



Cochise County Judicial System

Policy Title: Traumatic Event Counseling for Peace Officers and Public Safety Employees

Policy Number: 2004

Effective: December 5, 2023

Last Reviewed/Updated: December 5, 2023

Scope/Coverage: This policy covers employees in the following positions: probation officer, surveillance officer and juvenile detention officer.

I. Eligibility

- A. Pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) §§ 38-672 and 38-673, at the expense of Cochise County, peace officers and public safety employees are eligible for up to twelve (12) visits of licensed counseling, which may be provided through telehealth if they are exposed to a traumatic event while in the course of duty.
1. "Peace officer" as defined in A.R.S. § 1-215 includes Cochise County Sheriff Deputies and the Cochise County Constable.
 2. "Public safety employee" is defined in A.R.S. § 38-672, as follows:
 - a. An individual who is a member of the public safety personnel retirement system or the corrections officer retirement plan;
 - b. A probation officer, surveillance officer, or juvenile detention officer.
 - c. A "public safety employee" does not include a peace officer.
 3. A "traumatic event while in the course of duty" for public safety employees is defined as:
 1. Visually witnessing the death or maiming or visually witnessing the immediate aftermath of such a death or maiming of one or more human beings.
 2. Responding to or being directly involved in a criminal investigation of an offense involving a dangerous crime against children as defined in A.R.S. § 13-705.
 3. Requiring rescue in the line of duty where one's life was endangered.
 4. A "traumatic event while in the course of duty" for peace officers includes those events identified for public safety employees, as well as:

- a. Using deadly force or being subjected to deadly force in the line of duty, regardless of whether the peace officer was physically injured.
 - b. Witnessing the death of another peace officer while engaged in the line of duty.
 - c. Responding to or being directly involved in an investigation regarding the drowning or near drowning of a child.
5. "Licensed counseling" for peace officers means counseling provided by a psychiatrist or psychologist who is licensed pursuant to A.R.S. Title 32, Chapter 13, 17, or 19.1.
 6. "Licensed counseling" for public safety employees means counseling provided by a psychologist who is licensed pursuant to A.R.S. Title 32, Chapter 19.1 or a behavioral health professional who is licensed pursuant to A.R.S. Title 32, Chapter 33 and has training and expertise in treating trauma.
- B. If a licensed mental health professional determines that a peace officer needs additional visits of licensed counseling beyond the 12 sessions under section A, and that the additional visits are likely to improve the peace officer's condition, the County shall pay for up to an additional 24 visits if the visits occur within one year from the first visit.
- C. A public safety employee or peace officer shall not be required to take personal leave or sick leave to attend a counseling appointment under this policy.

II. Procedure

- A. An eligible employee who is exposed to a traumatic event while in the course of duty may notify the Department Director or immediate supervisor. In the alternative, the employee may notify the Judicial Human Resources Department directly.
- B. The Department Director or immediate supervisor who is notified, or otherwise becomes aware of an employee who is exposed to a traumatic event while in the course of duty, will coordinate with the Judicial Human Resources Department to ensure the employee's counseling needs are met.
- C. Upon determination of eligibility, the Judicial Human Resources Department will assist the employee in getting licensed counseling through a contracted provider or through a provider of the employee's own choosing who must be willing to provide counseling pursuant to A.R.S. § 38- 673 and to accept the schedule of fees fixed by the Industrial Commission of Arizona pursuant to A.R.S. § 23-908.