DAVIS POLICE DEPARTMENT

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM & PEER SUPPORT
Policy and Procedure 1-45-A

DEPARTMENT MANUAL

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EAP

I. STATEMENT OF ISSUANCE

Department members frequently respond to traumatic incidents and dangerous circumstances, including, but not limited to, fires, stabbings, shootings, physical fights, domestic violence, protests, traffic collisions, suicides, deaths, and other disasters. Members are also exposed to harmful substances and disease, such as drugs, blood, urine, vomit, TB, Hepatitis, scabies, and lice. They witness grave injuries, death, and grief. They are frequently placed in harm’s way, with significant risk of bodily harm or physical assault while performing the duties of their jobs.

The traumatic and unpredictable nature of emergency services results in a high-stress working environment that can take an overwhelming mental, emotional, and physical toll on personnel and their families. While most emergency service personnel survive the traumas of their jobs, sadly, many experience the impacts of occupational stressors when off-duty.

The culture of emergency services has often inhibited its personnel from asking for assistance in battling their psychological stress for fear it will cause ridicule, shame, or adverse job action. The Department has a responsibility to ensure that its members are equipped with the tools necessary for mitigating the occupational stress that they incur as a result of performing their job duties and protecting the public.

Therefore, the Department has established the Davis Police Department Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as outlined below. The program shall also be responsible for providing a department-wide network of peer representatives, reflective of the Department’s workforce both in job positions and personal experiences, who are available to come to the aid of their fellow members on a broad range of emotional or professional issues.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Davis PD Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Members are strongly encouraged to use the Davis PD EAP to ensure their own and/or their family member’s well-being which can be adversely affected because of “critical incident stress.” Critical incident stress” means the acute or cumulative psychological stress or trauma that law enforcement personnel may experience in providing emergency services in response to a critical incident. The stress or trauma is an unusually strong emotional, cognitive, behavioral, or physical reaction that may interfere with normal functioning and could lead to post-traumatic stress injuries, including, but not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Physical and emotional illness.
• Failure of usual coping mechanisms.
• Loss of interest in the job or normal life activities.
• Personality changes.
• Loss of ability to function.
• Psychological disruption of personal life, including their relationship with a spouse, child, or friend.

All members have access to confidential EAP through XXXXXXXXXXXX. Some of the many options for services through XXXXXXXXXXXX include:

• Behavioral Health
• Managing Stress
• Health Information & Resources
• EAP Wellness Webcasts (calendar attached)
• Work/Life Resources
• Financial Services & Referrals
• Referrals for Pet, Child and Senior Care

Sworn members and Public Safety Dispatchers can also use EAP services through XXXXXXXXXXXX. EAP provides free access to high-quality, experienced therapists who share a strong commitment to helping those dedicated to the service of others. XXXXXXXXXXXX EAP services are available for all police officers and dispatchers employed by the City of Davis. XXXXXXXXXXXX will also provide services to spouses and significant others of sworn staff and dispatchers, as long as the relationship is current.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX EAP phone line is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year.

In case of an acute emergency, members should call 911. The number for the toll-free National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255). The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

If a request is non-urgent, the main XXXXXXXXXXXX for scheduling.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX EAP services include up to 14 counseling sessions per year. The goal is to resolve problems in a time-limited manner – or to assist with referrals if longer-term services are needed.

Members can seek out XXXXXXXXXXXX EAP services for a wide variety of reasons, including:

• Interpersonal problems
• Marital/relationship problems
• Depression
• Anxiety
• Stressful events
• Trauma
• Drug/Alcohol concerns
• Work-related issues.
Utilization of XXXX EAP services is strictly confidential. XXXX does not share client lists or call the City when our members use the service. There are no billing records with names. YCPARMIA just pays for the service so everyone can use it confidentially. Only in rare cases do laws allow or mandate disclosure of otherwise confidential information (e.g., in cases of a potential threat of harm to yourself or others; child abuse; elder or disabled abuse; or in response to a court order).

B. Davis PD Peer Support & Crisis Referral Program (PSP) (Government Code § 8669.1 et. seq.)

The PSP offers assistance and appropriate support resources to members and their families during personal/professional stressful/difficult periods in their lives.

Peer support is generally available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to all members. A list of team members and on call numbers is available from Dispatch.

The PSP may provide members support and referral services for matters including, but not limited to, the following:

- Substance use and substance abuse.
- Critical incident stress.
- Family issues.
- Grief support.
- Legal issues.
- Line-of-duty deaths.
- Serious injury or illness.
- Suicide.
- Victims of crime.
- Workplace issues.

For purposes of the PSP, the following terms have the following meanings:

“Confidential communication” means any information, including, but not limited to, written or oral communication, transmitted between law enforcement personnel, a peer support team member, or a crisis hotline or crisis referral service staff member while the peer support team member provides peer support services or the crisis hotline or crisis referral service staff member provides crisis services, and in confidence by a means that, as far as the law enforcement personnel is aware, does not disclose the information to third persons other than those who are present to further the interests of the law enforcement personnel in the delivery of peer support services or those to whom disclosures are reasonably necessary for the transmission of the information or an accomplishment of the purposes for which the peer support team member is providing services. “Confidential communication” does not include a communication in which the law enforcement personnel discloses the commission of a crime or a communication in which the law enforcement personnel’s intent to defraud or deceive an investigation into a critical incident is revealed.

“Crisis referral services” include all public or private organizations that provide consultation and treatment resources for personal problems, including mental health issues, chemical dependency, domestic violence, gambling, financial problems, and other personal crises. Neither crisis referral services nor crisis hotlines include services provided by an employee association, labor relations
representative, or labor relations organization, or any entity owned or operated by an employee association, labor relations representative, or labor relations organization.

“Critical incident” means an actual or perceived event or situation that involves crisis, disaster, trauma, or emergency.

“Critical incident stress” means the acute or cumulative psychological stress or trauma that law enforcement personnel may experience while providing emergency services in response to a critical incident. The stress or trauma is an unusually strong emotional, cognitive, behavioral, or physical reaction that may interfere with normal functioning and could lead to post-traumatic stress injuries, including, but not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Physical and emotional illness.
- Failure of usual coping mechanisms.
- Loss of interest in the job or normal life activities.
- Personality changes.
- Loss of ability to function.
- Psychological disruption of personal life, including their relationship with a spouse, child, or friend.

“Law enforcement agency” means a local or regional department or agency, or any political subdivision thereof, that employs a peace officer, as defined in Section 830 of the Penal Code. The Davis Police Department is a law enforcement agency.

“Law enforcement personnel” means an officer or employee of a local or regional law enforcement agency. Davis Police Department members, excluding volunteers, are officers or employees of a local law enforcement agency.

“Peer support services” means authorized peer support services provided by a peer support team member to law enforcement personnel and their immediate families affected by a critical incident or the cumulative effect of witnessing multiple critical incidents. Peer support services assist those affected by a critical incident in coping with critical incident stress and mitigating reactions to critical incident stress. Peer support services may include one or more of the following:

- Pre-crisis education.
- Critical incident stress defusings.
- Critical incident stress debriefings.
- On-scene support services.
- One-on-one support services.
- Consultation.
- Referral services.
- Confidentiality obligations.
- The impact of toxic stress on health and well-being.
- Grief support.
- Substance abuse awareness and approaches.
- Active listening skills.

“Peer support program” means a program administered by a law enforcement agency to deliver peer support services to law enforcement personnel.
“Peer support team” means a law enforcement agency response team composed of peer support team members.

“Peer support team member” means a law enforcement agency employee who has completed a peer support training course or courses pursuant to Section 8669.6 of the Government Code (see II, B. 5. Below).

1. General Information

   a. Program Coordination - The PSP will be managed by a Program Coordinator appointed by, and who serves at the pleasure of, the Police Chief. The Program Coordinator will work with the Department’s sworn EAP provider for program advising and to coordinate services offered to members and their families.

   b. Team Member Recruitment, Eligibility, Selection and Appointment - Members will be selected using the procedures outlined in the Department’s Career Development Manual for Collateral Assignments. Team members serve at the pleasure of the Police Chief.

   c. A peer support team member shall not provide peer support services in any of the following circumstances (Government Code § 8669.5):

      1. If, when serving in a peer support role, the peer support team member’s relationship with a law enforcement personnel receiving peer support services could be reasonably expected to impair objectivity, competence, or effectiveness in providing peer support, or would otherwise risk exploitation or harm to the law enforcement personnel.

      2. If the peer support team member and the law enforcement personnel receiving peer support services were involved as participants or witnesses to the same traumatic incident.

      3. If the peer support team member and the law enforcement personnel receiving peer support services are both involved in a shared, active or ongoing investigation.

   d. Support will be provided to affected personnel as soon as practical after a critical incident, and the PSP may facilitate utilization of relevant resources by affected personnel, as may be warranted, such as PSP resources, EAP resources, the XXXXXXXPost-Critical Incident Self-Care Data Sheet, and Clergy resources. When warranted, the PSP will coordinate with experienced, qualified, licensed mental health professionals who specialize in providing services to law enforcement in order to schedule individualized and/or group debriefings, and to discuss recommendations regarding attendance at scheduled debriefings. PSP team members will provide follow-up outreach to affected personnel following debriefings, and affected personnel will be strongly encouraged to utilize EAP and other supportive resources.

2. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is governed by Government Code § 8669.4, which specifies:

(a) A law enforcement personnel, whether or not a party to an action, has a right to refuse to disclose, and to prevent another from disclosing, a confidential communication between the law enforcement personnel and a peer support team member made while the peer support team member was providing peer support services, or a confidential communication made to a crisis hotline or crisis referral service.
(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), a confidential communication may be disclosed under the following circumstances:

(1) To refer a law enforcement personnel to receive crisis referral services by a peer support team member.
(2) During a consultation between two peer support team members.
(3) If the peer support team member reasonably believes that disclosure is necessary to prevent death, substantial bodily harm, or commission of a crime.
(4) If the law enforcement personnel expressly agrees in writing that the confidential communication may be disclosed.
(5) In a criminal proceeding.
(6) If otherwise required by law.

3. Training

To be eligible for the Confidentiality protections afforded by this policy and law, a peer support team member shall complete a training course or courses on peer support approved by the Department that may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Pre-crisis education.
- Critical incident stress defusings.
- Critical incident stress debriefings.
- On-scene support services.
- One-on-one support services.
- Consultation.
- Referral services.
- Confidentiality obligations.
- The impact of toxic stress on health and well-being.
- Grief support.
- Substance abuse awareness and approaches.
- Active listening skills.
- Stress management.
- Psychological first aid.

The suggested minimum training is:

- 24 Hour Basic Peer Support course
- Basic Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) course

Additionally, the California Peer Support Association offers a training conference each year. Peer support team members may be budgeted to attend each year. Those in attendance shall provide training for team members unable to attend. Peer support team members should attend on-going training to stay current on the latest practices and procedures for assistance to Davis Police Department members.

4. Limitation of Liability (Government Code § 8669.5)

A peer support team member who provides peer support services and has completed a training course described in Government Code § 8669.6, and this policy, shall not be liable for damages, including personal injury, wrongful death, property damage, or other loss.
related to an act, error, or omission in performing peer support services, unless the act, error, or omission constitutes gross negligence or intentional misconduct.

Darren Pytel
Police Chief
2/18

Reviewed 5/19
Revised 10/19 added Government Code changes