

# DALTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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<i>Subject</i> <b>Employee Assistance Program and Critical Incident Support</b>		
<i>Reference</i> <b>CALEA Standards – 4.2.3, 22.1.2, 22.1.4, 22.1.7</b>		<i>Revised</i> <del>February 22, 2022</del> <b>January 23, 2024</b>
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## I. Policy

The City of Dalton provides a broad-based Employee Assistance Program for employees of the Dalton Police Department and their covered family members. The Employee Assistance Program provides employees and dependent family members with the necessary resources to assist in maintaining a higher level of work, home, or school functioning.

Due to the sometimes volatile nature of policing and accidental encounters, employees may be involved in traumatic events which may result in extreme stress levels. It is the policy of the Dalton Police Department to provide critical incident support to all Department employees involved in situations which result in the death or serious injury of another person.

## II. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The City of Dalton contracts annually to provide the services as outlined in this policy.

### A. Eligibility of Employees / Family Members

Any full-time employee, who has at least three (3) months of completed service, and / or their household members (including dependents and family members living with them) are eligible for services through the EAP.

### B. Employee Cost

1. The employee and / or family member is not charged for the initial assessment and five (5) counseling sessions.
2. Additional outpatient counseling sessions beyond the six (6) initial visits, including individual, group, or family therapy, shall be the responsibility of the employee.
3. If it is determined by the treatment team that the covered employee needs a referral for the following services, which are not included in the six (6)

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free sessions, the referral will be made, and the services may be handled by his / her personal health benefit plan:

- a. Intensive or specialized treatment, i.e., inpatient, intensive outpatient, day hospital
  - b. Services of a licensed Ph.D., clinical psychologist, or psychiatrist
  - c. Psychological and / or educational testing
4. The Employee Assistance Program Coordinator shall work with the employee to manage cost effectiveness, insurance coverage concerns, the employee's ability to pay, and other treatment options, if necessary.

C. Counseling Information, Evaluation, and Referral

1. Counseling services shall be provided by a Masters-level qualified therapist.
2. Employees will be given an initial full evaluation to determine the type of treatment and / or counseling needed.
3. After the initial evaluation, the employee will be given recommendations. Recommendations can be, but are not limited to: short-term counseling, long-term counseling (more than three (3) visits), inpatient hospitalization, partial hospitalization, drug and alcohol education group, referral to one of the many community resources (i.e., Consumer Credit Counseling, etc.), or referral to a local support group (i.e., AA, Alanon, EAP, CODA, etc.)
4. Personal issues that the EAP can address include, but are not limited to, alcohol and drug use / abuse, depression, anxiety, child and adolescent issues, grief work, crisis intervention, marital problems, work stress, or divorce.

D. Training and Orientation Services

1. Training shall be offered annually to all employees on drug / alcohol awareness. Training shall consist of one (1) hour sessions designed to satisfy requirements for the Drug-Free Workplace Program specified in 34-9-417 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.
2. New and existing employees shall be continually informed of EAP services through orientation, in-service training, and the employee newsletter.
3. Supervisors shall be provided annual training in identifying, documenting, and referring employees with job performance behaviors, which may be related to impairment by a controlled substance, alcohol, or other mood-altering drugs (Refer to policy GO97-3.8, Drug-free Workplace Policies and Procedures for Elimination of Substance Abuse, and Employee Assistance), or psychiatric and / or emotional disorders disabling them in the workplace. Training shall be for one (1) hour and shall be designed to

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satisfy requirements for the Drug-Free Workplace Program specified in 34-9-418 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

E. Supervisory Consultation and Counseling

1. Supervisory consultation and counseling shall be provided on request to individual Supervisors to assist in clarifying or identifying an individual or group job-performance problem.
2. Further areas of Supervisory consultation include clarification of the EAP referral process, recommendation of possible approaches to a problem situation, and identification of other resources for the Supervisor(s).

F. Procedures for Employees Obtaining Counseling Services

Supervisors and employees shall be provided annual training regarding the nature (how to access and refer) and availability of EAP services.

1. Self-referral

Employees and family members may access EAP services by calling the EAP directly. The use of the self-referral service is strongly encouraged for employees and / or their family members. Early intervention is the goal of the EAP.

2. Mandatory Supervisory Referral

- a. The Chief of Police shall have the option (but not the obligation) to make a mandatory Supervisory referral for an employee who has broken a work rule and / or violated the Drug-free Workplace Policy (Refer to policy GO97-3.8, Drug-free Workplace Policies and Procedures for Elimination of Substance Abuse and Employee Assistance).
- b. Mandatory participation in the EAP is available one time and on a "last chance" basis. An employee may be offered a reprieve in discipline or reinstatement of employment or position if he or she promptly enters and successfully completes the EAP program, treatment plan, and recommendations, including signing the necessary release of information forms. In the event an employee refuses to enter the EAP or fails to successfully complete the EAP treatment plan and recommendations, the employee shall be terminated.
- c. Upon making a referral to the EAP, the Supervisor shall complete and fax the "Administrative Referral Form" to the EAP.
- d. The Supervisor shall intervene immediately if the employee is suspected of using or being under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs (Refer to policy GO97-3.8, Drug-free Workplace Policies and

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Procedures for Elimination of Substance Abuse, and Employee Assistance).

- e. The Supervisor shall intervene immediately if the employee is displaying symptoms of a mental health condition or mental illness, which is causing disciplinary or productivity problems while working.
- f. Utilization of EAP services does not exempt the employee from the requirement of maintaining an appropriate job performance level or from the standard disciplinary action procedures. The EAP shall not be used for disciplinary purposes.

#### G. Referral / Rehabilitation and Re-entry

- 1. In utilizing the EAP, if the employee is referred to an inpatient facility, or other treatment program in which they are required to be absent from work, the employee may be placed on leave in accordance with the City of Dalton's personnel policy.
- 2. Upon entering a rehabilitation program (i.e.: inpatient facility, partial hospitalization) the EAP Coordinator shall maintain contact with the employee, employee's Supervisor, Chief of Police, Human Resource Director, and the treatment facility with appropriately signed releases.
- 3. The EAP Coordinator shall participate in the treatment process, as appropriate and permitted and work with the employee and the treatment facility in developing a Return to Work Plan.
- 4. The employee's Supervisor and / or manager shall also be involved in developing and implementing a Return to Work Plan, which shall include details of the on-going recovery plan, performance expectations, random drug screens, and consequences of non-compliance (Refer to policy GO97-3.8, Drug-free Workplace Policies and Procedures for Elimination of Substance Abuse, and Employee Assistance).

#### H. Program Reporting to the City of Dalton

The EAP shall submit a report to the City's Human Resources Director documenting EAP usage while ensuring employee confidentiality by not listing names or identifying data, in accordance with state and federal confidentiality guidelines. The information in these reports shall be governed by the policy on confidentiality.

#### I. Confidentiality

All disclosure of information is governed by federal and state confidentiality rules and regulations. Specifically, no information regarding the employee's diagnosis, details of his / her conditions, or involvement with the EAP shall be released to anyone without the employee's / family members' prior written authorization, except as otherwise provided by law. The following exceptions to confidentiality apply:

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1. If the employee plans to physically injure or kill another person or himself / herself
2. If the employee discloses that a minor child is currently being physically or sexually abused
3. If the employee indicates that he / she may engage in activity which could be dangerous to other employees or the public
4. If the employee gives information which indicates that the employee has committed (or is planning to commit) a crime against the employer or its premises or the public

### III. **Critical Incident Support for Deadly Force Incidents**

A. When faced with a catastrophic life event or major change, an employee may experience great difficulty in appropriately dealing with his / her feelings and emotions. Some of the signs of an employee's inability to deal appropriately with a traumatic incident are:

1. Continuation and intensification of post-incident symptoms, such as:
  - a. Heightened sense of danger / vulnerability
  - b. Fear and anxiety about future encounters
  - c. Anger / rage
  - d. Nightmares
  - e. Flashbacks / intrusive thoughts of the incident
  - f. Sleep difficulties
  - g. Depression
  - h. Guilt
  - i. Emotional numbing
  - j. Isolation and emotional withdrawal
  - k. Stress reactions (e.g., headaches, indigestion, muscle aches, diarrhea / constipation)
  - l. Anxiety reactions (e.g., difficulty concentrating, excessive worry, irritability, nervousness)
  - m. Family problems
2. Excessive stress and anxiety reactions

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3. Continual obsession with the incident
  4. Increased absenteeism, burnout / drop in productivity
  5. Increase in anger and irritability
  6. Under-reaction
  7. Risk taking
  8. Increase in family problems
  9. Alcohol / drug abuse
- B. Human beings are recognized generally to experience five distinct phases in their coping process. These phases are:
1. Denial and isolation
  2. Anger and resentment
  3. Bargaining
  4. Depression
  5. Acceptance
- C. The following guidelines have been found to alleviate much of the stress associated with the aftermath of an Officer-involved shooting or other deadly force situation. To enable the Officer to feel supported and to reduce the amount of overall trauma, these guidelines have been approved by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Police Psychological Services Section:
1. At the scene, show concern and understanding. Give mental and physical first aid.
  2. After obtaining necessary on-scene information, and with authorization of Investigators, provide a psychological break by getting the Officer some distance from the scene. The Officer should be with a supportive friend or Supervisor and return to the scene only if necessary.
  3. With some Officers, it is important to explain what administrative procedures will occur during the next few hours and over the next day. This will help the Officer realize that the handling of the investigation of the incident is standard operating procedure.
  4. If the incident involves the Officer's service weapon, it is to be taken (as evidence) and replaced with another weapon as soon as possible, if feasible.
  5. Before undergoing a detailed interview, the Officer should have some

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recovery time in a secure setting where he / she is insulated from the press and curious Officers.

6. If the Officer is not injured, the Officer or designated employee should contact the family (via phone call or personal visit) and let them know what happened before they hear rumors or receive phone calls from others. If the Officer is injured, a Department member familiar with the family should offer to transport the family to the hospital.
7. For the Officer(s) who was involved in the deadly force situation, there should be a mandatory confidential debriefing with a knowledgeable mental health care professional prior to returning to duty. The debriefing should take place as soon after the incident as is practical, ideally within 24 hours and no later than 48 hours. Fitness to return to duty and / or any need for follow-up sessions should be determined by the mental health care professional.
8. Everyone at the scene should have a separate debriefing. During this debriefing, it should be noted that anyone at the scene could experience a significant emotional reaction and should consult with the mental health professional within 48 hours. Follow-up sessions for other personnel may also be appropriate.
9. The opportunity for family counseling (spouse, children, significant other, etc.) shall also be made available.
10. An administrator or Supervisor should brief the rest of the Department about the incident. This should prevent the Officer from being inundated with questions and hold rumors in check.
11. Expedite, so far as feasible and consistent with sound investigative practices, the completion of administrative and criminal investigations, and advise the Officer of the outcomes.
12. Subject to the circumstances of the deadly force incident and in the discretion of the Chief of Police, the Officer, upon being placed on administrative leave, shall automatically be assigned to the appropriate ranking Officer for the duration of his / her administrative leave. During this time, the Officer shall maintain regular contact with this ranking Officer.

#### IV. **Critical Incident Support for Non-Use of Force Incidents**

- A. Any employee directly involved in actions (traffic crash, training accident, etc.) that result in death or great bodily injury shall be placed on administrative leave, pending investigation.
- B. Unless the circumstances of the incident warrant otherwise in the discretion of the Chief of Police, the leave shall be without loss of pay or benefits and shall not be interpreted to imply or indicate that the employee acted improperly.

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- C. While on administrative leave, the employee shall remain available at all times for official Departmental interviews during the investigation and shall be subject to recall at any time.
- D. The employee shall not discuss the incident with anyone except the assigned Investigator(s), the employee's immediate family and / or attorney, the District Attorney, the Chief of Police, or professional counselors.
- E. The employee shall undergo an evaluation by the Department-designated mental health care professional. If recommended by the mental health care professional, the employee shall attend any recommended counseling or treatment / therapy.

*This policy supersedes any previous policies issued.*

**BY ORDER OF**

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**CHIEF OF POLICE**

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