

D.05.03.02 Police Officer Mental Health Leave Procedure

Responsible Department:

Based on Board Policy: [D.05.03](#) - Holidays, Leaves and Absences

Approved: 12/18/2025

In accordance with Texas Government Code 614; Subchapter A-1 Mental Health Leave, the Alamo Colleges District will provide mental health leave to College District peace officers and full-time telecommunicators who experience a traumatic event in the scope of that employment, if needed.

Police Officer Mental Health Leave (“POMHL”) will be granted to any Eligible Employee who experiences a Traumatic Event within the scope of employment, as defined and specified below.

DEFINITIONS

Eligible Officers - The following categories of employees (“Eligible Officers”) are eligible for Police Officer Mental Health Leave:

Police Officers – Any police officer employed by the Alamo Colleges District who is licensed as a peace officer under Texas Occupations Code Chapter 1701 and authorized to perform law-enforcement duties, such as carrying firearms in the line of duty, enforcing criminal laws and arrest. Traumatic Events experienced may include direct involvement in or exposure to critical incidents. The key factor is that they have.

Full-Time Telecommunicators (dispatchers) – Any full-time police telecommunicator (dispatcher) employed by the Alamo Colleges District. Traumatic Events may be experienced through emergency calls, radio communications or operational support duties, including indirect or auditory exposure to certain critical incidents.

Traumatic Event – An event that occurs within the scope of employment of an Eligible Officer that causes them physical, emotional, and/or psychological harm, including vicarious trauma, and which has the potential to interfere with their ability to perform their duties effectively. Such traumatic events can have varying degrees of severity and effect on any individual.

Traumatic Events may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) An officer-involved shooting.
- (b) A serious injury or death of a colleague in the line of duty.
- (c) A serious injury or death of any person as a result of police action.
- (d) A multiple casualty incident.
- (e) An in-custody death.
- (f) Telecommunicator handles a call where an officer is seriously injured or killed.
- (g) Telecommunicator listens to a homicide or suicide in progress.

POMHL is not intended to grant additional mental-health leave for other conditions or circumstances not specifically tied to “Traumatic Events” as herein defined.

Mental Health Professional - A State of Texas licensed: general practitioner, social or mental health worker, counselor, psychotherapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist.

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SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a) Alamo Colleges District Police Department supervisors shall ensure Eligible Officers are aware of the POMHL procedure.
- (b) A supervisor who becomes aware of behavioral changes in an Eligible Officer directly involved in a Traumatic Event should consult with the College District Chief of Police and Employee Relations to suggest appropriate supportive resources such as the College District's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and/or the College District's POMHL described herein.
- (c) A supervisor shall participate in the award process as described below.

POLICE OFFICER MENTAL HEALTH LEAVE AWARD

Any Eligible Officer directly involved in a Traumatic Event within the scope of their employment shall be entitled to and may request POMHL. An Eligible Officer requesting POMHL shall inform their immediate supervisor as soon as practical but no later than 30 days after the traumatic event or when the officer knew or should have known of the trauma, and the Eligible Officer shall complete and submit the Police Officer Mental Health Leave Request Form directly to the Benefits Manager at dst-hrbenefits@alamo.edu for approval. The request must clearly identify the Traumatic Event and include written medical certification by a physician or mental health professional. Receipt of request shall be acknowledged within 24 business hours and will be treated as a priority matter. A determination regarding the leave request will be issued upon receipt of all required documentation.

- (a) The Eligible Officer and supervisor will also complete an "Employee Injury Report" and all required workers' compensation forms for On-Duty Injury and Illness.
- (b) Upon approval, the supervisor will code the Eligible Officer's timesheet with POMH. The TOSI Benefits Department will submit a copy of the Mental Health Leave form to Enterprise Risk Management for archive with the workers' compensation employee injury report.
- (c) An Eligible Officer on approved POMHL will not work and shall adhere to the restrictions as outlines in D.5.1.4 FMLA and this procedure.
- (d) Eligible Officer's salaries and benefits shall not be reduced due to requesting or receiving POMHL.

POLICE OFFICER MENTAL HEALTH LEAVE DURATION

An Eligible Officer directly involved in a Traumatic Event within the course and scope of their employment may receive up to three (3) working days of POMHL per qualifying Traumatic Event.

- (a) POMHL shall be taken consecutively upon approval and will not be taken separately, intermittently or at a later date.

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- (b) An Eligible Officer may request an extension of their POMHL under certain circumstances. The extension request shall be made in writing, including email to the TOSI Benefits Manager who will notify the Chief of Police or his designee through the officer's chain of command. The request may be granted provided the officer articulates specific, compelling reasons for the extension. The request for an extension should be submitted within 24 hours of the awarded POMHL ending or within a reasonable time to allow the request to be reviewed for approval.
- (c) The TOSI Benefits Manager may grant an extension of up to ten (10) working days. Eligible Officers awarded a POMHL extension must provide a "Return to Work" form from a health professional releasing them to return to duty.
- (d) Eligible Officers unable to return to duty after an extension of POMHL shall be treated under workers' compensation.

Following the use of all awarded POMHL hours the College District or Chief of Police may require the officer to undergo a Fit-for-Duty or psychological examination by a mental health professional.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- (a) Any request for Mental Health Leave shall be treated as strictly confidential by all parties involved. The request and/or approval shall not be discussed or disclosed outside the employee's immediate chain of command and only as necessary to facilitate the use of the leave.
- (b) Confidentiality may be waived under circumstances that indicate the employee is a danger to themselves or others.
- (c) Supervisors or co-workers gossiping or violating confidentiality POMHL may be subject to disciplinary action. If a supervisor becomes aware of a confidentiality violation by an employee, then that supervisor shall take appropriate action to address or report the violation

Legal Reference - TACC Policy Reference Manual

DEC(LEGAL) - Compensation and Benefits: Leaves and Absences

Texas Government Code § 614.015