

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

Any critical incident, particularly those involving physical threats, injury, or death, may create stress or psychological trauma. These negative conditions may manifest themselves as anxiety or depression and may affect not only individuals, but larger sections of the community.

If a Mental Health Crisis Occurs:

Site administrators should:

- Provide affected individuals and/or the community with accurate and timely information.
- Seek advice and coordinate efforts with professional mental health practitioners.
- If additional resources are required to effectively manage the situation, request assistance from the Contra Costa County Mental Health Director at (925) 957-5150.
- Be prepared to provide for the crisis counseling needs of affected employees, students, and family members. Incidents requiring these types of resources often generate large volumes of telephone calls and media attention.
- Refer requests for information to the District Public Information Officer (PIO) or District Chief of Police. These individuals are authorized to provide information to employees, students, and the news media.
- If appropriate, establish a sign-in and message center to facilitate communication between involved individuals and/or groups.

Additional procedures:

During any potential or actual mental health crisis, the site Incident Management Team should take the following actions as appropriate:

- Assess the situation.
- Identify at-risk individuals and/or populations.
- Provide regular briefings and defusing sessions to the campus community
- Provide counseling as appropriate.
- Designate and establish conference areas for individual and group consultations.
- Coordinate efforts with outside assistance.
- If multiple agencies are involved in the response to the crisis, establish a Joint Information Center (JIC) to coordinate any released messages or information.

Preparedness/Mitigation Measures

To facilitate the recovery of the District community as a result of a mental health crisis:

- Become familiar with the District Illness and Injury Prevention Plan (IIPP).
- Pre-plan for potential mental health crises.
- Establish and maintain lists of available mental health resources.
- Participate in available pre-incident mental health training.