



**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
PROBATION AND PAROLE DIVISION
OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE**

Procedure:	PPD 1.3.3600 CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE	
Effective Date:	05/24/2021	Page 1 of 4
Revisions Date(s):		
Reference(s):	PPD 1.1.600 RD ; DOC 1.3.36; 39-74-105, MCA	
Signature / Title:	/s/ Katie Donath, Acting Probation and Parole Division Administrator	

I. PURPOSE:

The Probation and Parole Division will follow established procedures when responding to an employee exposed to a job-related critical incident or stressful event that may require intervention, assessment, and follow up care.

II. DEFINITIONS:

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) – A comprehensive, integrated, and systematic crisis intervention approach used to manage and minimize an individual(s) stress reactions after experiencing critical incidents.

CISM Team – A group of individuals which will include a mental health provider facilitator, and/or facilitator(s) trained to provide peer support, defusing, and debriefing.

Critical Incident - Unusually challenging events that have the potential to create significant human distress and can overwhelm one’s usual coping mechanisms.

Debriefing – A specific, seven-step group crisis intervention tool designed to assist a homogenous group of people after an exposure to the same specific traumatic event. It is an active, temporary, and supportive small group process that focuses on building up a group’s resistance to traumatic stressors and focuses on the group’s resilience. It is ordinarily provided within 24 to 72 hours of the incident. The debriefing is in no way to be considered psychotherapy or a replacement for psychotherapy. Only people properly trained in critical incident stress management and specifically in the small group process may provide debriefings.

Defusing – A small group discussion typically within hours following the event, consisting of a homogenous group that was exposed to the same event. If possible, it should be provided within one to two hours and must be provided by trained critical incident stress management team members only. A defusing is a shortened version of the debriefing.

Department Employee – A person employed by the Department of Corrections who has attained permanent status or is eligible to attain permanent status, as provided in §2-18-601, MCA; volunteers, interns, temporary and short term workers; this term does not include service providers.

Mental Health Professional – A licensed clinical social worker, licensed psychologist, or other licensed professional counselor trained in the critical incident trauma-debriefing model who has an understanding of, and experience with, correctional employees.

PPD-Probation and Parole Division – The Division oversees the Probation & Parole regional offices and interstate transfers.

Peer Support – A Department employee trained to provide peer support in the form of one-to-one discussions, defusing, debriefing, and assisting a mental health professional conducting an assessment.

Service Providers - This term includes contracted persons or other vendors providing service whose assignment is primarily on Department premises, e.g. facility or program office.

III. PROCEDURES:

A. GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. Critical incidents may include situations leading to serious injury, death, or trauma that PPD staff are involved in or witnessed. These incidents specifically include the following:
 - a. use of force incidents resulting in deployment of a TASER, discharge of a firearm, or death or injury to employees, service providers, or offenders;
 - b. discharge of a Department-issued firearm not in the line of duty with injury or death;
 - c. death of offender in PPD custody or in the presence of a PPD employee or service-related death of employee, volunteer, or visitor;
 - d. serious injury, life-threatening accident, or life-threatening illness requiring transportation for medical attention;
 - e. actual, suspected, or attempted hostage action;
 - f. on-site violent act committed by an employee, on-site volunteer, or visitor that may result in criminal charges;
 - g. serious assaults either offender on offender or offender on employee resulting in injury;
 - h. any event deemed an emergency by the Deputy Chief (DC) or designee and requiring an emergency response from non-Department first responders.
2. The PPD Administrator, Probation & Parole (P&P) Bureau Chiefs, and Deputy Chiefs (DC) will establish local critical incident stress management (CISM) teams for the probation and parole regions. DOC staff participation on CISM teams is highly encouraged and must be done on a regular basis as approved by a supervisor.
3. The directives for the responsibilities of the CISM team given in *DOC Policy 1.3.36, Critical Incident Stress Management*, and the procedures of *PPD 1.1.600RD Priority Incident Reporting*, will be followed in conjunction with this procedure.
4. All discussions, meetings, and information held within CISM are confidential pursuant to section 39-74-105, MCA.

B. AT TIME OF INCIDENT:

1. Upon a critical incident occurring, P&P Officers on scene should notify local authorities of the incident immediately. A supervisor shall be called as soon as safely possible.
2. Officers on scene, in conjunction with authorities, should render medical aid to anyone in need.
3. Upon receiving notification of a critical incident, the supervisor shall notify the DC, and the DC will make appropriate notifications through the PPD chain of command. If determined

necessary, immediate notification by the supervisor to his/her supervisor and the CISM team is completed through whatever means of communication is practical.

4. Supervisor shall go to involved P&P Officer's location, whether it is on scene or otherwise. Upon arrival, if involved Officer(s) is required to stay on scene, go with the investigating authority, or needs medical attention, the supervisor or another officer of the Officer's choice shall remain with the Officer and offer support and cooperation in line with their authority.
5. If there are no immediate duties to fulfill, the P&P Officer may be taken to a quiet area away from the incident; supervisor or designee or another officer of the Officer's choice shall remain with the Officer, but are advised not to discuss the details of the incident.
6. The supervisor will assist in ensuring personal items and clothing of the Officer are secured as appropriate.
7. On scene, the supervisor should check the P&P Officer's involved firearm(s) to see if the firearm was discharged. If a firearm has been discharged, it shall be seized by the investigating authority or the supervisor.
 - a. The supervisor will immediately provide the P&P Officer a spare, loaded Department-issued firearm, unless it is determined that to do so would create an unsafe condition for the Officer or others.
 - b. Qualifying with the new firearm will be scheduled for a time that is appropriate at a later date.
8. When it is feasible and appropriate, and prior to making any formal statement to investigating authorities, the P&P Officers involved in the incident should be allowed to notify their families about the incident as soon as possible. If the Officer is unable to do so, a supervisor or official of the Officer's choice shall notify the family.

C. POST-INCIDENT:

1. The supervisor and P&P Officer(s) involved shall work in conjunction at all times with the investigating authority, if there is one (i.e., DCI, local police, other local authorities).
2. Pursuant to *PPD 1.1.600RD*, priority incident reporting shall be made as soon as practicable but no later than 72 hours after the incident and in a manner taking into account the nature of the incident, level of injuries, and whether the involved employees' families have first been notified. However, if staff who were involved in or witnessed a deadly encounter priority incident are requested to give an interview regarding the incident to an investigating party (i.e., DOC investigations, law enforcement), they will not be compelled to complete a *P&P Incident Report Form*. The interview will be used as the staff member's report.
3. Services available to employees who have been subject to an incident may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. CISM leave:
 - 1) administrative leave – paid leave for up to 40 hours, where the employee is relieved of all duties;
 - 2) temporary telework – assignment of meaningful work which can be done on a temporary basis, not to exceed 40 hours, from the employee's home; or

- 3) temporary reassignment – reassignment to another worksite within the Department, which may be either within or outside the P&P office, not to exceed 40 hours, unless approved by the PPD Administrator, or designee, and in consultation with the Human Resources Bureau (HR).
 - b. defusing;
 - c. debriefing;
 - d. counseling through the state health care system, including the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 866-750-0512 or <http://hr.mt.gov/employeeassistanceprogram>;
 - e. hostage rehabilitation; and
 - f. assistance with benefit and insurance issues.
4. Any Officer(s) involved in a critical incident may be placed on administrative leave for a period of time to be determined by the DC in consultation with the Bureau Chief.
 - a. Officer(s) shall remain available during this period for any investigative matters.
 - b. The Officer(s) shall be returned to duty only when the Bureau Chief of the region involved, in consultation with the Deputy Chief, upon examination of appropriate reports and/or evaluations, etc., reasonably concludes that the Officer is mentally, physically, and emotionally prepared to return.
5. Supervisors should, at a minimum, check in with Officer(s) on CISM leave regularly and at a minimum of weekly to determine if the Officer's needs are being met and to provide any additional information that would be useful to assist in the return to duty.

IV. CLOSING:

Questions regarding this procedure should be directed to the Deputy Chief, Probation & Parole Bureau Chief, or the Human Resources Bureau.

V. FORMS:

PPD 1.1.600 (A) **RD** Priority Incident Report