

# Solutions for Supervisors

from your

## Affiliated Employee Assistance Program

1.800.769.9819  
[www.affiliatedeap.com](http://www.affiliatedeap.com)

A publication provided by your organization/s EAP  
(Employee Assistance Program) to help you with common  
employee dilemmas and/or problems.

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### QUESTION:

**What is a critical incident and how does Affiliated EAP assist clients when they happen?**

### ANSWER:

A critical incident is any situation that evokes extraordinary emotion on the part of employees. Employees who do not receive support within the first 48 hours of the event are at some risk for developing significant and protracted post-traumatic symptoms. On the other hand, those who do get support or otherwise recover from their symptoms may return to their jobs, and experience emotional and spiritual growth. Some examples of critical incidents are:

- Serious injury or death of a coworker, patient, client, or customer
- Violence towards a coworker
- Attempted or completed robbery
- Suicide of a coworker
- Terrorism
- Multiple casualty accident
- Intensive media coverage and scrutiny of a scandal
- Downsizing
- Death or violence to a family member of a worker

As is regularly evident in news reports, no organization is immune from workplace traumatic events. Affiliated EAP has extensive experience dealing with the needs of client organizations that face these situations, hardly a week goes by without our providing supportive services to a company dealing with a critical incident. Our staff has been trained to assist in managing such circumstances with compassion and professionalism. We can also help organizations develop policies and procedures for responding to such situations, with a mind to anticipating such events and providing training ahead of time, or to ensuring a structured response following such events.

Remember that EAP is here to help in any way that we can - call on us for consultation and assistance anytime!

**Call 1-800-769-9819**

### Educational Programs for Supervisors

Affiliated EAP offers many educational programs designed to help leaders become more effective in supervising your staff. For a complete course listing or to schedule training contact Liz Ashe, Director of Training at **1-800-648-2727** or visit our website at [www.affiliatedeap.com](http://www.affiliatedeap.com)



**For more information about how to best handle employee work performance problems call your EAP at:**

**1-800-769-9819**

TTY dial 711 for

TRS then dial 800-769-9819

**[www.affiliatedeap.com](http://www.affiliatedeap.com)**

# Solutions

continued



## QUESTION:

**How does Affiliated EAP serve as a resource for supervisors and employers?**

## ANSWER:

As your EAP, we want to provide support to you, your employees and to your organization under these circumstances. Our goals are to do the following:

- Provide support and perspective to supervisory staff right after an event
- Help plan individual support and/or support sessions for affected staff

- Provide support within 48 hours of an event, in most cases
- Facilitate support to affected staff, either onsite or in a neutral location
- Provide follow-up to the job site if needed
- Provide individual EAP counseling for affected staff if needed following onsite support
- Refer staff as needed for further help

## QUESTION:

**How do we access help for employees following a critical incident and what does it consist of?**

## ANSWER:

1. To initiate the process a supervisor must follow their own organization's procedures regarding a crisis, including contacting emergency services if needed. Then the supervisor should report to the person responsible for networking with the EAP program or his or her designee. This person will then contact the EAP regarding the crisis and the need for EAP support.
2. A plan will be made, and the EAP will respond in a way that takes into account the nature of the event, the people involved, and the work situation that must be taken into account. In addition to conferring with the EAP contact person, our staff will be in touch with the supervisor at the involved job-site.

The support EAP offers staff following a critical incident is not meant to be therapy, but an opportunity for those involved to talk about their experience and to talk about normal reactions to an abnormal, and possibly traumatic, event. We want to reinforce the natural resiliency of your employees and to provide them with information, perspective, and with suggestions for self-care. Whether

we see your staff individually or as a group we want to provide a safe, confidential setting for them to deal with what they went through.

Employees are invariably grateful for this kind of support following a critical incident. The support of the EAP shows employees in a concrete way that the organization is taking the event seriously and cares about the employees who were involved. Furthermore, employees are indeed rattled by critical incidents and find such support helpful. The event itself may be difficult, but the reactions of the police, the media, and the employee's family and friends may compound the stress that an employee feels following such an incident. Finally, other stressful events in an employee's life may exaggerate or heighten their reaction to a critical incident; we may be able to reduce the impact of those multiple stressors on your employee. We want your folks to get through this regardless of what else is happening in their lives.