



SAN ANTONIO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL MANUAL



Procedure 921 – Psychological Services

Office with Primary Responsibility:	CTA	Effective Date: Prior Revision Date:	July 24, 2015 July 31, 2010
Office(s) with Secondary Responsibilities:	PSC, PNC, TSC, STC, MCC	Number of Pages:	3
Forms Referenced in Procedure:	None	Related Procedures:	None

.01 INTRODUCTION

This procedure provides officers with an understanding of the psychological services available to individual officers and their families.

.02 DISCUSSION

The San Antonio Police Department recognizes the importance of the mental and emotional health of its employees. It also recognizes the many stresses placed on officers by the job they perform and the toll those stresses take on the emotional and behavioral well-being of officers. To help decrease the impact of excessive stress, the Department has a Psychological Services Office prepared to support the psychological needs of its officers and their families through evaluation, counseling, and consultation.

.03 TERMINOLOGY (For specific use within this procedure, see Glossary)

Consultation Counseling Critical Incident Stress Evaluation Stress

.04 AVAILABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

A. Evaluations

1. The Psychological Services Office provides psychological evaluations to officers of the Department and their immediate families.
2. Voluntary evaluations may be conducted at the request of an officer or an officer's immediate family. Voluntary evaluations include, but are not limited to, assessments of the following:
 - a. An officer's stress level;
 - b. An officer's or family member's non-job related emotional, cognitive, or behavioral functioning issue; and
 - c. An officer's neuropsychological integrity following a head injury.
3. Appointments for voluntary evaluations may be made by calling the Psychological Services Office at 207-2180.
4. Non-mandatory evaluations may be requested by an officer's supervisor when there is a noticeable change in an officer's on-the-job performance. Some of the factors that may be taken into consideration are as follows:
 - a. An increase in the use of sick leave;
 - b. An increase in the number of citizen complaints;
 - c. Frequently reporting late for work;



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- d. An increase in sarcastic or abusive remarks toward fellow officers;
 - e. Withdrawal from other officers;
 - f. A decline in personal appearance;
 - g. A decrease in impulse control;
 - h. A decrease in productivity; or
 - i. A decrease in the quality of an officer's written reports.
5. Mandatory evaluations may be ordered by the Chief of Police to determine an officer's fitness for duty or emotional, cognitive, and/or behavioral suitability for police work. The evaluations may be for, but not limited to, any of the following incidents:
- a. Any loss of life or serious bodily injury as a result of an officer's actions;
 - b. Police involved shootings;
 - c. Fatality incidents;
 - d. Fatality crashes involving officers;
 - e. The death of an officer;
 - f. Officers involved in critical incidents;
 - g. Officers involved in family disturbance/violence incidents;
 - h. Substance abuse, or
 - i. Report/complaints of criminal wrongdoing; or
 - j. Report/complaints of significant behavioral infractions.

B. Counseling

1. The Psychological Services Office provides psychological counseling services to officers of the Department and their families who are experiencing problems in any of the following areas (including but not limited to):
 - a. Substance abuse;
 - b. Depression;
 - c. Suicidal thoughts;
 - d. Physical problems related to stress;



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- e. Panic attacks;
 - f. Temper control problems;
 - g. Family conflicts;
 - h. Eating disorders; or
 - i. Smoking habits.
2. Requests for counseling may be made by self-referral, a family member, or an officer's supervisor.
 3. Officers may be ordered to counseling by the Chief if the member is involved in a family disturbance/violence incident.
- C. Consultations
1. Any supervisory or command officer may consult with the Psychological Services Office on supervisory, operational, or organizational issues.
 2. Supervisory officers are encouraged to consult with a staff psychologist prior to counseling an officer due to noticeable changes in the officer's behavior. The staff psychologist should be able to advise the supervisor regarding the importance of the officer's behavioral changes, methods of approaching the officer, and the need for Psychological Services Office intervention.
 3. The Psychological Services Office provides consultation services to any unit concerned with the application of psychological knowledge to the development of organizational effectiveness. Included in the appropriate organizational issues for the Psychological Services Office are the following:
 - a. Validation of the assessment and selection process of personnel; and
 - b. The application of psychology in the investigative process.

.05 CONFIDENTIALITY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

- A. All voluntary and non-mandatory evaluations and counseling are confidential information, unless the staff psychologist determines an immediate threat exists to an officer or other party (in such cases, the staff psychologist has a duty to intervene to save lives), or if required by law or subpoenaed by a Judge's order.
- B. Mandatory evaluations and counseling are not considered confidential information. The officer subjected to mandatory evaluation or counseling shall cooperate fully with the staff psychologist and understand the information discussed will be shared with the Office of the Chief.