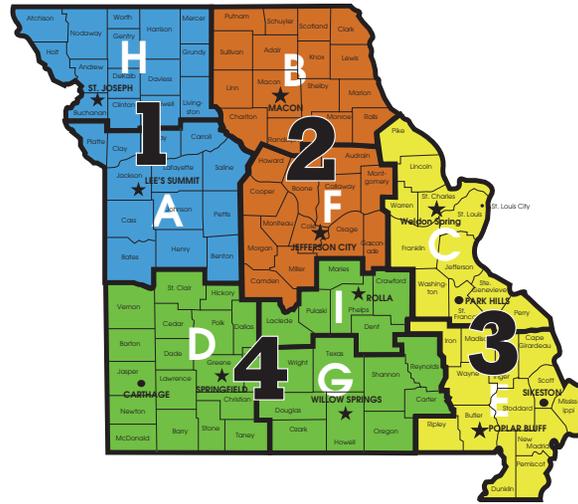


## WHAT IS A POST CRITICAL INCIDENT SEMINAR?

**T**rauma exposure alters the human psyche and may result in unintended, negative consequences. If you are currently experiencing intrusive thoughts, nightmares, relationship problems, performance decline, recent work confrontations, or alcohol and/or substance abuse (beginning after exposure to one or more critical incidents), this three-day therapeutic seminar is for you.

The Missouri Post Critical Incident Seminar was established to provide first responders and communications operators/dispatchers with support following exposure to critical incidents in the line of duty. At PCIS, you will meet other first responders who have experienced similar critical incidents. Health service providers and peer team members acquainted with first responder culture facilitate support. Spouses and significant others are invited to accompany their first responder to PCIS. The seminar provides networking opportunities and discussions about life as a first responder.



### DEFENSE

#### REGIONAL COORDINATORS

##### REGION 1

Sgt. Andy Henry

##### REGION 2

Cpl. Bruce McLaughlin

##### REGION 3

Lt. Michele Coon

##### REGION 4

Lt. Trois Maloney



Need peer support? Contact:

**DEFENSE**

(573) 522-7600

[DEFENSE@mshp.dps.mo.gov](mailto:DEFENSE@mshp.dps.mo.gov)

Or contact an individual peer team member on the DEFENSE Peer Team Roster found in the MSHP Forms folder on the Patrol's intranet.

SHP-594B 4/2023

THE BEST  
*offense*  
IS A  
GOOD



PEER  
*support*  
guide





## WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT?

Peer support is one part of a comprehensive six-component program administered by DEFENSE (Defending Employees From the Effects of Negative Stressful Experiences). Peer support can provide you with one or more specially equipped and respected co-workers (peer team members) who have a sincere desire to assist you following a personal or professional crisis. Peer team members are current (or retired) employees, just like you! They live where you live, work where you work, and experience similar situations. Certainly some have experienced significant stress following an event that is unique, yet very similar to one you may find yourself experiencing at some point during your career. The first official activation of the DEFENSE Team was on April 29, 2016.

## HOW DO I BECOME A PEER TEAM MEMBER?

Peer team members are carefully selected by the DEFENSE steering committee after being nominated by co-workers on a Peer Team Nomination Form (SHP-578). Peer team members must sign a special code of ethics acknowledging the importance of confidentiality for employees who request support. Peer team members must also first complete core training in the topics of assisting individuals in crisis and group crisis intervention provided by the Patrol. The training program is certified by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation.

## AM I THE ONLY ONE THAT FEELS THIS WAY?

Yes, and no. It's important to recognize that not everyone is affected the same way following a critical event. The ability to comprehend and process crises in our lives are rooted in our own unique life experiences, upbringing, spirituality, health, etc. Over time, these experiences shape our world view and create the lens by which we view each new experience. Quite naturally, we resort to past solutions to resolve newly encountered problems. However, past solutions may not be effective in a new crisis. Peers who have navigated similar crises are available to guide you. All you need to do is call DEFENSE at 573-522-7600, to receive this assistance.

## WHAT IS A CRITICAL INCIDENT?

- Officer-involved shootings
- Pursuits involving death or serious injuries
- Child fatalities
- Multiple casualty events (air, land, marine)
- Natural disaster response
- Any event posing a threat of serious injury or death
- Witnessing a fatality occur
- Suicide response
- Incidents of public/media scrutiny
- Line of duty deaths
- Unsuccessful rescue attempts
- Duty-related traumatic events
- Other miscellaneous work-related stressors

## HOW CAN PEER SUPPORT HELP?



When an employee requests assistance following a personal or professional crisis, peer team members are activated and will intentionally focus on supporting that individual. You may be contacted automatically following certain types of critical incidents, or when another employee asks DEFENSE to offer assistance to you because of their concern for you. Employees should be aware that they may refuse support at any time by informing a peer team member that they do not wish to receive additional support from DEFENSE.

### Peer team members can help with:

- Critical or traumatic events (on or away from the scene)
- Relationship issues
- Grief and loss
- Military and family support
- Spiritual support (Patrol chaplains)
- Employee injury/illness support
- Incidents drawing significant media attention

Peer team members are not psychotherapists, and their role is limited. However, they can be of great assistance to employees in crisis by having knowledge and familiarization of supportive resources. If needed, they can assist you with referrals to a mental health professional which is right for you.

