

CITY OF APPLETON POLICY		TITLE: CISD – Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (non-public safety)
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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the City of Appleton provides the necessary resources and support to employees who have had to respond to emergency situations. The prevention and effective management of post-emergency situations and critical incidents can assist to minimize the negative impact of an unexpected event.

II. POLICY

Emergencies and critical incidents in the workplace can affect people physically and psychologically. It is the policy of the City of Appleton to provide necessary assistance to our employees when there is a likelihood that they could become personally distressed under extraordinary circumstances.

III. DISCUSSION/PROCEDURES

a. Examples of extraordinary circumstances covered by this policy:

1. A serious injury or unexpected death of a co-worker.
2. A serious injury or death of a civilian resulting from City operations.
3. Loss of life following extraordinary or prolonged expenditure of physical or emotional energy.
4. A case involving a departmental employee, that attracts an unusual amount of attention from the news media.
5. An incident that can be considered a serious physical or psychological threat to the personnel involved.
6. An incident that exposes personnel to graphic or unsettling duties.

b. Signs, symptoms or characteristics of psychological distress may include:

1. Being unable to talk about the event and the feelings associated with it.
2. Feeling detached and withdrawn and keeping emotional distance from family and friends.
3. Avoiding activities that are reminders of the incident.
4. Experiencing recurring and intruding memories, feelings or dreams about the incident.
5. Feeling preoccupied and experiencing impaired memory and concentration that results in difficulty completing tasks.
6. Difficulty sleeping, feeling hyper, alert, startling easily, headaches, nausea, fatigue, diarrhea and appetite changes.
7. Increased use and/or abuse of alcohol, medications or other drugs.

c. Supervisory Response to Critical Incidents/Circumstances:

1. Intervention should generally occur within 48-72 hours after the incident.
2. The Department Director or designee may initiate this process by contacting Employee Resource Center at 920-993-2000.
3. Debriefing may include individual and group counseling, the type of counseling will be at the discretion of the Employee Resource Center staff. The aim of these sessions is to:
 - a. Decrease feelings of isolation
 - b. Provide people affected by the incident with a facilitated session to assist them to normalize their thoughts and feelings. Groups assist people to identify and express their thoughts and feelings.
 - c. Provide an opportunity to identify internal and external resources.
4. To ensure the safety of employees there may be times when a Department Director may require attendance at Employee Resource Center. A mandatory referral shall also require prior approval of the Human Resources Director and the City Attorney.
5. In extreme cases, the City of Appleton may elect to involve additional professional assistance for employees.