

GENERAL ORDER

April 2016

Immediately

II-35

Distribution: All Employees

Subject: **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Index as:	CARE Team	EAP
	Chaplain Program	Employee Assistance Program
	CISM Team	Employee Support Services
	Compassionate Assistance with Respect and Empathy Team	PEER Support Team
	ComPsych® Corporation	
	Critical Incident Stress Management Team	

Accreditation Standards: 22.1.4, 22.1.5, 22.1.7, 35.1.9, CFA 10.16

Cross Reference: G.O. II-42, Use of Force
 G.O. II-43, Lethal and Less-Lethal Weapons
 I.O.V.5:20, Employee Support Services
 §39.201, F.S.S., Mandatory reports of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect; mandatory reports of death; central abuse hotline
 §491.0147 Confidentiality and privileged communications

Replaces: G.O. II-35, Employee Assistance Program (April 28, 2016)

This Order consists of the following sections:

- I. Introduction
- II. Purpose
- III. Philosophy
- IV. Resources and Referrals
- V. Entering the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- VI. Confidentiality
- VII. Limits of Confidentiality
- VIII. Personnel Issues
- IX. EAP Notification Procedures
- X. Training

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The St. Petersburg Police Department and the City of St. Petersburg are committed to creating a safer environment and providing responsive police services through an aggressive, problem-solving partnership with the community. The Department recognizes that the ability to meet this commitment is integral to the depth of pride and commitment its employees bring to their jobs, and that the strength of the Department's employees lies in the support behind them.

B. The Department also recognizes that the health and well-being of its employees and their families are essential in creating an atmosphere within the Department that promotes communication, creativity and participation. The Department values its employees and encourages them to achieve their greatest potential.

C. The City of St. Petersburg provides an Employee Assistance Program to all employees through ComPsych® Corporation, herein referred to as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

1. The Employee Assistance Program is free and confidential.

2. The EAP does not report back to the City that a Department member or a family member has used the services. Except as detailed in this Order.

3. This service is part of the employee benefit package and is provided to assist Department members and their household with problems when they arise.

II. PURPOSE

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) was created to assist employees and their families in accessing resources and obtaining referral information for problems of a personal or professional nature. The primary purpose of the EAP is to assist employees who are experiencing problems of a continuous or persistent nature which, when left unresolved, may jeopardize an employee's psychological and/or physical well-being. The goal is to provide individuals with brief, solution-focused consultation, health maintenance education classes, preventive services, and referrals to psycho-social services and treatment.

III. PHILOSOPHY

A. The Department and the public have a significant interest in supporting the concept of confidentiality in the work of the EAP. Resolution of problems and effective treatment depend upon an atmosphere of confidence and trust; therefore, the mere possibility of disclosure of confidential communications may impede development of the relationship necessary for a successful conclusion.

B. Confidentiality within the EAP serves a public interest since the emotional health of employees of the St. Petersburg Police Department is no less important than their physical health in achieving our problem-solving partnership goals with the community.

IV. RESOURCES AND REFERRALS

A. The City of St Petersburg provides an Employee Assistance Program through ComPsych® Corporation (EAP) that is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week and can be reached at 1-888-327-5769 (TDD: 1-888-327-5769). Resource and referral information includes, but is not limited to:

1. Confidential Counseling

a. Call and talk. Quickly receive referral to in-person counseling and other resources for:

- 1) Stress, Anxiety and Depression
- 2) Relationship Conflicts
- 3) Job Pressures
- 4) Grief and Loss
- 5) Substance Abuse

2. Financial Information and Resources

a) Speak with Certified Public Accounts and Certified Financial Planners on a wide range of financial issues.

3. Legal Support & Resources

- a) Talk to an attorney.
- b) Referral to an attorney for a free 30-minute consultation with future service at a reduced rate.

4. Work-Life Solutions

- a) Need help with your "to do" list.
- b) Receive referrals and customized resources to help you.

5. Wellness

a) Make positive lifestyle changes. This program includes access to health coaches.

6. GuidanceResources® Online
 - a. Provides expert information on issues that matter to you.
 - 1) HelpSheets SM
 - 2) "Ask the Expert"

B. Contract Psychologist

1. See Attachment A

C. Department Employee Support Services include:

- a. Compassionate Assistance with Respect and Empathy (CARE) Team
- b. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team
- c. PEER Support Team
- d. Police Chaplain Program.

V. ENTERING THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

A. Entry into the program can occur at one of three levels: voluntary, informal or formal referral.

1. Voluntary Referral to the EAP occurs when an employee self-refers or otherwise initiates the contact with the EAP. An employee who voluntarily enters the EAP may discontinue participation at any time.

2. Informal Referral occurs when a supervisor makes a referral to the EAP after observing, or otherwise detecting, there are personal or professional issues affecting an employee's work performance or demeanor, but which do not give rise to formal disciplinary action. Informal supervisory referral to the EAP provides the employee with potential resources and information for problem resolution. An employee may refuse an informal referral to the EAP or may elect at any time to discontinue participation resulting from an informal referral.

3. Formal Referral occurs when an employee's participation in the EAP is mandated as an alternative to, or in conjunction with, disciplinary action. Formal referral may be made in instances where the underlying facts suggest the employee is at significant psychological or physical risk and referral is necessary prior to any disciplinary process. This determination will be made by the employee's Bureau Commander. Formal referrals shall be deemed a condition of employment.

VI. CONFIDENTIALITY

A. Voluntary or Informal Referral

1. The communication(s) between the EAP and the employee is deemed confidential upon entry into the EAP at the voluntary or informal referral levels.

2. Although communication(s) with the EAP may be confidential, this confidentiality may be superseded by a court order.

3. The Department will not request or require the EAP to furnish information which results from participation in the EAP at the voluntary or informal referral levels.

4. Voluntary or informal participation shall not preclude prosecution or disciplinary action which may result from an independent investigation or complaint.

B. Formal Referral

1. Employees entering the EAP through a formal referral shall sign a J:\Forms\EAP_Employee_Support_Services\Waiver_of_Confidentiality_Release_of_Information_11022015.pdf. The *Waiver/Release* will allow communication between the EAP and the Chief of Police, or designee, in order to report on the employee's compliance, progress and participation in any EAP services.

2. Where the formal referral is made as part of a disciplinary action, the *Waiver/Release* shall also address those facts and circumstances which concern the employee's compliance with the terms of the discipline administered.
3. In the case of a formal referral, the only information released to the Chief of Police, or designee is:
 - a. The employee's ability to perform their job, and/or
 - b. The employee's compliance with the recommendation(s) of the EAP.

VII. LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY

A. The limits of confidentiality are as follows:

1. When there is a stated danger to themselves or others;
2. When disclosure is required by law, or
3. When the client signs a *Waiver/Release* allowing for confidential information to be disclosed (§491.0147, FSS).
4. The release of confidential information may be disclosed in the event of mandatory reporting of any child or elder abuse, abandonment, or neglect (§39.201, FSS).

B. The Department will not initiate an investigation or complaint based solely upon an employee's request for assistance, nor will the Department violate the confidentiality of the EAP, unless the request for assistance constitutes a communication specified in this Order.

VIII. PERSONNEL ISSUES

A. The EAP is supportive in nature; therefore, informal referrals to the program represent a genuine effort to assist employees with personal or professional issues that are negatively impacting their lives. Such referral is not disciplinary and shall not be referenced in an employee's permanent record.

B. An employee has the right to refuse informal referral to the EAP. In the event a referral is refused, such refusal shall not be used against the employee and shall not be referenced, in any manner, in the employee's personnel files.

C. To the extent that an informal EAP referral is offered to remedy job performance issues, the underlying issues may still be documented and used during the employee's job performance evaluation, regardless of the employee's participation in the EAP.

IX. EAP NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

A. In those instances when the EAP must contact the employee's Chain of Command, the EAP will deal directly with the Chief of Police, or designee.

B. The Chief of Police, or designee, will make those notifications necessary for operational purposes, while maintaining the maximum amount of confidentiality.

X. TRAINING

A. Mental Health Awareness Training

1. Annually, all personnel will receive documented educational training related to mental health awareness, prevention, mitigation, and treatment to include Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

2. All new employees shall receive documented educational training related to mental health awareness, prevention, mitigation, and treatment to include Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as a part of their pre-Academy training, or during initial orientation of new civilian employees.

B. EAP Referral Training

1. Training regarding the Employee Assistance Program and EAP referral procedures will be provided to employees upon their promotion to a supervisory position. This training will normally be done in conjunction with the scheduled block of New Supervisor Training.

2. All new employees shall receive information about the Employee Assistance Program as a part of their pre-Academy training, or during initial orientation of new civilian employees.

3. Personnel, who provide services such as Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), Peer Support, or Compassionate Assistance with Respect and Empathy (CARE) Team, shall receive training commensurate with their responsibilities.

Anthony Holloway
Chief of Police