

Columbus Police Division Directive	EFFECTIVE	NUMBER
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Personnel Involved in Traumatic Events		



I. Introduction

- A. For the purpose of this Directive, a traumatic event is defined as an incident where serious injury or death has occurred as a result of a use of firearm, a police action, or the operation of a Division vehicle.
- B. Involvement in a traumatic event may affect the ability of **personnel** to carry out their assigned duties. The Division recognizes the need to provide assistance to personnel involved in these incidents without unnecessarily limiting their availability to supervisors and investigators conducting administrative and criminal investigations. One such means of assistance is the Officer Support Team.
 1. The Officer Support Team is a volunteer organization recognized by the Division of Police and administered under the command of a police supervisor. The assigned supervisor shall coordinate all administrative duties related to the Officer Support Team through the Training Bureau. A copy of the roster is maintained in the Radio Room.
 2. The Officer Support Team shall consist of **sworn personnel** who have been involved in traumatic events that resulted in serious injury or death. A trained Officer Support Team member shall be dispatched to the scene of all police-related traumatic events.
 3. Involved **sworn personnel** and Officer Support Team members are cautioned that their communications are not privileged; therefore, Officer Support Team members should avoid discussing facts relating to the incident with the involved **sworn personnel**.
- C. **Division personnel who are** involved in a traumatic event may also use the services of the Peer Assistance Team (PAT), Employee Assistance Program (EAP), a **Police Chaplain**, a Division psychologist, or any licensed psychologist/psychiatrist.

II. Policy Statements

- A. Supervisors investigating or controlling traumatic events shall offer the services of the Officer Support Team to the involved employee(s).

Note: Supervisors or **other Division personnel** may **also** use or recommend services such as the PAT and EAP to employees **who are** involved in a traumatic event.

- B. Officer Support Team members shall not self-dispatch to an incident. Members shall wait until requested by the on-scene supervisor and dispatched by a **911 Emergency Dispatcher**.

- C. An employee directly involved in a traumatic event shall be temporarily placed on administrative leave for three to five working days and shall remain on leave until completion of a review of the incident by **his or her** bureau commander/manager.

Note: Any leave beyond five days shall require the Chief of Police or his or her designee's approval.

1. As part of the incident review, the bureau commander/manager shall confer with the Firearms/Police-Involved Death Review Board Chairperson, the Accident Investigation Unit Sergeant, the Internal Affairs Bureau Commander, and/or the Homicide/Assault Section investigator assigned to the incident to determine the likelihood of criminal or departmental charges being filed.

Note: Civilian managers shall consult with their deputy chief before rendering a decision.

2. Upon deciding to approve a return to regular duty, the bureau commander/manager shall talk to the involved employee and the chain of command.

Note: Civilian managers shall consult with their deputy chief before rendering a decision.

3. The bureau commander/manager's decision to allow the involved employee(s) to return to regular duty is not the final adjudication of the incident, but only an administrative decision to allow **the** employee(s) to return to regular duty while the incident is investigated.

- D. The employee(s) directly involved shall attend a minimum of one counseling session with a licensed psychologist before returning to work. The **employee's** bureau commander/manager is responsible for ensuring the required counseling session is scheduled through the Employee Benefits Unit and completed.

- E. Any employees indirectly involved and feeling the need to obtain counseling are strongly encouraged to do so.

III. Procedures

- A. Officer Support Team member dispatched to a scene involving death or serious injury

1. Report to the outer perimeter of the scene and contact the supervisor in charge.
2. Request to see the involved employee(s).
3. Provide only moral support to involved employee(s). Do not interfere with the investigation.
4. Request to accompany the involved employee(s) when he or she is transported to headquarters **or another location**.

Note: The involved employee(s) may be transported from the scene by an Officer Support Team member, but only with the approval of the supervisor in charge of the investigation.

5. Respectfully decline to provide any information solicited by persons other than personnel responsible for investigating the case.
6. Remain available to assist the involved employee(s) and his or her family members until the issue *or* investigation is resolved. The involved employee(s) may terminate the assistance of the Officer Support Team member at any time.