

	<b>Houston Independent School District Police Department Directives</b>	<b>DIRECTIVE: 420-009</b>
		<b>EFFECTIVE DATE: September 5, 2021</b>
	<b>SUBJECT: Family Assistance/Post Critical Incident Trauma</b>	<b>REVISED DATE: January 14, 2022</b>

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this directive is to provide department procedures for assistance to officers who are injured in the line of duty and to the families of HISD Police Department Personnel. This directive applies to all Houston Independent School District Police Department Personnel.

## **POLICY**

The Houston ISD Police Department is concerned about the well-being of all of its employees. Any officer, whether on or off duty which causes death, serious injury to another, suffers a serious injury, or any other circumstance, as determined by the Chief of Police, is subject to the procedures of this policy.

The Houston Independent School District Police Department shall provide liaison assistance to the immediate family of department personnel who has been seriously injured in the line of duty, have become seriously ill, or have died. Designated members of the Family Assistance Unit and volunteers will provide tangible and emotional support during the traumatic period of adjustment for the family.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES-FAMILY ASSISTANCE UNIT**

When an employee of the HISD Police Department dies or is seriously injured or ill, members of the Family Assistance Unit may offer to:

- a) Notify the families in person, whenever possible, promptly and in a considerate manner. Whenever possible, assistance should be obtained from the clergy or a relative or close friend;
- b) Assist the family at the hospital if needed,
- c) Help the family with legal and benefits matters,
- d) Support the family during the suspect's criminal proceedings (if any).

## **PROCEDURE**

This section establishes the format by which the department will assist employees and their families who may be affected by post-critical incident trauma. This assistance is also provided under the HISD Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and is given to aid and support the employee and their family to remain productive members of the department.

The employee involved in the incident connected to the serious injury or death of another will, when possible, give an account of the incident to the shift supervisor so

that appropriate notifications are made. The involved employee will not be permitted to be interviewed by the media. The employee involved will be required to take an immediate drug and alcohol test.

The employee involved in a serious injury or death of another person should, when practical and in the company of another employee, be moved away from the scene to await the arrival of investigators. The role of the companion is to provide support for the person involved. If more than one person is involved, they should be separated, and each has the company of a fellow employee.

As soon as practical after the critical incident, the involved employee may communicate with the family. If the affected employee requires immediate professional counseling assistance following the critical incident, the supervisor will ensure that those contracted to provide professional services for department members are notified.

Following any critical incident, there may be other employees adversely affected, i.e., Telecommunicators, who may be emotionally affected by the incident, although not directly involved. All department supervisors will be aware of this and monitor their employees' emotional conditions.

No later than 24 hours after a critical incident has occurred, the employee involved may be ordered to meet with a psychologist or other mental health professional. This meeting will be provided at no expense to the employee.

After administrative review and determining that the employee is fit for duty and no criminal violation or policy violation exists, the Chief of Police may return the employee to full duty.

## **GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS FOR SPECIAL DUTY ASSIGNMENT**

An officer involved in a critical incident will be placed on a special duty assignment for a minimum of three days. Should it be determined it is in the best interests of the officer or the department, the Chief of Police may order the officer relieved of all police duties.

In cases where an officer discharges his firearm, and the discharge does not cause death or serious injury, the officer's captain may grant special duty status as soon as possible. Special duty status will be granted if it is in the best interests of the officer or the department.

If the officer's special duty status is to be relieved of all duty, the officer will remain at their residence during regular dayshift duty hours and be available by public service. During those hours, the officer may leave the residence only with the approval of the division commander for any of the following circumstances:

- a) The officer is involved in an investigation related to the incident.

- b) The officer has a counseling session with the Psychological Services Unit.
- c) The officer has an informational debriefing with in-service training personnel for future training purposes.
- d) There are special family considerations.

### **SPECIAL DUTY**

When an officer is assigned to Special duty status, the officer will not work any extra employment jobs during the entire period of the special duty status.

Approved By   
Pedro Lopez Jr., Chief of Police