

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Standard Operating Procedures

Functional Area: Support Services/Personnel	Reference Number: IVO01-0007	Revises Previous Effective Date: 12/1/1
Subject: Critical Incident Debriefing		
Authority: Ryan	Effective Date: 2/01/03	Page 1 of 6

I. POLICY:

Appropriate and timely support services known as "Critical Incident Debriefings" (CID) will be provided as needed to encourage emotional recovery and stability to any employee who has been involved in a traumatic event (while on or off the job) that adversely impacts his/her ability to work effectively or efficiently.

II. APPLICABILITY:

All employees of the Department of Corrections (GDC) and Georgia Correctional Industries (GCI) and their household/family members. These services are also available to the employees of the Georgia county-correctional/adult facilities.

Staff employed by organizations other than GDC who are regularly assigned to work in a GDC facility may use the services on a very limited basis after receiving approval from the GDC Human Resources management through their employer.

NOTE: Use of these services by any correctional-employee of a County facility or any employee of any other organization does not infer or impose any other employment rights, obligations or employer-relationship with GDC.

III. RELATED DIRECTIVES:

GDC Board Rules	125-2-1-.01(d).	General Information
GDC-SOPS	IVO01-0005	Bulletin Boards
	IVO01-0006	Employee Support Services
	IVO08-0001	Working Hours, Overtime and Compensatory Time (FLSA)

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IVO08-0002

Time Keeping Requirements
(FLSA)

IV: DEFINITIONS:

Critical Incident: Any traumatic event that affects a staff member in such a way that it may interfere with his/her performance of job duties.

Critical Incident Debriefing: A process to assist the survivor of a traumatic event in understanding the individual effects of trauma on the survivor and to help in the healing process of recovery. It may include co-workers and families of the survivor who may also be affected, though not directly involved.

Supportive Services: Referral to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Contact Consultants and/or community resources to assist in recovery beyond the process that begins in the debriefing.

V. ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1- Employee Support Services - Official Policy Statement

Attachment 2- Report for Employee Support Services Form

VI. PROCEDURE:

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A. CID Program

1. The Central Personnel Administration (CPA) Employee Support Services Unit is responsible for providing training, trauma recovery services and other/related critical incident debriefing services for GDC employees. The Statewide CID Coordinator will assist in establishing the local debriefing teams.
2. Full-time, part-time and contract employees will receive CID Program information (included in the standard orientation package) at the assigned work site.
3. A copy of the Employee Support Services Official Policy Statement (Attachment 1) will be posted on the official bulletin board in all facilities, Centers, Units and offices operating under the GDC jurisdiction.

B. CID Teams

1. The Appointing Authority of each facility/center/site and region will select at least two, but no more than ten employees for the local CID team. One employee should be a peer counselor if possible.
2. One team member must have had formal counseling training (Chaplains or Counselors are recommended).
3. All coordinators will be required to attend the Basic CID training during their first year as coordinator. Coordinators are also required to attend Advanced CID training each time it is offered.
4. Vacant coordinator or team member positions should be filled immediately by the Appointing Authority. Written or e-mail notice must be sent to the Statewide CID Coordinator, as members change.
5. The name of each designated representative should be reviewed/verified yearly; and confirmation of all team members must be sent to the Statewide CID Coordinator.

C. Critical Incident Debriefings

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1. It is the responsibility of the Appointing Authority to insure that employees involved in critical incidents are referred to an appropriate debriefing team and confirm that the Region office and CPA Employee Support Services Unit staff members are appropriately notified.
2. Debriefing sessions must be conducted for all personnel involved in one of the designated types of events where the employee(s):
 - a. Experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event(s) that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others; and/or
 - b. The response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror. (Definition of "Acute Stress Disorder" is taken from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-Fourth Edition);
 - c. Seriously injured due to assault or shooting;
 - d. Taken hostage or involved in a riot or disturbance.
3. Employees involved in any of the following events should be considered for debriefing:
 - a. Involved in a potential HIV, hepatitis, tuberculosis or other communicable disease exposure;
 - b. Involved in or witness to the death, homicide, suicide, or attempted suicide or homicide of an inmate or staff member;
 - c. Involved in or witness to the execution of an inmate or in daily contact with the inmates on death row before an execution; and
 - d. Other incidents or events acknowledged by the Appointing Authority to have a potential for Acute Stress or Post-incident Trauma in or out of the work place (vehicular wrecks, violent deaths, fires and natural disasters, etc.)

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4. All CID debriefings will be deemed "Confidential" and not a part of any adverse action investigation of the event. The appointing Authority will insure that no adverse action will be taken, no penalty will be assessed, nor will comments be entered on a Personnel Management Form (PMF) of any employee based upon information obtained directly from a debriefing session.
5. The initial debriefing session should occur as soon as possible, but no later than seven days following the event. The Appointing Authority will insure that the employees and the debriefing team members are allowed sufficient flexibility in scheduling to accomplish the initial session within the seven days. Follow-up sessions may occur within sixty days of the event, if the debriefing team believes it to be necessary.
6. The critical incident debriefing will take priority over routine work assignments, whenever possible for the affected employee and the debriefing team members. Debriefing sessions will occur during normal work hours and will count as work time for FLSA purposes.
7. When the debriefing process is completed, the team leader will "verbally" report to the Appointing Authority. The report will only consist of the names of the employees in attendance at the debriefing. No other information regarding the debriefing session is required to be divulged unless safety or security issues are involved. Other material will be presented to the Appointing Authority only when permission is given by the employee(s) for the release of such information.
 - a. In rare cases, the debriefing team may determine that the affected employee is not ready to perform his/her duties and that it would be a danger to him/herself, and possibly to others, if the employee returned to work. This assessment will be reported verbally to the Appointing Authority.

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b. The Appointing Authority will take this information into account to further assess an employee's "fitness " to return to duty.

8. If the debriefing team believes that an employee needs more in-depth or extended assistance, the employee will be referred to sources qualified to provide such assistance. Each team will be knowledgeable of local resources where employees can be referred. The CID Team will assist in maintaining resource lists. The local Employee Assistance Coordinator or CPA Employee Support Services may be contacted if assistance is needed in identifying additional referral services.

9. The Appointing Authority (in collaboration with the local CID Team and the Statewide CID Coordinator) may request the services of a neighboring debriefing team. Given the nature or severity of the incident and the employees involved, the Statewide CID Coordinator may provide services directly.

D. Employee Work Status

Employees may be eligible for appropriate leave or worker's compensation benefits if they are directly involved in an incident at work. Each issue should be handled on a "case-by-case" basis, via the local Personnel Office, for a determination of eligibility.

E. Reporting and Documenting

The Report for Employee Support Services form (Attachment 2) must be completed by the local Coordinator and sent to CPA, Employee Support Services within one week following any Critical Incident Debriefing.

VII. RECORD RETENTION:

Attachment 1- EMPLOYEE SUPPORT SERVICES-OFFICIAL POLICY STATEMENT

Permanently post on the "Official" Bulletin Board.

Attachment 2- REPORT FOR EMPLOYEE SUPPORT SERVICES Form

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Retained by CPA Employee Support Services for one calendar year.