

**CHAPTER: 500**

**Personnel/Human Resources**

**DEPARTMENT ORDER:**

**521 – Employee Assistance Program**

**OFFICE OF PRIMARY  
RESPONSIBILITY:**

**TP  
OPS**

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# Arizona Department of Corrections Rehabilitation and Reentry



**Department Order Manual**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Thornell", is written over a horizontal line.

**Ryan Thornell, Director**

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## **PURPOSE**

This Department Order (DO) establishes uniform procedures for providing immediate support to employees who are **impacted** emotionally or physically in a critical incident in an effort to mitigate the effects of the incident. This DO further provides support and assistance to family members of staff who have been injured or died in the line of duty. **Additionally, the following communication and engagement requirements have been established for members of the Employee Support Unit (ESU) to ensure the consistent delivery of support and resources to employees.**

**The ESU's mission is to empower and support correctional staff by fostering an environment of compassion and resilience. The ESU is dedicated to providing confidential, empathetic, and peer-driven assistance to improve the overall well-being of every Department staff member. The ESU strives to ensure all staff have access to the resources they need to thrive and the opportunity to engage.**

## **APPLICABILITY**

This DO does not create a contract for employment between any employee and the Department. Nothing in this DO changes the fact that all uncovered employees of the Department are at-will employees and serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority.

This DO is applicable to all **Department employees, contractors, volunteers, Program Associates, and interns.**

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

**The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and ESU fall under the supervision of the Assistant Director for Training and Personnel.**

## **PROCEDURES**

**1.0 PROGRAM OVERVIEW** – In recognition of the unique environment presented in a correctional setting, the **EAP** provides essential tools for Department employees and their families to cope with **the** unusual circumstances and/or **associated** stress. The State's **EAP** provides professional services, which include psychological counseling, financial planning, legal assistance, and community assistance. Critical incident/trauma debriefing services are also provided on an as-requested basis and are arranged through the Department's Chief Human Resources Officer. The Department also provides on-site, volunteer assistance through its **ESU**.

### 1.1 Use of Services

1.1.1 Except where noted, employee participation shall be on a voluntary basis.

1.1.2 Employees or their immediate family members, where appropriate, may request services from any portion of the program or **several** sources.

1.1.2.1 Psychological counseling services through the **EAP** are limited to 12 sessions per issue per calendar year.

1.1.2.2 **Compsych: Call 877-327-2362**  
**TDD: 800-697-0353**  
**GuidanceResource.com**  
**Web ID: HN8876C**

- 1.1.3 If necessary or desired by the employee, staff members who participate in providing services may advise employees and their families regarding non-Department services available in addition to those provided by the Department.
- 1.2 **ESU members:**
  - 1.2.1 Assigned to a prison complex shall be direct reports to the Deputy Warden of Operations of their respective complex when mobilized. **In the absence of a Deputy Warden of Operations, ESU members shall report to the Warden.**
  - 1.2.2 Assigned to a non-institutional area of operation shall report to their Administrator.
  - 1.2.3 **ESU provides Critical Incident and Employee Peer Support services to staff involved in a critical incident that can reasonably have a traumatic effect on that person. These services include assisting staff to appropriately process trauma, stress, and connecting staff to appropriate resources.**
    - 1.2.3.1 **The Peer Support Team are trained staff members, who provide support to their fellow staff experiencing trauma, stress, or problems that impact the workplace.**
- 1.3 Employee Death or Incapacitating Injury In the Line of Duty – The Department shall notify the appropriate family member/emergency contact in the event of an employee death or if the employee sustains an incapacitating injury in the line of duty. To the extent desired by the family, the Department shall provide support, and if deemed appropriate, shall assist the family with funeral arrangements.
  - 1.3.1 The Media Relations Office shall serve as the initial contact with the media and, if desired by the family, serve as the on-going contact with the media.
- 1.4 Employee Death or Incapacitating Injury Off Duty – While the Department may not be directly involved, the Department may be tasked with notifying a family member/emergency contact of an incident. In addition, while not to the degree of an in the line of duty incident, support for the family may be appropriate and thus offered by the appropriate Warden or Bureau Administrator, upon notification and approval of their Assistant Director.
- 1.5 Any deviation to the guidelines set herein shall require approval of the **Wellness Program Administrator or ESU Coordinator.**

## **2.0 GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY – EAP relies on a variety of intervention and family support services.**

- 2.1 Under the direction of the **Wellness Program Administrator**, employees may volunteer to serve as **ESU** leaders and members. The **Wellness Program Administrator** shall maintain oversight of the **ESU**, as well as evaluate the tenure of each member. **Rotation of members in and out of the ESU may occur** to prevent burnout.
  - 2.1.1 **ESU** members, trained in crisis intervention skills, shall respond to employees in crisis using appropriate techniques; and may assist employees by offering appropriate referral services.
  - 2.1.2 Assignment to **ESU** duty is voluntary and involves no reclassification activity or salary adjustment. All activities of team leaders and/or members are considered supplemental to regular job responsibilities.

2.1.3 Assignment to **ESU** duty shall be approved through the applicant's chain of command prior to the assignment occurring.

2.2 **ESU Leads and Co-Leads shall be issued a cell phone by the Complex Warden or designee.**

2.3 The Media Relations Office shall be primarily responsible for any media release involving any critical incident, **including incidents involving staff**. The Department shall not release any personal identifying information until the employee's next of kin has been notified and provides consent.

### **3.0 EMPLOYEE SUPPORT UNIT MEMBER SELECTION**

3.1 Each prison complex shall have one team leader, and shall have no more than a total of 20 **ESU** members.

3.2 The **ESU** Coordinator, in consultation with **applicable** Assistant Directors, shall determine the number of **ESU** leaders and members for non-institutional areas of operation.

3.3 A staff member who wishes to serve as an **ESU** member shall complete an **Employee Support Unit** Application, Form 521-1.

3.3.1 The application shall be submitted to the **ESU** leader at the staff member's duty post. The **ESU** leader shall conduct an interview and forward recommended applications to the Deputy Warden of Operations or Warden, if the Deputy Warden of Operations position is vacant. For non-institutional staff, the recommended applications shall be forwarded to the appropriate Administrator.

3.4 The Warden, Bureau Administrator, or Assistant Director, as appropriate, shall forward approved applications to the **ESU** Coordinator who shall notify, in writing, the applicants who are selected and add them to the master roster.

3.5 Past or pending disciplinary action and the display of professional behavior shall be considered in the final selection process and may preclude an individual from selection.

3.6 To avoid conflict with professional standards or other conflicts of interest, employees in the following categories may be precluded from becoming an **ESU** leader or member:

3.6.1 **Office of Inspector General Investigators**

3.6.2 Others as determined by the Warden, Deputy Warden of Operations, non-institutional Administrator, **ESU** Coordinator, and/or **Wellness Program Administrator**, in consultation with the **Assistant Director for Training and Personnel**.

3.7 Applications that are disapproved at any level shall be returned to the applicant with a brief explanation of the denial. Non-selection is not grievable.

3.8 **Upon approval of application, staff members shall receive an invitation to participate in ESU training.**

### **4.0 EMPLOYEE SUPPORT UNIT ACTIVITIES**

4.1 **ESU** Assignments – **ESU** leaders shall provide written team rosters to the Deputy Warden of Operations, non-institutional Administrators, and **ESU** Coordinator. The **ESU** Coordinator shall maintain a Department-wide master **ESU** roster.

4.2 **The ESU Coordinator shall have quarterly meetings with team leaders from each complex. Each ESU lead shall have monthly meetings, which will include training.**

4.3 **Ongoing Training Expectations**

4.3.1 **Monthly training will be conducted by the ESU lead; and the recommended length of training is for four hours.**

4.3.2 **Training topics will be provided by the ESU Wellness Program Administrator based on current wellness information.**

4.3.3 **Training – The Wellness Program Administrator and ESU Coordinator shall ensure compliance with applicable training standards.**

4.4 **Resource Distribution**

4.4.1 **Monthly Communication and Engagement Requirements at Each Complex**

4.4.1.1 **Frequency - Members of the ESU are required to conduct a meaningful engagement tour in at least one unit per month.**

4.4.1.2 **Objectives - During these sessions, members must provide relevant information and resources to employees, addressing any concerns, and promoting available support services.**

4.4.1.3 **Documentation - Members must document each meaningful engagement tour including the date, unit visited, key topics discussed, and resources provided. This documentation should be submitted to the ESU Coordinator for record keeping and review.**

4.4.2 **Annual Communication and Engagement Requirements for Statewide Members**

4.4.2.1 **Frequency - Each member of the statewide ESU is required to complete at least two meaningful engagement tours annually.**

4.4.2.2 **Active Status - Completion of these sessions is mandatory to maintain active status within the ESU. Failure to meet this requirement may result in reassignment or suspension from the ESU.**

4.5 **ESU Activation**

4.5.1 **Each ESU shall have a written mobilization plan in place that has been approved by the ESU Coordinator, Deputy Warden of Operations, or the non-institutional Administrator.**

4.5.1.1 **Mobilization shall occur as soon as possible during or after a critical incident. The Warden or designee shall be the Approving Authority for the mobilization of ESU at the complex level. Briefings and mission objectives shall be relayed to the responding ESU members.**

4.5.1.2 **Activation of all or part of ESU may be made dependent upon the type and scope of the incident and the number of employees involved. The Warden or designee, or non-institutional Administrator if a non-institutional activation, shall make the final determination.**

- 4.5.1.3 Activated **ESU** members shall be issued a two-way radio as needed to ensure regular communications and safety.
- 4.5.2 After a critical incident, the Assistant Director, **Deputy Assistant Director, Wellness Program Administrator**, Warden, Deputy Warden of Operations, or non-institutional Administrator shall request an **ESU** response for employees who were directly or indirectly involved in the incident. Interventions shall be held as soon as practical.
- 4.5.3 For an appropriate incident or series of incidents, the Assistant Director, **Deputy Assistant Director, Wellness Program Administrator**, Warden, or Deputy Warden of Operations shall activate **the ESU**. **Examples** may include any situation involving staff victimization such as threats of violence by inmates or a security threat group.
- 4.5.4 An **ESU** member shall:
  - 4.5.4.1 Make direct contact with involved staff and allow the staff member to accept or decline assistance; this may include telephonic contact.
  - 4.5.4.2 Be part of an in person notification to family/emergency contact, and shall provide immediate assistance/support to the family, provided the family makes such a request.
    - 4.5.4.2.1 Approval from the Deputy Warden of Operations or non-institutional Administrator and/or **Wellness Program Administrator and/or ESU** Coordinator for such assistance shall be obtained in advance.
- 4.6 Critical Incident Functions
  - 4.6.1 Upon activation, the **ESU** leader shall:
    - 4.6.1.1 Evaluate the situation.
    - 4.6.1.2 Determine the action to be taken and set-up **ESU** Command.
    - 4.6.1.3 Advise and consult with the **Warden**, Deputy Warden of Operations, or non-institutional Administrator.
    - 4.6.1.4 Contact and activate team members.
    - 4.6.1.5 In consultation with the Incident Commander or the senior on-site management official, coordinate on-scene intervention and assistance.
    - 4.6.1.6 Advise and consult with the **ESU** Coordinator as needed.
  - 4.6.2 **ESU** members shall **explain the limits of confidentiality to employees prior to engaging, specifically** advising employees that, prior to communicating with other **ESU** team members, confidentiality does not apply when disclosure is required by statute or Department written instruction such as criminal conduct, and/or serious violations of Department written instruction, or when circumstances indicate employees are likely to be a danger to themselves or others. For **ESU** confidentiality guidelines see Attachment A.

- 4.6.2.1 If there is any uncertainty about confidentiality, the **ESU** member shall contact the Deputy Warden of Operations or non-institutional Administrator, and/or the **ESU** Coordinator through the team leader.
  - 4.6.2.2 If disclosure of information is necessary, the team member shall inform the team leader who shall disclose the information to the Deputy Warden of Operations or non-institutional Administrator, and/or the **ESU** Coordinator of the circumstances, as soon as possible.
  - 4.6.2.3 If determined by the Deputy Warden of Operations, non-institutional Administrator or **ESU** Coordinator, that immediate response and attention is required, the team member shall disclose all information about the situation, including the identity of the employee involved in order to ensure that necessary steps **are** initiated to address the matter appropriately.
- 4.7 Mandatory Interventions – An **ESU** response and appropriate resource referrals, is **required** for the following critical incidents:
- 4.7.1 Line of duty death
  - 4.7.2 Staff involved shooting
  - 4.7.3 Hostage situation
  - 4.7.4 Incapacitating injury in the line of duty
  - 4.7.5 Staff assault
  - 4.7.6 Inmate execution
  - 4.7.7 Any situation where staff members are involved in life saving measures, such as a CPR response to an inmate, employee or other persons on site
  - 4.7.8 Inmate suicide, suicide attempt, or physical injury resulting from an attempt
- 4.8 Employees or family members may refuse **ESU** services.
- 4.9 Employee Referral Services
- 4.9.1 **ESU** team members may provide peer support and referral services for employees who may be under stress from:
    - 4.9.1.1 **Substance use concerns**
    - 4.9.1.2 Family crisis
    - 4.9.1.3 Post-traumatic stress
    - 4.9.1.4 Job-related stress
    - 4.9.1.5 Financial difficulties
    - 4.9.1.6 Military activation
    - 4.9.1.7 Return from military active duty



#### 4.9.1.8 Any other wellness concerns

4.9.2 This service may be limited to referring the employee to the appropriate contract service or other outside services. Any employee may consult with a team leader or member for appropriate referral service. **ESU** members shall follow up, at least once after the initial contact, to ensure the employee has made appropriate connections for assistance.

#### 4.10 Record Keeping and Documentation

4.10.1 Team leaders and members shall only record numbers of interventions and contacts.

4.10.2 The **ESU** leaders shall provide the **Employee Support Unit** Monthly Activity Report, Form 521-3 to the Deputy Warden of Operations, **Wellness Program Administrator**, and **ESU** Coordinator, with a copy to the Warden, by the 10th day of each month, summarizing services provided during the preceding month.

#### 4.11 Use of Overtime

4.11.1 Every effort shall be made to use on duty **ESU** personnel to provide intervention services.

4.11.2 The affected Assistant Director, through the **Deputy Assistant Director, Wellness Program Administrator, Warden**, or Bureau Administrator, shall approve or decline the use of overtime **per** DO #512, Employee Pay, Work Hours, Compensation and Leave, for intervention services.

4.11.3 Team members shall use flex time whenever possible.

4.12 Team Deployment Outside of Assigned Area – During large scale critical incidents, the Deputy Warden of Operations and the **ESU** Coordinator or designee shall coordinate team deployment for institutions, units, or other agencies outside of the team’s assigned area. Pre-trained and **ESU** Coordinator approved teams from other agencies may be used to supplement Department teams, **if necessary**.

4.13 Removal From the **ESU** – The **ESU** Coordinator or Deputy Warden of Operations, in consultation with the Warden for institutional staff or the Assistant Director for non-institutional staff, may remove a team member or leader from the program.

4.13.1 Justification for the removal shall be documented in the **ESU** file.

4.13.2 Any such removal is not appealable or grievable.

### 5.0 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNSELING – In addition to **ESU** or other services, employees may voluntarily seek **behavioral health** counseling **and/or services**.

5.1 Employees may, at their own expense, obtain alternative forms of counseling and assistance through one of the state’s health insurance providers or another provider of their choice.

5.2 Employees may use sick leave for voluntary **behavioral health** counseling **and/or services**.

5.3 Voluntary Substance **U**se Counseling

- 5.3.1 Employees who are concerned about their use of substances and/or other addictive behaviors are strongly encouraged to voluntarily seek assistance **about** those concerns.
- 5.3.2 Voluntary admittance to **treatment and/or** counseling does not negate the employee of the responsibility to uphold and comply with the laws of this state and to maintain an acceptable job performance level. Employees administratively determined to be in violation of statutes, rules, or Department written instructions, or who continue to display patterns of deteriorating job performance shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
- 5.3.3 Employees may use sick leave with the approval of their supervisor for qualifying voluntary **behavioral health services**.
- 5.3.4 Supervisors shall take a proactive role in recognizing employees who **may** have a **substance use** problem. Every effort shall be made to encourage and assist employees to seek **treatment and/or** counseling.

5.4 Critical Incident or Post-Trauma Counseling – In addition to **ESU** activities outlined in section 4.0, and in an effort to counter any immediate or delayed adverse psychological reaction to an incident:

- 5.4.1 Employees who are direct participants in a shooting incident, or are victims of critical incidents, shall be encouraged to receive **behavioral health** counseling **and/or services** as soon as practical following the incident. This may be provided onsite, through the **EAP**.

5.5 Confidentiality

- 5.5.1 The results of any post-trauma evaluation/counseling ordered by the Department shall only be shared with the Department Employee Assistance Office. A briefing shall be provided regarding the outcome of the results to the employee's Assistant Director and/or Warden/Bureau Administrator.
- 5.5.2 An employee who is receiving counseling shall be entitled to keep the contents of his/her counseling in strict confidence between the employee and his/her provider.

**6.0 EMPLOYEE DEATH OR INCAPACITATING INJURY/SURVIVOR SUPPORT** – The Department recognizes the need to consistently provide a timely response to an employee's death or incapacitating injury regardless of whether the incident occurs on or off duty.

6.1 In the Line of Duty Notification Process – If confirmed information is received that an employee has sustained incapacitating injury or death while on duty, the appropriate Assistant Director, Warden, Deputy Warden, Bureau Administrator, or **ESU** member shall immediately notify the **ESU** Coordinator of the incident.

- 6.1.1 The **ESU** Coordinator shall ensure that designated **ESU** member(s) are directed to respond to the immediate family/emergency contact.

- 6.1.2 After the immediate family/emergency contact has been notified, the team members may proceed to make other notifications as directed or necessary. Designated **ESU** members may offer to arrange to stay with the immediate family as necessary. Confidentiality of records shall be maintained in accordance with the Attachment A and DO #507, Employee Records.
- 6.1.3 If at any time the family wishes for the Department to have no further involvement, **ESU** members shall end contact.
- 6.2 Off Duty Employee Notification Process – Any staff member who becomes aware that an off duty employee has died or has sustained an incapacitating injury shall notify their supervisor and the Human Resource Liaison. The Human Resource Liaison shall notify the employee’s Assistant Director, Warden, Deputy Warden of Operations, or Bureau Administrator who shall immediately notify the **ESU** Coordinator and the Media Relations Office.
- 6.3 Notification Coordination – If other Agencies/Law Enforcement Officials are involved, appropriate communication and/or coordination shall take place to ensure that family members are not notified prior to clearance by the investigating agency.
- 6.4 Report Requirements – An employee death or incapacitating injury while in the line of duty requires a Significant Incident Report, Form 105-3, per DO #105, Information Reporting. An off duty incident may require a significant incident report.
  - 6.4.1 Reporting staff shall ensure that Significant Incident Reports, and employee health related reports outlined in DO #519, Employee Health – State/Federal Programs and Assignment, are completed as required.
- 6.5 In the Line of Duty Death - Response and Support – The appropriate Administrator shall appoint a Department representative to assist the family and act as the Family Support Liaison. The Family Support Liaison shall serve as a link between the Department and the deceased employee’s family. The **ESU** Coordinator shall:
  - 6.5.1 Prepare a letter to the appropriate survivor for the **Assistant Director for Training and Personnel** or **Human Resource** designee’s signature notifying them of the appointment. The letter shall be delivered as soon as practical.
    - 6.5.1.1 The family is not required to accept the services of the Family Support Liaison or may request the services of a different individual.
  - 6.5.2 **Coordinate and notify** the Department’s Office of Victim Services **if the employee’s death was the result of a crime**.
  - 6.5.3 Ensure that Department acknowledgment, such as follow-up letters or phone calls from the appropriate employees are made to the surviving family.
  - 6.5.4 Facilitate obtaining the Director’s approval for individuals who are seeking Department recognition of the deceased employee such as plaques, awards, or monuments.
  - 6.5.5 Prepare a letter to the survivors for the Director's signature, recognizing the employee’s service to the state and Department.

- 6.5.6 Inform the Media Relations Office of any memorial accounts/funds to assist the family.
- 6.6 The 100 Club – Whenever a Correctional Officer is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty, the **Chief of Prison Operations** or designee shall notify the 100 Club Liaison in the Employee Assistance Office, who shall notify the 100 Club of the situation. Benefits may be paid at the discretion of the 100 Club.
- 6.7 Catastrophic Events – Other catastrophic events in the workplace and require notification and/or employee or family support. These situations shall be addressed on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Director.

## **DEFINITIONS/GLOSSARY**

Refer to the Glossary of Terms for the following:

- 100 Club
- Crisis Intervention
- Critical Incidents
- **Employee Support Unit (ESU)**
- **Employee Support Unit (ESU) Coordinator**
- Family Support Liaison
- In The Line Of Duty
- Incapacitating Injury
- Off-Duty Death
- On-Duty Death
- Suicide
- **Wellness Program Administrator**

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - **Employee Support Unit Confidentiality Guidelines**

## **FORMS LIST**

**105-3, Significant Incident Report**  
**521-1, Employee Support Unit Application**  
**521-3, Employee Support Unit Monthly Activity**

## **AUTHORITY**

United States Code, Title 36, Chapter 10, 173-177

## ATTACHMENT A

### EMPLOYEE SUPPORT UNIT CONFIDENTIALITY GUIDELINES

Peer support interventions and conversations are not always considered “privileged” communication. In order for peer assistance to be effective, however, a certain degree of privacy and safety must be guaranteed. These guidelines are designed to assist the **Employee Support Unit (ESU)** members in discerning appropriate, professional action.

1. An **ESU** member who determines a person is potentially a danger to **himself or herself** or others must take action to advise appropriate authorities/parties. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - a) suicidal ideation
  - b) homicidal thoughts/intent
  - c) child abuse
  - d) **substance use** behavior that compromises the safety of others
2. **ESU** members may talk to other **ESU** members regarding a situation or individual in order to ensure that appropriate assistance is provided. These conversations should be held in person or by phone, away from others who might overhear. Sensitive information should never be sent by email or put in writing. No staff member or their specific situation should be discussed at a team meeting.
3. **ESU** members are not responsible for providing information about critical incidents to other staff. Decisions regarding the release of information and the methodology lie with the Wardens or other administrators. **ESU** may make suggestions, or be directed to deliver information at briefings or other venues, but should not initiate the dissemination of sensitive information. Never pass on information about a critical incident that has not been confirmed and approved.
4. **ESU** members may not pass on any medical diagnosis or prognosis without the express written consent of the individual.
5. **ESU** members are not qualified to render an opinion about a staff member’s mental health or fitness for duty. If asked to provide an opinion, an **ESU** member should state they are not qualified to do so.
6. **ESU** members may provide administration/supervisors a “heads-up” as a result of information received while providing **ESU** assistance. This may include concerns expressed by staff, issues that are “brewing,” and staff requests that may improve a situation. Specific sources of information or names of individuals should not be disclosed without permission of the speaker.
7. **ESU** members should not keep sensitive, written information on any individual. **ESU** reports should include only non-identifying demographics, incident types, referrals provided, and other statistical information.
8. **ESU** members must be cognizant of Department policies and reporting requirements. During an intervention, if the person being assisted initiates conversation about a topic that an **ESU** member must report (i.e., Equal Employment Opportunity issues, policy violations, etc.), the **ESU** member should stop the conversation. At this point, the **ESU** member may make an appropriate referral and/or advise that if the conversation continues, they may have to report the information. If it is an Equal Employment Opportunity issue, the **ESU** member should explain the proper reporting channels and the importance of reporting.
9. **ESU** members who are supervisors should be aware of potential role conflicts. When practicable, members should not provide **ESU** assistance to persons under their direct supervision.

10. **ESU** members should encourage staff to talk directly with other parties about their sensitive issues, rather than being an intermediary. If for any reason an **ESU** member must disclose an individual's identity and issues to any party other than another **ESU** member, they should secure permission or advise the individual.
  
11. **ESU** members that are unsure about the appropriate way to handle a confidentiality issue should consult with a team leader. Team leaders may consult with the **ESU** Coordinator.