

## **Charleston County Coroner's Office Policy #51**

**Title:** Wellness and Resilience

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### **51.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

Coroner's Office personnel are frequently exposed to traumatic events and critical incidents in the course of their regular duties that may result in the subsequent development of stress reactions. The Charleston Coroner's Office cannot control the intensity, frequency, or duration of traumatic events, but it seeks to establish formal interventions to prevent and manage stress reactions to critical incident response. The Charleston County government has partnered with the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as part of the employee benefit package. The MUSC EAP is a free and confidential service to help employees and their families with a wide range of problems including relationship issues, divorce, parenting, family problems, and eldercare; drug and alcohol concerns; depression, anxiety and other mental health issues; life balance and stress management; personal impact of financial or legal matters; workplace stress, problems with a co-worker or supervisor; grief or other health and wellness issues.

### **51.2 AWARENESS**

A critical (or traumatic) incident is any event outside the usual realm of human experience that is markedly distressing (e.g. evokes reactions of intense fear, helplessness, horror, etc.). Such critical incidents usually involve the perceived threat to one's physical integrity or the physical integrity of someone else. Most importantly, critical incidents are characterized by how they undermine a person's sense of safety, security, and competency in the world. This results in a form of psychiatric injury. All violent crime is a critical incident and MDI/forensic personnel are often exposed to

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these events, sometimes daily. Recognizing this exposure helps to create a culture within the workplace that fosters discussion and encourages members to seek help if needed for themselves or their peers.

### 51.3 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

1. Self-Referral - Simply call (843) 792-2848 to schedule your confidential assessment appointment.
2. Informal Referral - If your employee or co-worker is experiencing personal issues that are not affecting work performance, please give them our contact information and recommend that he/she schedules an appointment.
3. Formal Supervisory Referral -If your employee is having work performance issues such as absenteeism, chronic tardiness, decreased productivity, poor morale, or mistakes, please fill out the supervisory referral form found at [www.eapnexus.com](http://www.eapnexus.com) or call (843) 792-2848.
4. Confidentiality: MUSC EAP maintains strict confidentiality standards. All records are kept locked in-house and access is limited to MUSC EAP therapists. Supervisors and/or HR personnel are not notified of the attendance of self or informal referrals. Formal supervisory referrals will be asked to sign a release of information so that we can confirm attendance/compliance with supervisors.

### 51.4 OTHER PROGRAMS

From time to time as the Coroner may direct, other programs or services may be added to the baseline EAP program which may be more focused on first responder trauma or vicarious trauma mitigation and/or critical or chronic incident stress debriefs. All affected employees are encouraged to participate.