



EXHIBIT A

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Date: July 28, 2021

To: Employees- City of Fair Oaks Ranch

From: Tobin Maples, AICP, City Manager
Joanna Merrill, Director of Human Resources

Mental Health Leave for Police Officer's Policy

To be effective 9/01/2021

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance in accordance with Chapter 614.015 of the Local Government Code regarding mental health leave for Peace Officers as employed by the City. The mental health leave will be used to provide Peace Officer up to 3 work-shifts of paid time off from work in order for them to seek professional treatment for the handling of any traumatic event in which they were involved in while on duty. The City of Fair Oaks Ranch recognizes that the mental health and safety of our Peace Officers is important. The City supports establishing a workplace that is comfortable, healthy, safe, and supportive.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective 9/01/2021.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Peace Officers employed by the City of Fair Oaks Ranch and does not cover contracted entities. The Police and Human Resources Department Heads will be responsible for communicating and implementing this policy as applicable.

DEFINITIONS

"Peace Officer" means an individual described by Article 2.12, Code of Criminal Procedure, who is elected for, employed by, or appointed by the city.

"Traumatic Event" means an event that involves extreme injury, near death, or the actual death of an individual.

POLICY

The use of mental health leave for Peace Officers is intended to provide full-time Peace Officers who experience a traumatic event, time away from work to receive assistance in dealing with the event. The event must involve extreme injury, near death or death of an individual at the event that the Peace Officer responded to while on duty with the City for a Peace Officer to be eligible to utilize this type of leave.

The Peace Officer who experiences a traumatic event as defined above will be provided up to 3 work-shifts off from work in order for that Peace Officer to seek professional treatment for the handling of the traumatic event in which they were involved in while on duty with the city. The Peace Officer will be entitled to mental health leave without a deduction in salary or other compensation provided to employees of the city.

a) Requesting Leave:

In order to utilize mental health leave, the Peace Officer must contact the Chief of Police to request the use of mental health leave in writing. The Chief of Police will then consult with the Director of Human

Resources to grant leave in increments of up to 3 work-shifts away from work based on the information provided to the department regarding the traumatic event, or if ordered by a mental health professional.

Extensions of mental health leave may be available under certain circumstances. Any request for an extension shall be accompanied by documentation from a mental health professional who is counseling the officer. The request may extend the leave by 3 working days, and each officer may not request more than two extensions. Each extension must be accompanied by documentation from the mental health professional who has been counseling the officer.

If an officer needs additional time off, they may apply for a Leave of Absence in accordance with the cities current policies.

b) *Concurrent Leave:*

If an officer is off of work due to Mental Health Leave and the employee is eligible for Family Medical Leave, then both leaves will run concurrently.

c) *Secondary Jobs:*

An employee on Mental Health Leave may not work a second job, including self-employment, or participate in volunteer work.

d) *Confidentiality:*

To provide the highest level of anonymity for the Peace Officer as possible all hours away from work for this reason will be noted on the timesheet as regular hours. Any other documentation provided will only be placed in the confidential HR medical file for that Peace Officer to serve as a record of the time away and as a historical record that leave was granted. No other notation of the reason for the Peace Officer's absence will be noted and any missed shifts will be covered by other Peace Officer's.

Any request for mental health leave shall be treated as strictly confidential by all parties involved and shall not be discussed or disclosed outside the officer's immediate chain of command, and only as necessary to facilitate the use of the leave. Any officer or supervisor who becomes aware of the behavioral changes and suggests the officer seek mental health leave shall not discuss the matter with any third party. Any breach of this confidentiality shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

Confidentiality may be waived by the officer seeking mental health leave and may be waived under circumstances which indicate the officer is a danger to himself, herself, or others resulting in the need for personnel to confer with mental health professionals.

e) *Return to Work*

Following the use of Mental Health Leave, the city reserves the right to require a Peace Officer to undergo a psychological examination, by a professional of the cities choosing to determine fitness for continued employment, as may be necessary in order for the city to provide a reasonable accommodation and as permitted in accordance with applicable laws before returning to work.

Peace Officers may utilize any of the below resources available to seek professional treatment for the handling of the traumatic event in which they were involved with while on duty.

UHC Employee Assistance Program

Confidential Support 24/7/365

Call 1-888-887-4114

COPLINE

An Officer's Lifeline

Confidential Support 24/7/365

Call 1-800-267-5463