

# Employee Assistance Unit

Critical  
Incidents



## **A Few Tips to Promote a Swift Return to a Normal State:**

- **Talk to others about what you are feeling.**
- **Spend time with others. Don't isolate yourself.**
- **Eat healthy meals on a regular schedule. Avoid caffeine, sugars, and soft drinks in excess.**
- **Don't complicate things with the overindulgence of alcohol. Alcohol clouds your thinking, and can prolong your discomfort.**
- **Recurring thoughts, dreams, and flashbacks are normal and will pass with time. Do not attempt to fight them. They will fade with time.**
- **Do the things that feel good to you. Give yourself a break. Do something you have been meaning to do.**
- **Do some physical exercise alternating with periods of rest.**
- **Make as many normal daily decisions as possible, but don't look to make any big life changes or decisions.**

Although you are a trained, experienced member of the service (MOS), understand that your chosen profession increases the likelihood of you being exposed to a critical incident. Even though you have what it takes to handle it, you are still human and these types of events may be so extraordinary and sudden that they have a strong effect on even the most prepared emergency response personnel.

## **Critical Incidents**

A critical incident is any situation, in which you were exposed to something that has the ability to impact how you function and feel right now or years down the road.

## **Take Care of Yourself**

The symptoms of stress reaction may last from a few days to a few months, depending on the severity of the traumatic event. With the understanding and support of loved ones, the stress reactions usually pass more quickly.

### **Common effects of stress on your mood**

- Anxiety
- Restlessness
- Lack of motivation or focus
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Irritability or anger
- Sadness or depression

## **Not Everyone Will React to a Critical Incident in the Same Way.**

For example, officers involved in shootings:

1/3 experience a mild or no traumatic reaction

1/3 experience a moderate reaction

1/3 experience a severe reaction

### **Possible Reactions May Include:**

- **Nightmares**
- **Flashbacks**
- **Distressing memories**
- **Increased irritability**
- **Obsessions with the incident**
- **Self-doubt**
- **Feelings of inadequacy**
- **Difficulty concentrating**
- **Withdrawal from others**
- **Increased alcohol consumption**
- **Hyper vigilance**
- **Guilt**

Support is available 24/7

**Call Any Time  
(646) 610-6730**

# Your chosen profession increases the likelihood of you being exposed to a critical incident

## **Critical Incident Debriefings**

When appropriate, a group discussion that includes both crisis intervention and an education process may be arranged. The primary objective is to minimize or resolve any distress associated with the event. These discussions are conducted away from department facilities and are NOT recorded in any manner.

## **Who Attends a Debriefing?**

MOS like yourself that have been involved in a particular event. While you may feel you don't need (or want) to talk about it in a group situation, your presence will lend support to the cop who needs to talk. By sharing your experience, you may help another MOS get through a tough time.



## **Employee Assistance Unit**

The Employee Assistance Unit (EAO) was designed to assist members of the service that are experiencing personal problems. The early identification and resolution of these problems can minimize negative impact on their career or home life.

Referrals are accepted from fellow members of the service, unions and fraternal organizations, family and friends.

Our unit is **NOT** a disciplinary arm of the department. Communication between EAO personnel and members of the service remain confidential, **EXCEPT** in cases of serious misconduct and suicidal behavior.

The Unit's members are available weekdays from 0700-2100 hours. In emergency cases during non-business hours unit members will be contacted and will respond.

### **Employee Assistance Unit**

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