

<b>HVERFORD TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL</b>		
<b>Issue Date</b> March 2023	<b>Review Date</b> March 2024	<b>Directive Number</b> 6.1.18
<b>Accreditation Index:</b>		<b>Rescinds:</b> none
<b>Section:</b> Six – General Procedures		<b>Chapter:</b> One – Organization and Management Role
<b>Chief of Police:</b> <i>John F. Viola</i>		

**SUBJECT: CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM)**

**I. PURPOSE**

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is designed to reduce stress in emergency personnel and to assist these personnel with recovery from significant stress encountered at work, in order to minimize the chance that they will develop or suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

**II. POLICY**

The policy of the Department shall be to afford all members access to adequate counseling after they were involved in a critical incident.

Law enforcement duties can often expose officers and support personnel to mentally painful and highly stressful situations that cannot be resolved through normal stress coping mechanisms. Unless adequately treated, these situations can cause disabling emotional and physical problems. This policy is intended to safeguard the continued good mental health of all personnel.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

**Critical Incident** – A powerful traumatic event that initiates a crisis response. These events are usually outside of the usual range of normal human experiences on the job or in one’s personal life, including but not limited to the following: a line of duty death, serious injury in the line of duty, suicide or sudden death of a co-worker, serious injury or death of a child, multi-casualty incident or disaster, officer involved shooting, knowledge of a victim in a traumatic event, events gathering excessive media interest, or any incident likely to produce a significant emotional response.

**Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)** – an approach designed to manage an officer’s stress resulting from a critical incident or traumatic events. The goal of the process is to alleviate the reactions to traumatic experiences by providing a format in which officers can discuss their reactions, emotions, and fears to such an incident and obtain referral for further care. CISM may be conducted on an individual, one-on-one basis or in a group setting. It is not a critique of the actions, performance, policies or strategies utilized at that incident by the involved officers or supervisors.

**Delaware County Fraternal Order of Police Foundation CISM** – a critical incident stress management program dedicated to the stress management, education and traumatic support needs of Delaware County Law Enforcement Community and their families. CISM is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. Services are provided by volunteer law enforcement peer support and mental health team members.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** – an anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to short term severe stress, or the long term build-up of repetitive and prolonged milder stress.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES**

- A. Any sworn or non-sworn personnel who have experienced stress resulting from critical incidents may initiate the services of Delaware County FOP Foundation CISM.
- B. The referral for CISM services may be made by oneself, or come from a supervisor, member of command staff, concerned co-worker, or any other employee who believes the personnel could benefit from CISM. CISM services can also be requested by and provided to family members of personnel.
- C. A co-worker or supervisor requesting CISM services for sworn or non-sworn personnel shall consult with Township of Haverford Police Department Command Staff before contacting Delaware County FOP Foundation CISM. The supervisor and command staff shall ensure the well-being of personnel referred is maintained until the personnel meet with CISM members.
- D. Delaware County FOP Foundation CISM is to be contacted by telephone at 484-588-8893. Delaware County FOP Foundation CISM is no longer dispatched through the 911 center.
- E. In the event Delaware County FOP Foundation CISM members are unavailable to respond, personnel referred to CISM shall meet with officer(s) designated by the Chief of Police who shall provide assistance until Delaware County FOP Foundation CISM members are available.

- F. Any personnel referred to CISM by Township of Haverford Police Department Command Staff shall meet with CISM personnel as ordered.
- G. Any personnel referred to CISM by Township of Haverford Police Department Command Staff shall have the right to refuse services by CISM members and be deemed to have carried out the order once they have met with CISM members and refused their services.

**BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE**