

## **SANTA CLARA POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 1.7**

### **CRITICAL INCIDENT LEAVE**

**ISSUED APRIL 2006**

#### **1.7.1 Relief from Duty After Critical Incidents**

The purpose of this policy is to establish standard procedures related to shootings and other critical incidents, to supplement existing Department policy, to address the legal and community safety issues and to provide sworn and non-sworn personnel with professional assistance in dealing with severe stress.

Procedure:

Whenever an employee's actions on-duty (or off-duty, if acting lawfully under the color of authority) results in:

- The discharge of their firearm in a deadly force encounter, whether or not an assailant is struck,
- the death or critical injury to another person, whether or not a shooting was involved,
- or, in any other critical, life-threatening event deemed appropriate by the Watch Commander.

the following procedures shall be followed:

- The employee, if able, shall provide information to assist in the necessary evidence collection at the scene and any immediate paperwork required to document the facts of the incident.
- The employee involved shall be placed on mandatory extraordinary leave, with pay, by the Watch Commander, immediately following the incident. The employee shall not be returned to duty prior to 72 hours after the incident.
- As soon as possible after the incident, at the request of the Chief of Police or designated representative, a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist shall contact the involved employee(s) for counseling and assessment regarding the impact of the incident. This contact shall take place whether or not the employee has been injured; however, contact may be delayed if an employee is seriously injured.
- Immediately following this initial contact, the psychologist or psychiatrist shall recommend to the Chief of Police or designated representative the extent of leave which appears, at the time, to be necessary for the involved employee. The psychologist or psychiatrist shall include with the recommendation an opinion as to whether any part of the employee's current emotional or mental condition requiring leave is a result of the critical incident and therefore

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job related. If the condition of the employee is the result of the critical incident, the employee shall automatically be listed as injured on-duty.

- The Chief of Police, working in conjunction with the Director of Human Resources, shall determine the appropriateness and duration of the injury status based on the recommendation of the psychologist / psychiatrist regarding the employee's readiness to return to duty.
- The employee, while on injury status, shall maintain regular contact with the Chief of Police or designated representative until he/she returns to duty.
- Contact with the psychologist / psychiatrist and determination of injury status are intended for the benefit of the employee and shall be no indication of fault or responsibility and, shall in no way be related to any criminal investigation of the incident which may be conducted. All contact between the employee and psychologist / psychiatrist shall be confidential, except for 'fitness for duty' examinations.