

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

For use within the Police Officers Standards and Training Council (POSTC), Connecticut Department of Correction (CTDOC) and the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control (CFPC)

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MODEL CRITICAL INCIDENT AND PEER SUPPORT OVERVIEW

Effective Date: **April 28, 2020**

General:

Based on Public Act 19-17, "An Act concerning worker's compensation benefits for certain mental or emotional impairments, mental health care for police officer and wellness training for police officers, parole officers and firefighters". The following overview has been created as a guide for agencies and qualified persons who are covered by this act.

Definitions:

CTDOC. Connecticut Department of Correction.

CFPC. Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, A Division of Emergency Services and Public Protection.

DAS. Department of Administrative Services Office of the State Fire Marshal.

DHMAS. Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Affected Person. Any first responder who is not covered as a qualified individual based on this bill who responds to a qualifying event and renders care and aid to those effected by the event.

POSTC. Police Officers Standards and Training Council, A Division of Emergency Services and Public Protection.

PTSD. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Qualifying Event. An event occurring in the line of duty on or after July 1st, 2019 in which a police officer, parole officer or firefighter encounters any of the following:

- Views a deceased minor;
- Witnesses the death of a person or an incident involving the death of a person;
- Witnesses an injury to a person who subsequently dies before or upon admission at a hospital as a result of the injury and not as a result of any other intervening cause;
- Has physical contact with and treats an injured person who subsequently dies before or upon admission at a hospital as a result of the injury and not as a result of any other intervening cause;
- Carries an injured person who subsequently dies before or upon admission at a hospital as a result of the injury and not as a result of any other intervening cause; or

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- Witnesses a traumatic physical injury that results in the loss of a vital body part or a vital body function that results in permanent disfigurement of the victim.

Qualified Individuals. Any person who is employed as a firefighter, police officer or parole officer. Police officers who are members of the law enforcement unit of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe or the Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut do not qualify.

Pre-Employment: CTDOC, CFPC and POSTC in consultation with DMHAS shall create curriculum for resilience and self-care techniques to be presented at pre-service. If feasible, each department or agency shall provide in service training to current employees using the same curriculum.

Procedure: As soon as it is evident that a qualified individual has been exposed to a qualifying event, the supervisor shall ensure Critical Incident and Peer Support specific to that agency are made available to the employee. A supervisor may offer Critical Incident and Peer Support when available to all affected persons who are present during a qualifying event.

After a qualifying event, a qualified individual may seek a referral for mental health care services to a mental health professional such as a certified psychiatrist or licensed psychologist.

Each department or agency covered under CTDOC, CFPC and POSTC shall assist any qualified individual in finding a certified psychiatrist or licensed psychologist. The Connecticut Workers' Compensation Chairman List of Board-Certified Psychiatrist and Licensed Psychologist provided with this overview may be used by employers to give to qualifying individuals.

If the qualifying individual is treated by a certified psychiatrist or licensed psychologist that is approved by the chairperson of the Workers' Compensation Commission and suffers from PTSD based on the qualifying event, that individual shall follow their department or agency's policies of reporting. No agency shall discharge, discipline, discriminate against the employee based on the findings, and all qualifying individuals shall be eligible for workers' compensation in accordance with Public Act 19-17.

Exceptions/Forms: CTDOC, CFPC and POSTC shall offer peer support and create policy based on the specific needs of any department that falls under their jurisdiction. If they do not have a policy or guide in place, each agency shall see Attachment A, *Model Critical Incident & Peer Support Template* to ensure all steps are taken to assist an affected individual.