

Critical Incident FAQs for Managers and Supervisors

What is a critical incident?

A traumatic event, known in the workplace as a critical incident, is an abrupt, powerful crisis that creates an unusually strong emotional reaction. The stress response can be immediate or delayed and triggered by one event, or by a series of events, which may interfere with normal coping abilities.

Why respond to a critical incident?

It is to both the employees' and employer's benefit to help workers manage the impact of a workplace critical incident. Research indicates employees who are exposed to a critical incident, that is dealt with inappropriately, are more likely to experience an increase in personal and health-related problems. There is a greater risk of them using more sick days, having lower productivity or leaving their employment following the critical incident. Two factors greatly reduce critical incident stress:

- **Pre-trauma awareness** - Education and familiarization with critical incident stress can help protect your work group.
- **Prompt support after a critical incident** – Most workers feel that their bosses set the tone for workplace response to trauma and grief rather than company policies.

What is my role as Manager/Supervisor?

Managers and supervisors are leaders in times of crisis. Depending on the nature of the event, immediate outreach to employees acknowledging the critical incident may be enough to reduce distress. If the critical incident has caused evident signs of considerable distress, impairment or dysfunction amongst the workforce, a formal critical incident intervention can effectively address concerns.

What is a critical incident intervention?

A Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) is a mental health intervention which requires specialized training. It is often referred to as "mental health first-aid." The purpose is to normalize reactions and facilitate recovery to build a sense of resiliency.

Led by an expert, the process typically entails a combined approach of group story-telling with practical information. The traditional format is a group debrief followed by individual meetings. This format is flexible to accommodate the organization's needs. A group and/or individual meetings can be scheduled. Services can be delivered onsite, virtually or telephonically.

The CISD process does not constitute any form of psychotherapy and it should never be utilized as a substitute for psychotherapy.

How do I initiate a critical incident stress debrief (CISD)?

Consult with the EAP by calling 855-775-4357 and asking to speak with an Organizational Service team member. The team may also be contacted directly during business hours at 858-736-0040 or via email at orgservice@allonehealth.com. **For after-hour needs, please contact the main EAP line at 855-775-4357.**

During the consultation, a team member will request information to understand the nature of the incident and provide recommendations and best practices. If it is decided to proceed, the team member will go through an intake process and provide guidance on next steps.

Be sure to let the staff know that any intervention is voluntary for their support, is confidential and will not be used as a performance critique or evaluation. Managers and supervisors are not part of the CISD group session. A separate consultation for management can be arranged.

Contact AllOne Health

855-RSL-HELP (855-775-4357)

<http://allonehealth.com/reliance-matrix>

Company Code: RSLI859

