

GENERAL ORDER



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Title Metropolitan Police Employee Assistance Program (MPEAP)		
Topic	Series	Number
PER	201	28
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Replaces: GO-PER-201.28 [Metropolitan Police Employee Assistance Program (MPEAP)], Effective Date March 27, 1990		
Rescinds: SO-00-15 Selection of Peer Support Team Members, Effective Date July 21, 2000 TT-06-033-09 (MPEAP), Issued June 11, 2009		

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to outline the procedures for participation in the Metropolitan Police Employee Assistance Program (MPEAP), developed in collaboration between the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and the DC Police Union MPD Labor Committee.

II. PROCEDURES

A. General

1. The MPEAP, which functions as an independent organization, provides autonomous and confidential counseling assistance to sworn members of the department and their families without cost. In addition to counseling services, the program provides training to supervisory personnel, sworn members, and recruits.
2. Members may take advantage of the services offered by MPEAP by voluntary request or may be ordered to schedule an appointment for MPEAP services by their commanding officer, the Medical Services Division, the Disciplinary Review Division, or as part of a settlement agreement.
 - a. The assistance and support offered by the program is not solely directed toward a member's job responsibilities; the program also focuses on those areas of a member's personal life where help is needed.

- b. Members who wish to make an appointment with MPEAP during a scheduled shift time shall:
 - (1) Notify their supervisor concerning their intention to schedule an appointment with MPEAP to occur during their scheduled shift;
 - (2) Notify their supervisor of their appointment time with the MPEAP at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled appointment;
 - (3) Attend the scheduled session while on-duty; and
 - (4) Notify their supervisor when they return to duty following their scheduled session.

NOTE: Members may also schedule appointments with MPEAP on their own time if they wish to do so.

- c. If a member is ordered to the MPEAP, the member shall be permitted to attend while on duty
 - d. Members shall be permitted to attend MPEAP on duty as long as it does not interfere with operations as determined by their supervisor. If a disruption in operations is anticipated, the member shall be permitted to reschedule the MPEAP appointment.
3. The basic support services offered by the MPEAP to all sworn members regardless of rank consist of interviewing by the psychologist/therapist to determine the nature of the problem, counseling, and may include family members. Other services may include:
- a. Structured training seminars for supervisors and sworn members to support member well-being in the workplace.
 - b. Constructive counseling in areas of alcohol use, post-critical incident trauma, marital and relationship difficulties, and other stress-related problems.
 - c. Referral services, as needed, for specialized issues outside the training and expertise of MPEAP clinicians (e.g., alcohol treatment, psychiatric diagnosis requiring medical treatment by specialists).
4. Pursuant to *Jaffee v. Redmond*, 518 U.S. 1, 116 S. Ct. 1923, 135 L. Ed. 2d 337 (1996), any records maintained on members who participate in MPEAP shall be regarded as confidential and shall be protected under District of Columbia and federal law.
5. Employee participation shall be considered positive evidence of a member's desire to resolve his or her problems and may serve as a mitigating factor in deciding an appropriate disciplinary action.

6. Participation in MPEAP shall not preclude regular forms of administrative, corrective, or disciplinary action. In situations where such action is deemed appropriate, MPEAP shall not be used in lieu of established disciplinary procedures.
7. Job security and promotional opportunities shall not be jeopardized by employee participation in MPEAP.
8. When MPEAP identifies significant concerns which directly affect the ability of a member to safely and effectively use their police powers, the MPEAP clinical director shall immediately notify the director of the Medical Services Division (MSD) who shall determine if the member's police powers should be revoked.

B. MPD Referrals to the MPEAP

1. Supervisors shall monitor the performance of members assigned to their command to watch for symptoms of stress that may be reflected in chronic absenteeism, tardiness, disciplinary problems, or complaints. Supervisors who observe or are notified of these issues shall:
 - a. Order members to contact the MPEAP within one week.
 - b. Notify the MPEAP clinical director by telephone (202-546-9684) and their commanding officer that an officer referral to the MPEAP has been made.
 - c. Contact the MPEAP to verify that the member is receiving MPEAP services as directed. The MPEAP will make every effort to assist in the prevention of negative work habits (e.g., disciplinary problems, absenteeism, tardiness, complaints).
2. Commanding officers may, when necessary, confer with the MPEAP clinical director to seek advice on supporting members on how to improve their performance and behavioral health.

C. MPEAP Response to Critical Incidents

MPEAP personnel are available on a 24-hour basis. They will respond when requested to assist members involved in critical incidents.

1. The Command Information Center (CIC) shall notify the MPEAP via text in the following situations:
 - a. Injury – critical or fatal;
 - b. Injury – member admission to a hospital;
 - c. Officer involved shooting; or

d. At the discretion of a supervisor.

D. Critical Incident Debriefing

1. The MPEAP critical incident debriefing program was established to mitigate the stress reactions resulting from direct or close involvement in serious incidents or traumatic events. Whether job related or a personal life experience, critical incidents may adversely affect a member's frame of mind, disposition, or stress level.
2. Members who are involved in a critical incident shall attend up to six critical incident debriefing sessions as scheduled by MPEAP, or as determined by the MPEAP clinical director.

E. MPEAP Union Liaison

The union chairman may designate one bargaining unit member to serve as the MPEAP union liaison. The department shall provide up to 40 hours of official time each week for the MPEAP union liaison to perform his or her duties.

III. DEFINITIONS

When used in this directive, the following terms shall have the meanings designated:

	Term	Definition
1.	Critical incident	A traumatic event that is outside the normal range of everyday policing and has the potential to overwhelm an officer's normal coping abilities. Examples of critical incidents include, but are not limited to, deaths, serious injury, or the threat of physical injury to officers or members of the public.
2.	Family member	Spouse or significant other.



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