time, who is commissioned to serve at UT Health San Antonio.

Licensed Mental Health Professional or Clinician– a licensed social or mental health worker, counselor, psychotherapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist who is overseeing and directing the care of an employee as their patient.

V. Related References

Questions regarding this policy should be direct to Human Resources at 210-567-8847 or by email at AskHR@uthscsa.edu.

Institutional Handbook of Operating Policies (IHOP)

- [4.7.12 Leave of Absence Without Pay](#)
- [4.7.13 Family Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#)
- [Section 4.7 Work and Leave Administration, includes other applicable policies](#)

UT System (UTS) Policy

- UTS 195: [Mental Health Leave for Peace Officers](#)

Texas Government Code

- Code 614.015, Subchapter A-1, [Mental health leave](#)

VI. Review and Approval History

- A. The approving authority of this policy is the University Executive Committee.
- B. The review frequency cycle is set for three years following the last review date, a time period that is not mandated by regulatory, accreditation, or other authority.

Effective Date	Action Taken	Approved By	Date Approved
05/2022	Policy Origination	VP/Chief HR Officer and Chief of Police	05/03/22