



## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 310 – MENTAL HEALTH LEAVE FOR SWORN OFFICERS

---

**RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT/ DIVISION** Human Resources

---

**EFFECTIVE DATE** 09/01/2021

**LAST UPDATED**

---

**RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURE(S)**

---

### SECTION 310-10. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To establish a policy for Mental Health Leave, in accordance with Texas Government Code section 614.015. This policy is intended to provide time away from work for sworn officers (as defined below) who experience a traumatic event in the scope of their employment.

### SECTION 310-20. DEFINITIONS

Fire Fighter. A paid employee of the City’s fire department who: (a) holds a position that requires substantial knowledge of firefighting; (b) has met the requirements for certification by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection under Chapter 419, Government Code; and (c) performs at least one of the following functions: (i) fire suppression; (ii) fire prevention; (iii) fire training; (iv) fire safety education; (v) fire maintenance; (vi) fire communications; (vii) fire medical emergency technology; (viii) fire photography; (ix) fire administration; or (x) fire arson investigation.

Peace Officer. An individual holding a peace officer license issued under Chapter 1701 of the Texas Occupations Code and having been appointed by the City of Killeen to serve as an officer. This includes Police Officers, City Marshals, and Fire Marshals.

Sworn Officer. An individual meeting the definition of Fire Fighter or Peace Officer above.

Traumatic Event. An event which occurs in the sworn officer’s scope of employment where the officer took an active role in the response to, or investigation of, an event that causes the officer to experience unusually strong emotional reactions or feelings which have the potential to interfere with their ability to function during or after the incident.



## SECTION 310-30. POLICY

### (a) GENERAL

- (1) Traumatic events may include, but are not limited to the following:
  - (A) Major disasters which may include response to weather related events involving multiple casualties.
  - (B) Explosions, shootings, traffic accidents or search and recovery missions involving multiple casualties.
  - (C) Line of duty death or suicide of a department member.
  - (D) Death of a child resulting from violence or neglect.
  - (E) Officer involved shooting of a person.
- (2) If an officer believes there is a need for Mental Health Leave, it is the officer's responsibility to request leave in writing within six (6) months of the event. Approval and use of Mental Health Leave is determined by the Department Head.
- (3) Mental Health Leave carries no deduction in salary or other compensation. Hours away from work will be noted on the officer's timesheet by the Department Head or designee as Administrative Leave with Pay to provide anonymity. However, the request for leave and any/all related notes will be placed in the officer's medical file by Human Resources to provide a record of time away as well as a record that the leave was granted.
- (4) The Department Head or designee may grant up to one (1) work week of Mental Health Leave per year. If time off beyond one (1) work week is required, the officer may request use of eligible accrued leave.
- (5) Any request for Mental Health Leave shall be treated as priority and as strictly confidential by all parties, shall not be discussed or disclosed outside of the officer's immediate chain of command, and only as necessary to facilitate the use of the leave.

The reason for the officer's absence shall not be provided to other officers/employees and shall only be notated on any documents to which officers/command staff/employees have access for valid administrative reasons.



Any breach of confidentiality shall be grounds for discipline.

- (6) The requesting officer may inquire about mental health services available to employees.

## **SECTION 310-40. DOCUMENT APPROVAL**

The policies in this document have been reviewed and approved by the responsible Department/Division Head or designee, the City Attorney's Office, and the City Manager.

Any revisions, including added or deleted sections and language modifications, that are made to this document must be approved by the City Manager, the City Attorney's Office and the responsible Department/Division Head or designee. Signatures from all parties are required every time there are changes or revisions to this policy.

---

*Kent Cagle, City Manager*

---

*Eva Bark, Executive Director of Human Resources*

*Due to frequent changes in work environments and conditions, responsible departments shall attempt to review all policies and procedures annually for any necessary revisions or additions.*