

## EMPLOYEE WELLNESS AND PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

<b>AUTHORITY:</b>	Government Code (GC) §§ 8669.1-8669.7 Law Enforcement Peer Support and Crisis Referral Services Program	
<b>RESCINDS:</b>	Procedure Manual Item 1-2-006, dated 07/09/19 (Major Revision)	
<b>FORMS:</b>	Peer Support Team Stat Sheet	(Attachment)
	PST Member Confidentiality Agreement	(Attachment)
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	To establish the Employee Wellness and Peer Support Program (PST) policy.	

### I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. The Department recognizes the value of providing an in-house resource for Probation employees, and their family members, to support them in managing professional and personal crises.
- B. The Employee Wellness and Peer Support Program is comprised of Department employees who have received specialized training and agreed to offer support and appropriate referrals/resources to employees and their family members during difficult times in their personal and professional lives. These identified employees are Peer Support Team (PST) members.
- C. PST may be utilized to support other county agencies and law enforcement departments within Orange County and in cooperation with the Orange County Association of Peer Supporters (OCAPS). Additionally, the PST may be called upon to support other State of California Probation Departments. Deployment of PST to other county agencies (e.g., Orange County Sheriff's Department, Orange County Social Services Agency, etc.), law enforcement within Orange County (e.g., Anaheim Police Department, Santa Ana Police Department, etc.), or other State of California Probation Departments (e.g. San Diego County Probation Department), must be approved by Executive Management prior to an employee deploying. PST members deploying to outside agencies shall work in alignment with all Department policies and procedures and in cooperation with the agency chief, department head, or designee, to determine the nature of support needed.
- D. PST members who may possibly be involved with conducting any administrative or criminal investigations (e.g., Professional Standards Division (PSD) investigators) or approving administrative discipline (e.g., Executive Management [EM]) related to an employee seeking assistance, shall coordinate an appropriate referral and opt out of serving as a PST member to avoid any potential or actual conflict of interest.
- E. Role of the Employee Wellness and Peer Support Program.
  - 1. The Employee Wellness and Peer Support Program is intended for the following purposes:

- a. To provide support to Department employees and their families, during and after difficult times in their personal and professional lives.
  - b. To refer Department employees and their families to appropriate resources.
2. PST members are available to:
- a. Listen to and support fellow employees regarding personal and professional issues/stressors. Peer Support does not take the place of professional counseling with a licensed mental health or treatment professional.
  - b. Provide information on referral services for matters including, but no limited, to the following:
    - 1) Substance abuse
    - 2) Critical Incident stress
    - 3) Family issues
    - 4) Grief support
    - 5) Legal issues
    - 6) Line-of duty deaths
    - 7) Serious injury or illness
    - 8) Suicide
    - 9) Victims of crime
    - 10) Workplace issues
  - c. Provide an Employee Wellness and Peer Support orientation to new employees.
  - d. Support peers immediately after and in response to a Critical Incident.
  - e. Assist with Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) debriefings.
  - f. Check on the well-being of employees not working, due to illness or injury, and provide support where desired and needed.
3. Contact information for PST members can be found on the Department's internal website (ProbNet → Training → Peer Support Resources → Contact Info).

4. Additional information on Employee Wellness can be found on the Department's internal website (ProbNet → Training → Peer Support Resources).

## II. CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. The acceptance and success of the Employee Wellness and Peer Support will be determined in part by the observance of confidentiality. It is imperative that each PST member maintain strict confidentiality of all information learned about an individual within the confines of this program.
  1. Statute, such as GC § 8669.4, protects the confidentiality of information shared while the PST member is providing peer support services.
  2. However, confidential communication may be disclosed under the following circumstances:
    - a. Communication regarding the commission of a crime - In this circumstance, the PST member will disclose the information to the PSD Division Director (DD).
    - b. Communication in which the person's intent to defraud or deceive an investigation into a Critical Incident is revealed - In this circumstance, the PST member will disclose the information to PSD DD.
    - c. To refer a person to crisis referral services.
    - d. During a consultation between two PST members.
    - e. If the PST member reasonably believes that disclosure is necessary to prevent death, substantial bodily harm, or commission of a crime - In this circumstance, the PST member will disclose the information to the PSD DD.
    - f. If the person expressly agrees in writing that the confidential communication may be disclosed.
    - g. In a criminal proceeding.
    - h. If otherwise required by law.
    - i. As required by the County's Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedure, any PST member who is a supervisor or manager and who receives information that an employee has been subjected to harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and/or abusive conduct shall disclose that information to the PSD DD.
- B. Every PST member will be required to read, understand, and abide by the terms of the Confidentiality Agreement prior to becoming a team member. The Program Administrator shall retain the signed original Confidentiality Agreements.

### III. PST MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Program Administrator: The Strategic Development Division (SDD) DD, or designee, will serve as the Program Administrator. Responsibilities include coordination of relevant internal and external training, dissemination of relevant employee wellness material, coordination of quarterly PST member meetings/team buildings events, and other related duties as assigned.
- B. Program Coordinator(s): Program Coordinators are non-managerial PST members, nominated by any member of the PST and agree to be points of contact for PST member deployment or for designated strategies (e.g. new employee engagement). Program Coordinators will work directly with the Program Administrator regarding operations of the PST and shall:
1. Notify the Program Administrator, via telephone or in person, of all peer support emergency response requests outside of normal working hours.
  2. Seek approval from the Program Administrator prior to activating a PST member after normal working hours.
- C. PST Members: Employees from every sworn and professional classification are eligible to become PST members. All members must attend a three (3)-day POST certified Basic Peer Support Training before being recognized as a PST Member.
1. The responsibilities of a PST member include the following:
    - a. Convey trust and assure confidentiality within the policy.
    - b. Be able to identify when an employee/subject requires outside resources/assistance and be able to provide the employee the information needed to access those resources.
    - c. Attend quarterly meetings, when able (with approval from immediate supervisor).
    - d. Submit monthly PST statistics to the Program Administrator regarding assistance provided. Statistics are due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month for the previous month. In the event, the PST member does not have any PST activities to report, the PST member shall submit a stats sheet indicating no activities were performed.
    - e. Code individual timesheet to PST activities using the designated codes. All PST activities should be coded including attendance at quarterly meetings, conferences, and training. The Job Code corresponds to the employee's assignment: Adult Operations Bureau-RAOTPEER, Juvenile Operations Bureau-RJOTPEER, Operations and Support Bureau-ROSTPEER, and Probation Dept. Admin-ROTTPEER.
    - f. Active participation in PST may be considered when determining attendance at advanced PST training and/or PST-related conferences.
  2. A PST member may opt-out of being a PST member at any time by

contacting the Program Administrator.

#### IV. PST MEMBER APPLICATION/SELECTION PROCESS

- A. The Department will add PST members when needed, as determined by the Program Administrator. New PST members will be added by the following:
  - 1. The Department will disseminate an Opportunity Interest Bulletin including the steps to submit their interest in joining the PST. The number of new PST members may be limited due to training availability, appropriate number of PST members at various locations, etc. However, the Opportunity Interest Bulletin will specify those limitations.
  - 2. Employees within the Department may be approached by the Program Administrator or Program Coordinator(s) to become PST members when team members are needed at specific locations or the individual has demonstrated behavior consistent with being a PST team member. No employee approached regarding their interest in becoming a PST member is obligated to join the PST and declining the offer will not negatively affect the employee in any way.
- B. PST members shall be employees in good standing as determined by their immediate supervisor and DD, or designee, with no documented performance or misconduct concerns, current Performance Improvement Plans, or pending discipline. Further, all interested personnel shall receive permission from their immediate supervisor to attend the required PST training and become a member of the PST.
- C. Members of the PST can be removed by the Program Administrator at any time. Such removal is not subject to appeal.
- D. The Department expects PST members to complete their regular job duties/tasks as assigned. Failure to remain in good standing in their primary assignment will result in the employee's removal from the PST.

#### V. CRITICAL INCIDENTS

- A. A Critical Incident refers to an event or situation that involves crisis, disaster, trauma, or emergency.
- B. Program Coordinators should be notified of all Critical Incidents as soon as practically possible by both PST members and/or non-PST members. Peer Support Coordinators shall gather general information regarding the nature of the incident and the name(s) of employee involved.
- C. Any person involved, witnessing, or impacted by a Critical Incident can contact a PST member directly or request Peer Support assistance.
- D. Critical incidents that may require a peer support response may include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Experiencing or witnessing incidents involving serious injury or likelihood of serious injury

2. Witnessing an incident involving death (e.g., suicide)
3. Officer involved shootings
4. Hostage situations (e.g., when an employee is taken hostage)
5. Any incident deemed appropriate by the Administrator in Charge (AIC-Facilities) or Critical Incident Manager (CIM-Field).

## VI. CRITICAL INCIDENT DEBRIEFS

- A. The Department maintains a contract with an outside provide (The Counseling Team International [TCTC]) to provide Critical Incident response aimed at reducing the intensity of an individual's emotional, mental, physical, and behavioral reaction to crisis. Assistance is available twenty-four (24) hours a day with crisis telephone calls/consultations and/or on-scene response.
- B. After a Critical Incident occurs, the AIC, CIM, or designee will evaluate the need for an immediate response and call TCTI at (909) 884-0133 or (800) 222-9691.
- C. As noted in Procedure Manual Item (PMI) 1-4-128 (Critical Incident Manager [CIM]), if the Critical Incident involves any employee represented by the Association of Orange County Deputy Sheriff's (AOCDS), AIC, CIM, or designee will notify AOCDS by calling 714-285-2800 as soon as practical and/or possible. In consideration of the existing relationship between AOCDS and TCTI, the AIC/CIM can discuss coordination of TCTI's response.
- D. The AIC, CIM, or designee can discuss with the provider to determine what services are needed ranging from a one-on-one to a group debrief. All involved employees are encouraged to attend a one-on-one or group debrief but attendance is considered voluntary.
- E. When deemed appropriate, the AIC, CIM, or designee can invite members of the Department's Chaplaincy program to respond or participate in debrief activities. For more information regarding the Chaplaincy Program, please refer to PMI 1-2-007 (Probation Staff Chaplaincy Program).

## VII. PAY AND COMPENSATION

- A. Typically, a PST member shall offer support services to employees while the PST member is on duty.
- B. Prior to PST members being deployed to a Critical Incident or Critical Incident debrief outside of their normal work hours, the Program Administrator will seek approval from Executive Management for the PST member to receive overtime. The Program Administrator will advise the PST member(s) of the approved hours.
- C. The pay/compensation will be the same as the guidelines set forth in the applicable Memorandum of Understanding for that team member.
- D. PST members will not be paid/compensated for being on the PST roster. If a PST member is contacted regarding a Critical Incident, the PST member has discretion and can decline assisting for that incident.

## VIII. TRAINING

- A. PST members should receive training in the following areas:
  - 1. Pre-crisis education
  - 2. Critical Incident Stress Defusing
  - 3. Critical Incident Stress Debriefings
  - 4. On-scene support services
  - 5. One-on-One support services
  - 6. Consultation
  - 7. Referral services
  - 8. Confidentiality obligations
  - 9. The impact of toxic stress on health and well-being
  - 10. Grief support
  - 11. Substance abuse awareness and approaches
  - 12. Active listening skills
  - 13. Stress management
  - 14. Psychological first aid
- B. The minimum training for a PST member is completion of a twenty-four (24) hour Basic Peer Support course.
- C. Additional Peer Support training can include:
  - 1. Advanced Peer Support Training
  - 2. Basic Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) course
  - 3. National Organization of Victim Assistance (NOVA) Basic Crisis Response Training
  - 4. Any additional training, as deemed necessary by the Program Administrator, or designee

**REFERENCES:**

Procedure: 1-2-005 Staff Attendance at Outside Training, Conferences or  
Professional Association Activities  
1-2-007 Probation Staff Chaplaincy Program  
1-4-003 Suicide Prevention  
1-4-107 Authorization to Carry Firearms  
1-4-110 Threats, Harm or Danger to Employees and Others  
1-4-128 Critical Incident Manager (CIM)

Policy: Department Values Statement & Code of Ethics

A-1 Policy Procedure and the Law  
A-2 Upholding Departmental Philosophy and Principles  
A-7 Employees as Departmental Representatives  
C-16 Employee Conduct – On Duty  
C-17 Employee Conduct – Off Duty – Law Violations  
C-19 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

C. Stiver

**APPROVED BY:**





**Monthly Statistics Report - Probation**

**Month:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Peer Supporter:** \_\_\_\_\_

	Identified Issues																															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Male (M)/Female (F)																																
Old (O)/New (N)																																
Approach (A)/Not Approach (NA)																																
Anxiety																																
Organizational Stress																																
Critical Incident																																
Depression																																
Family/Kids/Elders																																
Marital/Relationship																																
Medical/IOD																																
Retirement																																
Referrals																																
Substance Abuse																																
Other																																

**TOTAL HOURS OF CONTACT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group Debriefs/# of Participants:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYEE WELLNESS AND PEER SUPPORT  
PROGRAM CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**



Except as provided herein, I agree not to divulge any confidential personal information obtained in the course of my employment. I further agree that confidentiality regarding co-workers must be maintained indefinitely, even after my separation from the Orange County Probation Department ("PROBATION").

I recognize that my participation in the Probation Peer Support Team ("PST") is a privilege, not a right and that any future reassignment from PST not involving a demotion is not subject to grievance. I agree that any unauthorized release of confidential verbal or written information will be cause for my immediate termination from PST, and may also result in the imposition of discipline.

I understand that all of my communications with any Probation employee are not privileged communications under the Evidence Code and may be discovered in litigation.

I understand the **exceptions** to rights of confidentiality as mandated by our policy in the following instances:

1. The employee or a third party is a danger to themselves or others.
2. Information concerning the commission of a crime.
3. Disclosure has been compelled by a court of competent jurisdiction.

**I further understand and agree that I am required to disclose to the PST Administrator any information I receive indicating that an employee or a third party is a danger to themselves or others, as well as any information I receive concerning the commission of a crime.**

I agree to discuss any concerns or questions I may have about this Confidentiality Agreement with the PST Administrator.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the terms of this Confidentiality Agreement, and shall continue to do so after my separation from Probation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE SIGNED