

## **MENTAL HEALTH LEAVE**

An officer involved in a traumatic event, in the scope of their duties, may request the use of mental health leave. The request shall be made in writing through the chain of command. The request shall be treated as a priority matter and a decision on the granting of the leave shall be made as soon as practical following the submission of the request. The request shall be granted unless the chain of command can articulate compelling reasons to deny granting the leave.

Requests for mental health leave under this policy shall be treated as protected health information to the extent allowed by law and shall not be discussed or disclosed outside the officer's immediate chain of command, unless necessary to facilitate the use of the leave. Unpermitted disclosure of protected health information is grounds for discipline. Confidentiality regarding the request for leave may be waived by the officer seeking mental health leave.

This section does not apply to reports from co-workers of officer distress or other circumstances which indicate the officer is a danger to himself or herself or others and under which department personnel seek guidance as to a potential response or action, including the application of leave under this policy.

An officer directly involved in a traumatic event, in the scope of their duties, may request up to three working days of mental health leave.

Extensions of mental health leave may be available under certain circumstances. Requests for an extension shall be accompanied by documentation from a health care provider as required by the City's Human Resources Department.

### **Definitions**

Traumatic Event- An event experienced by a peace officer in the response to or investigation of a threat or occurrence of serious injury to the officer or others or a threat or occurrence of death to others and which may cause the officer to experience acute or recurrent distress, such that the officer is unable to perform the essential functions of the employee's assigned position.

Traumatic events may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Major disasters which may include response to weather related events involving multiple casualties; or explosions with multiple casualties; or search and recovery missions involving multiple casualties.
- b. Incidents involving multiple casualties which may include shootings or traffic accidents.

- c. Line of duty death or suicide of a department member.
- d. Death of a child resulting from violence or neglect.
- e. Officer(s) involved shooting of a person.

**Mental Health Leave** – Administrative leave with pay granted in response to a traumatic event that occurred in the scope of the peace officer’s employment.

**Mental Health Professional** – a licensed social or mental health worker, counselor, psychotherapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist.