


| Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Internal Management Policies and Procedures (IMPP) | | |
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|  | TITLE | IMPP |
| | Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) | 6.2 |
| | | EFFECTIVE DATE 08/13/2024 |
| | APPLICABILITY ALL MEMBERS | RESCINDS/AMENDS 05/05/2016 |
| REFERENCES: AUTHORITY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | | |
| IMPP OWNER: DIVISION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT | | |

1 POLICY

- A. This Internal Management Policies and Procedures (IMPP) outlines the FWC's response to employees who, as a result of responding to or becoming involved in a critical incident in their professional or personal lives, may be in need of peer support or access to mental health services. Public service can often be emotionally demanding and difficult, and employees may experience stress and related emotional difficulties. Some emotional reactions may have a negative impact on personnel performance, and in extreme instances, may present a danger to the welfare and safety of employees, their families or the public. Therefore, it is FWC's policy to provide all Commission employees and their family members access to peer support and/or mental health services.
- B. The agency establishes Regional [Critical Incident Stress Management \(CISM\) teams](#) that provide access to emotional and psychological support to employees. This support and assistance extends to family members when appropriate. Assistance may be accomplished through a broad range of crisis services that include, but are not limited to:
1. Pre-deployment education, preparation, planning and policy development
 2. Assessment of the situation and the reactions of personnel
 3. Strategic crisis response planning
 4. Large group interventions (Rest, Information, and Transition Services and Crisis Management Briefings)
 5. Small group interventions (defusing, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing)
 6. Individual (one-on-one peer) support services
 7. Family support services
 8. Follow-up services
 9. Referral, when necessary, to professional assistance programs and/or providers
 10. Post-incident education

- C.** CISM is intended to provide support and assistance during and in the immediate aftermath of critical incidents. CISM has clearly defined notification and initiation procedures, a structured response and post-incident conclusion process. CISM is not intended to provide long-term counseling or other mental health support and is not a substitute for psychotherapy. Employees or their family members in need of additional assistance shall contact Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and/or their primary medical care provider.

D. Confidentiality

- 1.** Confidentiality is the hallmark of the CISM Team Program. Any statements made by employees or their family members to CISM Team Members in group and individual interventions will be confidential with the following exceptions:
 - a.** If the individual poses a danger to themselves or others; or
 - b.** If the individual has or intends to commit a criminal act; or
 - c.** If the employee has violated a Commission policy that requires mandatory reporting such as Sexual Harassment or involves 'major misconduct' as defined in IMPP 1.8.
- 2.** Failure by any CISM Team Member to maintain confidentiality as required will result in immediate removal from the Team and/or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in accordance with IMPP 6.1 Standards of Disciplinary Actions for Misconduct.
- 3.** Employees who have been involved in a violation of law or their oath of office shall not rely upon nor expect peer counseling to serve as a means of relieving or diminishing their real or perceived responsibility. Exceptions to the confidentiality rule will be clearly stated to the participants prior to the beginning of any CISM process.
- 4.** CISM Team Members having knowledge of one of the exceptions will immediately contact the appropriate Regional Commander or Section Leader, who will notify the appropriate Division Director or designee.
- 5.** It is FWC policy to respect the confidentiality of the CISM processes. The agency will not question the individual(s) involved or CISM Team Members regarding the facts surrounding a critical incident debriefing, defusing, or the individual(s) involved, or referrals made to a mental health provider.

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6.2.1 DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident – Any situation that causes employees to experience unusually strong emotional reactions that could interfere with their ability to function.

Family members – For purposes of this IMPP, family members include, but are not limited to, spouse, fiancé, life partner, parents (including step or foster parents), children or anybody so designated by the employee.

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing – A confidential group discussion including individuals involved in a critical incident and members of the CISM Team. The primary purpose of the debriefing is to mitigate the impact of the critical incident. A debriefing is not an operational critique. Debriefings are usually conducted two to three days after an incident has occurred and serve to assist CISM Team Members in providing care, understanding and educational support to affected individuals.

Defusing – A shortened, less formal, version of a debriefing, but more immediate in its application. An individual or group meeting between CISM Team Members and individuals involved in a critical incident, which is conducted shortly after an incident. The purpose of a defusing is to provide immediate support and intervention.

One-on-One Peer Support – A confidential discussion between a member and a peer support member in matters relating to CISM. Under certain circumstances, peer support may be provided by fellow commission employees who are not Team Members.

Restoration of Adaptive Function – A primary goal of CISM. Adaptive function means that personnel have adjusted to and processed the critical incident and have returned to normal function in their personal and professional lives quickly as possible within the context of the event.

Peer Support Member – A member of a CISM team who has received the appropriate approved training.

Mental Health Professional – A person trained and licensed to provide mental health counseling and treatment services. Mental Health Professionals can be reached by contacting the State of Florida's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 1-800-860-2058.

Statewide CISM Team Coordinator – The individual designated by the Director of the Division of Law Enforcement to coordinate the Regional CISM Teams and has the responsibility of establishing training protocols, selection of CISM Team Members and holding regular meetings.

Assistant Statewide CISM Team Coordinator – The Assistant Statewide CISM Team Coordinator shall be a CISM Team Member, and shall be selected by , the Statewide CISM Team Coordinator and Division of Law Enforcement Director or designee. The Assistant Statewide CISM Team Coordinator shall assist the Statewide CISM Team Coordinator and assume the duties and responsibilities of the Statewide CISM Team Coordinator in their absence.

CISM Team Leaders – CISM Team Leaders work under the authority of the Statewide CISM Team Coordinator and direct the activities of members assigned to their team. A CISM Team Leader may serve as the Statewide CISM Team Coordinator during both the coordinator's and Assistant Statewide CISM Team Coordinator's absence.

CISM Team Members – CISM Team Members assist individuals exhibiting signs of emotional distress as a result of their involvement in critical incidents. CISM Team Members may be assigned to assist an Incident Commander with stress management.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – The State of Florida's Employee Assistance Program is a free employee benefit program intended to help state employees and their household members manage issues that might adversely affect their work performance, health and well-being. EAP counselors typically provide assessment, support and, if needed, referrals to additional resources. More information on Florida's EAP can be found on the program website at <https://www.mylifeexpert.com/> or by calling 1-833-746-8337 Code Word - Florida. EAP has Critical Incident Stress Debriefers and other resources available to respond as requested.

Incident Commander – The individual responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and the release of resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site.

6.2.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Regional Commanders are responsible for establishing a CISM Team in their Region in coordination with the Statewide CISM Team Coordinator. Tallahassee Headquarters is included in the Northwest Region.

B. Statewide CISM Team Coordinator

1. The Statewide CISM Team Coordinator has the responsibility for coordinating team functions and providing any necessary support to the Regional CISM Teams.
2. The Statewide CISM Team Coordinator is also responsible for developing and maintaining a selection process for Commission employees wishing to serve on a Regional CISM Team.
3. The Statewide CISM Team Coordinator is responsible for organizing appropriate training providers and programs and ensuring the appropriate training is attended by all Regional CISM Team Members.

C. CISM Team Leaders

1. CISM Team Leaders are required to be a team member and attend and successfully complete training as outlined in the CISM Team Manual.
2. CISM Team Leaders are required to follow incident response procedures as outlined in the CISM Team Manual.
3. CISM Team Leaders are required to maintain confidentiality as outlined in the CISM Team Manual.

D. CISM Team Members

1. CISM Team Members are required to attend and successfully complete training as outlined in the CISM Team Manual.
2. CISM Team Members are required to follow incident response procedures as outlined in the CISM Team Manual.
3. CISM Team Members are required to maintain confidentiality as outlined in the CISM Team Manual.

Team Members do not use Defusings and Critical Incident Stress Debriefings to critique an incident.

All CISM Team Members, including the Statewide Team Coordinator and Team Leaders, are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the Critical Incident Stress Management processes. A breach of confidentiality (with the exceptions noted in the Policy Section above) will result in dismissal from the team and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in accordance with IMPP 6.1 Standards of Disciplinary Actions for Misconduct.

6.2.3 PROCEDURES

A Commission employees interested in participating on a CISM Team shall notify the appropriate Regional Commander, Section Leader, or the Statewide CISM Team Coordinator of their interest in becoming a team member. Upon meeting the minimum selection criteria, and when team vacancies exist, potential team members shall be recommended for selection to the respective team's Regional Commander or Section Leader. The Regional Commander and/or Section Leader shall have final approval for selection of regional team members.

B CISM Team Qualifications

1. Potential CISM team members must meet the following criteria:
 - a. Previous experience in law enforcement, corrections, or telecommunications operations and/or have received training in crisis intervention and/or be a member in good standing;
 - b. Strong communication skills, including the ability to be empathetic;
 - c. Ability to successfully complete team training requirements, including stress-related intervention, and
 - d. Must have the ability to properly handle people during stressful situations.
2. CISM team members are expected to consistently perform above average during normal work duties and should be recognized as positive informal leaders. Working just at, near, or below expectations for normal work duties, or failure to meet the conditions above are grounds to be removed from a team or to not be accepted on a team.

C Recruitment and Selection

1. Participants may be recruited for the following positions:
 - a. Team Leader
 - b. Team Member
2. Recruitment Process
 - a. If the applicant meets the minimum qualifications, they may be interviewed and assessed for team suitability, which may include an interview with existing team members.

D Training

1. New CISM Team Members must complete the training listed below prior to participation in and/or conducting interventions.
 - a. "Individual Crisis Intervention and Peer Support" class recognized by International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF)
 - b. "CISM: Group Crisis Intervention" class recognized by ICISF

2. CISM Team Members shall attend additional training as outlined in the CISM Team Manual.

- a. "Advanced Group Crisis Intervention" class recognized by ICISF
- b. "Suicide Prevention Intervention and Postvention" recognized by ICISF
- c. FEMA ICS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System
- d. FEMA IS-200.B: ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents

3. CISM Team Activation and Deployment

- a. A CISM team may be activated upon request from Local, State, and Federal agencies, or from within a Division. The affected Regional Commander may authorize team deployments depending upon request.
- b. The Division of Law Enforcement Director or designee can also activate CISM Teams as needed to respond to unusual occurrences or critical incidents in consultation with the affected Regional Commander(s).
- c. The decision to activate CISM Teams depends on the specifics of the request, the CISM Team capabilities for responding to the request, and consideration of other law enforcement resources and responsibilities available for responding to the request.

4. The Statewide CISM Team Coordinator or the Regional CISM Team Leaders shall be notified of, and the CISM Teams may be activated for incidents including, but not limited to, those listed below:

- a. Death or serious injury occurs to an on-duty employee;
- b. Death or serious injury occurs to another person through the action of an employee (whether on-duty or off-duty);
- c. An employee becomes involved in any shooting (whether on duty or off duty);
- d. Casualties have resulted from any incident;
- e. Other law enforcement agencies request CISM assistance; or
- f. Any incident, not listed above, that causes unusual distress to employees.

E CISM Team Operating Procedures

1. Refer to the CISM Team Manual for additional information.

Requests for the activation of a CISM Team are made directly to the appropriate regional CISM Team Leader or the Statewide CISM Team Coordinator (if the regional CISM Team Leader is unavailable). Team response is determined by the regional CISM Team Leader or Statewide CISM Team Coordinator in consultation with the affected Regional Commander or Section Leader.

3 FORMS

The CISM Manual can be found on the FWC Intranet SharePoint under the Employee Assistance tile.

| FORM NUMBER | FORM TITLE |
|-------------|------------|
| None | None |
| None | None |

Approved: Roger A. Young
Roger A. Young, Executive Director or Designee

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