

Peer Support in Public Safety

Critical Items for Success

The Basics

- ✓ **Do you have a comprehensive peer support team policy and procedure?**
 - Is your policy up to date and compliant with state legislation/codes?
 - Does your policy cover both the selection and de-selection of team members?
- ✓ **Does your team have a code of ethics?**
- ✓ **Do you have the right number of peer supporters to cover the need?**
 - Many teams are undersized, given low staffing, training time reductions, promotions and agency departures. Ideally, at a minimum, agencies should have 10% of their agency trained as peer supporters. Larger or more spread out agencies may need more of their personnel to be trained to adequately meet the need.
- ✓ **Has your agency leadership, command and below, been properly trained on what peer support is, how it can be effective, the limits of confidentiality and when to activate peer members?**
 - Many agencies have peer support teams that either lack support from the top down or are not understood by agency leaders responsible for activating the team's services. An activation procedure should be created, and training should be conducted with all supervisors and leaders.

Confidentiality

- ✓ **Confidentiality is critical to a team. Do your members understand what this is and when they are obligated to break confidentiality?**
- ✓ **Does your peer team have waivers of confidentiality?**
- ✓ **Does your team know the process for breaking confidentiality?**
- ✓ **Do your members sign confidentiality agreements?**

Training

- ✓ **Are your peer supporters fully trained to cover both post-critical incidents and day-to-day stressors/trauma exposure?**
 - Many agencies provide specialized debriefing training, which is a great start, but it does not provide the breadth needed to consider your peer supporters fully trained.
 - Review the lesson plan for anyone providing training to your team. Ensure the training covers both post-critical incidents and day-to-day stressors/trauma exposure.
- ✓ **Are your peer support team members certified through the Peer Support Training and Certification program from Lexipol?**
- ✓ **Are your peer supporters receiving continuing education?**
 - A minimum of four hours of continuing education should be conducted annually.

Clinical Support

- ✓ **Do you have a clinical consultant working with your team, available 24/7?**
- ✓ **Does your clinician have specialized training to work with peer support teams and do they understand their role within the organization?**
- ✓ **Is your clinician certified to work with public safety through the Clinician Training and Certification program from Lexipol?**

Ongoing Support

- ✓ **Do you have a process in place to collect data on your program's utilization and effectiveness?**
 - What do you do with this feedback?
- ✓ **Does your agency ensure peer support team members are taken care of?**
 - Self-care and post-incident interventions are exceptionally important to maintaining the health of your peer supporters. This component is often missed or overlooked.



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