

**JEFFERSON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #1
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES**

SOG 606

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS DEBRIEFING (CISD)

I. PURPOSE

- A. To establish an organized and professional intervention immediately after the occurrence of a critical incident.

II. SCOPE

- A. The goal so to provide immediate intervention for a critical incident or cumulative stress reaction. The main focus of this service is to assist the affected personnel in returning to their normal level of performance by minimizing the harmful effects of job stress, particularly in critical emergency operations.

III. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

- A. It will be the responsibility of the Chief and the officers to insure that these guidelines are followed.

IV. STANDARDS

- A. A Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) shall be initiated when a specific incident is identified as a critical stress-related incident. Such incidents may include, but are not limited to the following
 1. Serious injury or death of emergency workers in the line of duty
 2. Mass casualty incidents
 3. Suicide of co-worker
 4. Death of a child or violence to a child
 5. Loss of life of a patient following extraordinary and prolonged expenditure of physical and emotional energy during rescue efforts
 6. Incidents that attract extremely unusual and critical news media coverage
 7. Any incidents that is charged with profound emotions
 8. Any incident in which the circumstances were so unusual or the sights and sounds so distressing as to produce a high level of immediate or delayed emotional reaction
- B. Responsibilities
 1. CISD Team will provide an organized approach to the management of stress responses for firefighters having been exposed to, or showing signs, of traumatic stress experienced in the line of duty.
 2. Fire District personnel shall be alert to recognize and promptly report any incident or changes in behavior which may affect personnel.
 3. Company Officers shall be responsible for immediately reporting any event, situation, or behavior which may require a Critical Incident Debriefing to the

Chief.

4. Region 7 CISD Team - 1-800-621-5433

C. Types of Debriefing

1. On scene or near scene debriefing
 - a. On site evaluation and the counseling by another member. Watch for acute reactions, provide support, and consultation, and be available to help resting personnel deal with stress reactions.
 - b. Initial defusing shall be conducted shortly after the incident. Purpose is primarily informational. If needed, a more intense debriefing shall be organized.
2. Formal debriefing
 - a. Conducted within 24 to 48 hours of the incident.
 - b. Confidential non-evaluative discussion of involvement. Discussion of possible stress-related symptoms.
3. Follow-up debriefing
 - a. Conducted weeks or months after the incident.
 - b. Concerned with delaying or prolonged stress symptoms.
4. Individual consults
 - a. One to one counseling for any concerns related to the incident. Requires a referral to a mental health professional.

D. Debriefing Process

1. Emergency service personnel are responsible for identifying and recognizing significant incidents that may require debriefing. When an occurrence is identified as a “critical incident”, a request for debriefing should be made as soon as possible.
2. Debriefings are optimally conducted within 24-72 hours of the incident, and should not generally extend beyond one week. A 24 hour normalizing period following the incident is recommended. If large numbers of individuals are involved, debriefing begins with those most involved with the incident.
3. Process considerations
 - a. A location should be selected for the debriefing that is free of distractions and represents a neutral environment, i.e. school, church or other meeting facility as opposed to a fire station.
 - b. All emergency personnel involved in the incident should be invited to the debriefing and encouraged to attend. This includes, but is not limited to, fire, law enforcement, dispatch, and EMS personnel.

APPROVED:

DATE 1-12-2005

Earl Cordes
Fire Chief