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Sheriff

*San Diego County*

**SHERIFF**

## LINE-UP TRAINING

### Peer Support

### Topic #90

*After discussing/reviewing the below training material in line-up (briefing), sworn staff shall sign off as completed in LMS. In the event a staff member is not present when this topic is discussed in line-up, they shall independently read, review, and complete the training.*

*By clicking "Yes" to "Have you completed this activity?" in LMS, you are attesting that you have viewed, read, and completed the training activity.*

#### I. PURPOSE

The San Diego Sheriff's Department most valuable resource is its employees. The Peer Support Program's goal is to assist peers with the stresses caused by personal and professional difficulties and help them continue to be productive members of the department.

The Peer Support Unit recognizes that employees, by virtue of their profession, encounter situations that require them to take action which may result in them suffering emotional or psychological trauma. The Peer Support Unit assists its peers to understand the impact of such incidents by providing non-professional peer support services and/or referral information for professional counseling.

#### II. DISCUSSION

##### A. WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT?

Peer support is a process where a person discusses a personal issue with a non-professional, usually a friend or co-worker. Peer Support members have the responsibility to understand their role and its limitations. They are trained to employ active listening skills, to avoid "solving" or taking on the person's problems, and when appropriate, to refer the individual to professional resources.

##### B. CONFIDENTIALITY OF PEER SUPPORT.

The utilization of Peer Support is confidential. However, peer supporters are required to report specific issues to appropriate services. The exemptions of confidentiality are:

1. Imminent danger to self or others
2. Suspected child abuse



3. Factual elderly abuse
4. Narcotics offenses
5. Domestic violence
6. Crime committed

C. WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO TALK TO A PEER SUPPORTER?

Some believe peer support only responds to critical incidents. While they train for the worst situations, in reality peer support is available every day for a variety of life's issues.

Examples may involve relationship issues, illness, bereavement, financial concerns, suicide, addiction, as well as job related stressors.

D. CRITICAL INCIDENTS

A critical incident can be defined as any event that has a stressful impact sufficient enough to overwhelm coping skills of an individual. Critical incidents are abrupt, powerful events that fall outside the range of ordinary human experiences. Examples may include shootings, severe injury, uses of force and/or deaths.

At critical incidents, peer support members can provide support in various ways:

1. Advise what to expect from the department
2. Ensure person involved contacts spouse or significant others
3. Make other personal notifications as necessary
4. Speak with family members of person involved
5. Refer to professional help if needed

E. WHO CAN UTILIZE PEER SUPPORT AND THEIR SERVICES?

All members of the San Diego Sheriff's Department and their immediate family members are entitled to Peer Support services at any time.

F. HOW DO I CONTACT PEER SUPPORT?

More information can be found on the Peer Support homepage via the San Diego Sheriff's Department of Human Resources link:

[REDACTED]

You may also call the Sheriff's Communication Center and request a Peer Support Member.

[REDACTED]

To make an appointment with The Counseling Team (private company providing confidential counseling services to Sheriff's Department employees) please call:

**The Counseling Team**

[REDACTED]