



**COMMUNICATIONS PERSONNEL  
POLICY/PROCEDURE**

**Policy No. 2075** Date Issued: March 29, 1999  
Section: 2000 – Personnel Procedures Date Revised: July 22, 2015

**SUBJECT: MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR A CRITICAL INCIDENT**

**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Dennis Kidd, General Manager

**1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 To provide guidelines for any supervisor responding to a critical incident situation in which intervention may be needed to support dispatchers, help them recognize stress related responses, and to provide acceptance and closure to overcome negative symptoms caused by critical incident stress.

**2.0 Critical Incident Defined**

- 2.1 A critical incident is any event which has sufficient emotional power to overwhelm an employee's usually effective abilities to cope.

Examples of critical incidents could include (but are not limited to):

- a Mass Casualty Incident (MCI)
- any unusual or traumatic event, such as an officer-involved shooting
- any incident involving death or *serious* injury to a child
- any incident involving death, injury or suicide of a co-worker or other emergency services employee

**3.0 Supervisors' Options**

- 3.1 When a critical incident situation is identified, a supervisor shall refer to Policies 7620 (Peer Support Team - Critical Incident Stress Management) and 7620.80 (Procedure for Critical Incident Stress Debriefings) to determine whether to advise Peer Support Team members and/or to initiate scheduling of

a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD). A supervisor may also consider using one or more of the following alternatives:

- 3.1.1 Relieving affected employees from dispatch and call-taking duties. Relief from duty is a break during the shift of sufficient duration to allow employees to feel capable of resuming their duties.

Removing affected employees from dispatch and call-taking duties. Employees involved in critical incidents may be removed from their duties in accordance with the criteria contained in Policy No. 1080 (Corrective Action), paragraph 8. It is only the criteria that are pertinent; a removal from duties under this circumstance is for the employee's benefit and does not indicate intent to implement corrective action.

- 3.1.1.1 Supervisors will immediately report removing any employee from his/her duties to the General Manager.

- 3.1.2 Obtaining general assistance through the Employee Assistance Program.

- 3.1.2.1 General assistance may be initiated by the employee or upon recommendation by a supervisor.

- 3.1.3 Obtaining specific assistance through the Employee Assistance Program.

- 3.1.3.1 Specific assistance is a request, generated by the Supervisor, for a dispatcher Critical Incident Stress Team through the Employee Assistance Program.

- 3.1.4 Arranging for participation in a critical incident debriefing with a User Agency.

- 3.1.4.1 Participation may be at the request of the employee, supervisor, or a User Agency.