



*Providing exceptional culturally competent psychological services and training to first responders and their family members.*

## **Peer Support Team Development**

- I. **Memo to the Chief/Command-** include a problem statement, information on personnel stress and suicide and why PST is needed.
- II. **Develop Policy (review other departments and make it fit to your needs)**
- III. **In the process of developing policy consider budgetary issues to include:**
  - a. Cost of Basic Peer Support Training
  - b. Optional training: Annual CA Peer Support Association Conference, Advanced PST, Critical Incident Stress Management training.
  - c. Overtime: for a call-out/PST Meetings- minimal cost to dept.
- IV. **Once policy is approved and given permission to move forward:**  
**Two options:**
  1. **Do a presentation at all briefings/staff meetings-**This is your recruitment campaign  
(All staff should be asked to attend)
    - a. Presentation should be on what Peer Support is, what it is NOT, and why the department is moving forward in developing a team.
    - b. Chief's/command support. (Have someone from command/leadership there)
    - c. See if someone will discuss the impact of a case/call/incident in briefing/meeting
    - d. Show a short video relatable to your personnel's work/stress/trauma to start the discussion.
    - e. Discuss the process for team selection. What qualities are you looking for?
  2. **Email the department** with all the above information and send out interest forms with due dates.
- V. **Candidates**
  - a. Check in with candidate's supervisor-no major concerns and not pending an IA, etc.

**PREMIER FIRST RESPONDER PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES**

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## **VI. Interview Process & Purpose**

- a. Informal- purpose-getting to know you- on average takes 15 minutes
- b. Make sure candidates are there for the right reason & that they are genuine in wanting to help their peers
- c. Vet out people who are known to be “gossips” or are using to promote.
- d. Vet out personnel who may be dealing with personal or professional stress/issues and would cause them psychological harm if they were to take on their peers’ stressors.
- e. Panel (suggestion) to include PST Coordinator(s), Manager in charge of PST, members of peer support from surrounding departments, Dept. Psychologist.