


POLICY 413.0	FLPD PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES PROGRAM (FLPD PSP)	
	REVISED: 10/19, 03/24	RELATED POLICIES: 401.0, 406.0
	CFA STANDARDS: 10.16	REVIEWED: AS NEEDED THIS VERSION EFFECTIVE DATE: MARCH 29, 2024

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and inform employees of the Fort Lauderdale Police Department of the Psychological Services Program (PSP). The Department recognizes that employees and their families endure a wide range of situations and, at times, may need emotional and other types of support. As a result, the FLPD PSP will encompass an array of comprehensive psychological services available to employees (i.e. providing short term behavioral health therapeutic services, critical incident stress debriefings (CISD) to foster psychological assistance in processing a critical incident (after the fact), referrals to external clinicians commensurate with the City of Fort Lauderdale private, employee insurance, and providing an array of behavioral health trainings to FLPD personnel to make some of the services offered. Short term counseling is also offered to FLPD’s immediate family members (employee’s spouse, domestic partner, and adult children) contingent on short term therapy criteria and clinician caseloads. The FLPD PSP and its staff do not perform mandatory fitness for duty evaluations (FFDE’s) (either medical and/or psychological), for pre-employment, or as mandated after certain incidents. The FLPD PSP functions within the organizational-consultation intervention and operational domains of police psychology at FLPD.

B. POLICY

It is the policy of the FLPD to maintain a stable and well-adjusted work force and to provide the community with the best possible service. The FLPD is committed to assisting its employees and/or their family members who experience stress-induced or other emotional problems, and/or those employees exhibiting performance deficiencies, who may benefit from assistance from the FLPD PSP.

C. PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES PROGRAM

1. General:

The FLPD PSP provides professional counseling on a voluntary basis, and referral assistance for management of stress-induced or substance abuse problems.

a. Program Functions:

The Psychological Services Program provides the following services to departmental personnel:

- (1). Short-term counseling of all FLPD personnel, sworn and civilian, and their immediate family members, referral to outside

professional sources for extended counseling or upon request by the affected employee, referral to Department's peer support/counseling for Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) and/or police chaplains for pastoral counseling.

- (2). Availability on a 24- hour basis for emergencies involving on-scene response to shootings or other critical incidents involving police personnel. Personnel involved may voluntarily consult with FLPD PSP staff. When the FLPD PSP is unavailable, coverage will be provided in collaboration with FLPD's CISD team supervisor.
- (3). Consultation concerning crisis situations involving police personnel.
- (4). Assistance to employees observed demonstrating uncharacteristic performance errors or a decline in job performance.
- (5). Assessment and referral of employees related to substance abuse.
- (6). Case Management Intervention involving FFDE recommendations – Utilization of (I.7. a.- c. & 8. a.- c.) of FLPD Policy 401.0.
- (7). Development of intradepartmental procedures required for program administration.
- (8). Assist appropriate supervisory personnel dealing with behavioral health related issues concerning their employees.
- (9). Design or assist in the design of programs, which apply behavioral sciences to law enforcement and community needs, crisis intervention, organizational development, and stress abatement concepts.
- (10). Assist command staff upon request, for review regarding individuals involved in critical incident(s)/investigation(s)/ and/or behavioral health situation(s).
- (11). Assist the Training unit with the design, implementation, and if applicable, instruction of training programs for sworn and non-sworn personnel.
- (12). Collaboration with the CISD team/team supervisor regarding training and providing on-going consultations with the CISD team.

b. Voluntary Participation:

Employees are encouraged to seek professional counseling or consultation from the FLPD PSP to alleviate stress-induced, personal, professional, emotional or relationship problems.

- (1). The Department will not request or require FLPD PSP staff to furnish information resulting from voluntary participation unless an exigent circumstance (such as a threat to self and/or threat to others, state mandated reporting rationale) or a crime has occurred. Any substance abuse/usage by personnel is covered under HIPAA

guidelines and is confidential and privileged communication upon seeking voluntary treatment with the FLPD PSP.

- (2). Furthermore, the FLPD PSP may advise the concerned supervisor of the contact only when consent has been provided by the affected employee, and he/she has provided a signed release of information consent form waivers (i.e. either full information or attendance only). Information concerning the diagnosis or treatment of any voluntary participant shall not be requested by supervisors.
- (3). The Department will not initiate an investigation or complaint based on an employee's request for professional assistance. However, such voluntary participation shall not preclude prosecution or disciplinary action, which may result from a related investigation or complaint.
- (4). At the request of an employee, the following may be provided:
 - (a). General information concerning psychological services.
 - (b). Short-term counseling regarding personal problems.
 - (c). Information regarding outside counseling service, costs, and insurance coverage.
 - (d). Peer support contact with FLPD CISD team supervisor and/or liaison.

c. Supervisory Intervention/ Referral (SI/R):

Supervisors should remain alert for continued job performance problems and encourage employees to maintain acceptable standards of performance.

When a supervisor observes a continuing performance problem, coupled with a change in behavior or attitude, they may contact FLPD PSP for consultation concerning an intervention or other options to correct the problem/concern.

The supervisory intervention service is a voluntary counseling session facilitated by the FLPD PSP staff and is not utilized for psychological evaluation of the employee. The service is provided to assist the supervisor and the employee in the resolution of problems, which may be symptomatic of underlying personal or interpersonal problems that are manifested in job performance. This service may be considered by the supervisors when all other means of counseling and performance discussions have proven unsuccessful and/or there is an obvious need for support, but a refusal to accept services from a voluntary perspective. However, this is a separate issue and is not associated with disciplinary procedures or considered as an alternative to discipline. It is to be used only to address less than satisfactory employee performance, which is based solely on observable deficient or deteriorating job performance, which may be caused by underlying personal issues and/or traumatic based issues the employee may be facing.

If the employee, upon the request of a supervisor, does not desire to utilize the FLPD PSP for services, they will be offered external psychological -

behavioral health services (i.e. via the employee's health insurance and/or EAP). In circumstances involving an officer Involved Shooting (OIS), the Police Officer will be provided a least restrictive measure and opportunity for a CISD and potential, subsequent supportive mental health contact before consideration for FFDE due to the traumatic nature of such an incident (FLPD Policy 406.0, E.2.). A release of information (attendance and/or general release of information) will be provided to the employee to confirm that services are being utilized. Utilization of (I.6. a-c of FLPD Policy 401.0) if non-compliance with SI/R).

- (1). The FLPD PSP staff member facilitates supervisory intervention sessions in order to:
 - (a). Articulate the observable performance errors and the declining job performance in specific behavioral terms,
 - (b). Outline expectancies for desired performance change,
 - (c). Agree on a time frame for instituting the desired changes,
 - (d). Clarify between the employee and the supervisor any other peripheral issues which may affect the desired outcome, and
 - (e). Agree upon the amount or degree of feedback provided to the supervisor during the interim period and appropriate supervisory feedback to the employee on their progress, and/or
 - (f). Assist with developing team building exercises and/or conflict resolution training.
- (2). The supervisory counseling contact shall be conducted utilizing informal counseling guidelines.
- (3). If the supervisor does not see satisfactory improvement within agreed upon time limits, additional action/follow-up could be considered.

d. Post Shooting or Other Traumatic Incident Counseling:

- (1). An on-call member of the FLPD PSP will be included as part of the on-call notification process and will respond to the FLPD police station for the benefit of involved employees. This service exists solely for the benefit of the concerned employee. Every effort shall be extended by the on-scene supervisor to facilitate a brief interaction between the FLPD PSP and the affected employee(s).
- (2). All efforts to provide for the emotional well-being of the involved employee and/or immediate family member(s) will be made without jeopardizing the investigation process. The responsibility of balancing the urgency of the concerned employee(s) immediate needs with investigative requirements rests with the on-scene supervisor and/or commander. A decision concerning these issues will be rendered following a consultation between the on-scene supervisor and/or commander and the FLPD PSP.

- (3). The FLPD PSP will be available for both sworn and civilian personnel and their immediate family as may be needed following the initial contact.
- (4). The FLPD PSP will be advised of significant changes in the case prior to notification of the sworn and/or civilian personnel (i.e. death or injury of a subject, death or injury of an employee or immediate employee(s) family members.
- (5). When an employee is involved in incidents of a severe nature or exposed to an extreme emotionally debilitating event, as soon as circumstances allow, the concerned supervisor will advise the FLPD PSP of the incident, i.e. serious physical injury, employee is fired upon, severe accident or significant physical contact or trauma.
 - (a). The FLPD PSP will provide assistance, which may be required by the employee due to stress-induced problems resulting from the incident.
 - (b). If the employee requires hospitalization, the FLPD PSP may coordinate with the hospital staff to provide an environment most conducive to the employee's recovery.
- (6). Based on an assessment of the situation, a supervisor may consult with the FLPD PSP and forward concerns to their chain of command. The Bureau Chief of the affected employee may temporarily reassign the employee affected if deemed appropriate.
 - (a). FLPD civilian employees (professional staff) and their immediate families have access to initial on duty traumatic incident counseling and/or CISD services.
 - (b). The duty lieutenant or division captain will ensure notification to the FLPD PSP whenever a major traumatic event occurs to an employee or close family member of the employee. (i.e. serious injury, terminal illness, or death).

e. Management Consultation:

Any supervisor may request technical assistance from the FLPD PSP relative to:

- (1). Personal management style and its impact on subordinates,
- (2). Personal management problems existing in their respective command area, and
- (3). Other problems related to their respective duties and functions.

f. Confidentiality:

The FLPD PSP and/or any person participating in the diagnosis or treatment under their directions shall maintain confidentiality, as dictated and governed by Florida Statutes, the American Psychological Association, and the Florida Department of Professional Regulations regarding

communications made by a client in the context of such services, except by a written permission or in the face of a clear and immediate probability of bodily harm (i.e. exigent circumstances – a threat to self and/or threat to others) to the client or others and/or if a crime has occurred. Any substance abuse/usage by personnel is covered under HIPAA guidelines and is confidential and privileged communication upon seeking voluntary treatment with the FLPD PSP.

D. MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING

All sworn members and others identified by the Department shall receive educational training related to mental health awareness, and overall psychological wellness to include Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) awareness, prevention and intervention, suicide prevention and intervention, conflict resolution and threat assessment prevention and intervention.