

CHAPTER 7
CANCER SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP
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CHAPTER 7

CANCER SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP

1. PURPOSE.

a. The purpose of the Cancer Survivor Support Group (CSSG) is to provide emotional support, resources, and other types of assistance for departmental employees and/or their family members who have been diagnosed with cancer.

2. POLICY.

a. The CSSG is administered by the Office of Employee Safety and Assistance (OESA).

b. The CSSG consists of active departmental employees who are cancer survivors, or have loved ones who have been affected by cancer.

c. Members of the CSSG provide information regarding treatment while providing emotional support, positive influence, and inspiration to the employee and the employee's family.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY.

a. The CSSG is a confidential program. A CSSG peer shall not discuss information obtained while acting in a volunteer capacity with anyone, unless required by law. A CSSG Peer shall not divulge shared information with other employees, family members, friends, supervisors or management, or the general public. A CSSG Peer cannot be found insubordinate for failure to divulge information obtained as a CSSG Peer under any administrative investigation of employee misconduct other than for criminal conduct.

b. Employees shall be advised that confidentiality will be strictly maintained except in the following circumstances:

(1) The protection of confidentiality within the Department shall not apply to employee misconduct which constitutes criminal conduct. All CSSG volunteers shall divulge information obtained from an employee who acknowledges participation in misconduct which constitutes criminal conduct, to the employee's commander, and in any subsequent departmental administrative investigations.

(2) Confidentiality cannot be maintained should a CSSG Peer be subpoenaed to testify in court concerning information shared by an employee.

(3) Should a CSSG volunteer, while providing CSSG services to an employee, obtain information causing the belief the employee may be an immediate danger to themselves or others, the CSSG Peer shall immediately notify the employee's commander and the OESA supervisor who will assist in determining what steps should be taken. The OESA supervisor shall notify the OESA commander.

4. STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM. The CSSG is administered by the CSSG program coordinator assigned to the OESA. The CSSG program coordinator should possess awareness and understanding of the issues surrounding cancer. The CSSG program coordinator will work in conjunction with CSSG volunteers selected from peers who have knowledge and an understanding of cancer gained through their own personal experience or by having a loved one affected by cancer.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. Program Coordinator.

(1) Coordinate the recruitment, selection, and training of CSSG Peers.

(2) Maintain a listing of professional resources for potential referrals.

(3) Act as a resource for managers, supervisors, employees, and family members who have questions about cancer and its treatment.

(4) Attend training seminars to enhance their knowledge of various types of cancer treatment options.

(5) Develop and distribute cancer related materials to employees.

(6) Ensure participants adhere to the CSSG confidentiality policies.

(7) Compile and provide a report of activities as requested by the OESA commander.

(8) Receive complaints regarding any part of the CSSG and process complaints through the OESA commander.

(9) Assess training needs, report significant trends, and track the composition and geographic locations of the CSSG volunteers.

b. Volunteers.

- (1) Recognize participation in the CSSG is voluntary and be available to provide support and make a reasonable attempt to remain available to an employee if contacted.
- (2) Maintain contact with the CSSG program coordinator for review of CSSG activities.
- (3) Keep all communications strictly confidential except as provided in the confidentiality policy statement. Refer paragraph 3. of this chapter.
- (4) Abstain from any intimate social relationship (e.g., dating) with any employee, employee's family member, or departmental personnel to whom the CSSG volunteer is providing support.
- (5) Abstain from religious or financial entanglements with the employee.
- (6) Avoid espousing any particular moral standard or philosophy to the employee.
- (7) Assist in the presentation of OESA-related programs to employees.

6. SELECTION OF VOLUNTEERS.

- a. The commander of OESA, the CSSG program coordinator, and the OESA supervisor and/or their designee(s) shall select and interview recommended employees for volunteers based upon their qualifications and the needs of the Department.
- b. Recruitment and selection of CSSG Peers will be an ongoing function of the CSSG program coordinator. Volunteers will be selected from peers who have knowledge and an understanding of cancer-related illnesses, gained through their own experience or by having a loved one who has been affected by cancer.
- c. Interested employees shall submit a memorandum to the OESA, through channels, indicating an interest in the CSSG and describe their personal experience with cancer.
- d. Commanders will make a recommendation regarding the employee's suitability for participation based upon job performance, observed interpersonal skills, maturity, judgment, and personal and professional credibility. Commanders should review the employee's personnel folder to ensure the employee has not been the

subject of an adverse action that might adversely affect the function of the CSSG. Recommendations will be submitted to the respective Division commander for comment and forwarded through channels to the CSSG program coordinator. Recommendations may be withdrawn at any time by notifying the CSSG program coordinator.

7. DISQUALIFICATION OF VOLUNTEERS.

- a. A CSSG Peer who fails to fulfill any of the responsibilities of a CSSG volunteer may be removed from the CSSG at the discretion of the CSSG program coordinator, the OESA supervisor, the OESA commander, the employee's commander, Division, or Executive Management.
- b. Integrity is essential to the effectiveness of the CSSG. Any breach of confidentiality or other inappropriate activity by a CSSG volunteer shall be sufficient cause to be removed from the CSSG.
- c. A CSSG volunteer may permanently or temporarily remove themselves from the CSSG by notifying the CSSG program coordinator in writing.

8. TRAINING.

- a. Employees selected to serve as CSSG Peers shall receive 16 hours of initial training consisting of:
 - (1) Skills in active listening and providing support.
 - (2) Information on departmental CSSG policies, procedures, and the responsibilities and limitations of the CSSG Peer.
- b. The CSSG volunteers shall receive eight hours of annual training consisting of:
 - (1) Updates on relevant information.
 - (2) Maintenance of skills.
 - (3) Skills in providing support and active listening.
 - (4) Specialized training topics.

9. OBTAINING SERVICES.

a. Departmental employees may contact the CSSG program coordinator or a CSSG volunteer at any time. Employees are encouraged to contact the OESA at (916) 843-3320 for information on how to reach any member of the CSSG for support. Departmental or supervisory approval or notification is not required.

b. Commanders or designee may request assistance from any member of the CSSG whenever the need arises by contacting the OESA at (916) 843-3320.

(1) If a specific CSSG Peer is requested, every effort should be made to contact that volunteer.

(2) The nearest CSSG Peer will be contacted to assist.

(3) When requested to respond, the volunteer should be provided with, at minimum, the name and rank of the employee(s) affected and the location of the employee(s).

(4) If unable to contact a CSSG volunteer when needed, the commander or designee should notify the CSSG program coordinator.

10. TIME REPORTING/STATE VEHICLE USAGE.

a. A CSSG Peer shall notify their commander and receive approval prior to accepting and responding to a CSSG request, whether on or off duty.

b. Use of a state vehicle is authorized provided a vehicle is available. If a state vehicle is not available or is impractical, the CSSG Peer's commander shall approve reimbursement for the use of a private vehicle.

c. Approval of the appropriate Commissioner is required for use of departmental aircraft.

d. An on-duty CSSG Peer will be allowed to claim regular shift time when approved by the volunteer's commander.

e. An off-duty CSSG Peer will be allowed up to four hours of compensating time off when approved by their commander.

f. The CSSG Peer shall record approved peer support activity on the appropriate timesheet; a CHP 415, Daily Field Record; or CHP 71, Attendance Report, under the appropriate *Regular* or *Overtime* column utilizing Beat Code 915 in the *Beat Hour Summary* column. Overtime Duty Code 20 will be used when recording time

in *Section 4, Overtime*. The letters "CSSG" shall be entered in the *Notes* section of the CHP 415 and/or the *Remarks* section of the CHP 71, and "RDO" if overtime was worked on a regular day off. The name of the employee to whom support was provided shall not be noted. The assigned command shall be entered for the entire shift or any overtime claimed, regardless of where CSSG activities were conducted.

g. Any CSSG activity not approved by the CSSG volunteer's commander is strictly voluntary and is to be conducted on the CSSG volunteer's own time. Such activities shall not interfere with any regular work obligations.