

Critical Incident Stress Plan

49 CFR Part 272

**Submission by:
Northeast Illinois Regional Commuter Railroad Corporation
(Metra)**

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SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of Railroad: Northeast Illinois Regional Commuter Railroad Corporation (Metra)

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SECTION 2: Scope and Application

Metra's purpose with its Critical Incident Stress Plan is to advance the mental health and well-being of its employees after a traumatic event covered under this rule. This plan will promulgate a safer working environment for all employees and those who utilize our service.

This plan offers covered employees who are directly involved in a critical incident the option to receive timely counseling, guidance, and supportive services, including relief.

It is Metra's objective to ensure that all employees covered under this rule, perform their duties unencumbered by mental or emotional distress as a result of being involved in a critical incident. Metra will ensure through the use of this program that following a critical incident, an employee's emotional and mental health are not degraded after such an event.

Metra has enlisted the services of Sertoma Center Inc. a professional mental health company that specializes in mental health first aid.

The training provided by the Sertoma Center will focus on providing managers and supervisors with the tools and knowledge to address situations and events involving the application of mental health (psychological) first aid. This training provides managers and supervisors with the basic knowledge, skill sets and techniques when addressing a critical incident. The manager or supervisor's role in addressing an employee after critical incident does not preclude the employee from seeking assistance from a licensed professional.

This policy will be applicable to the following Metra employees:

- Train Crew employees that are engaged in or connected with the movement of a train.
- Signal employees that are engaged in installing, repairing or maintaining a signal system.
- Maintenance of Way employees, who inspect, installs, repair or maintain railroad right of way or structures.
- Maintenance of Equipment employees that are engaged in inspecting, repairing, or maintaining locomotives or passenger cars.
- Train Dispatching employees that are engaged in dispatching, reporting transmitting, receiving or delivering an order related to or affecting the movement of a train by the use of an electrical or mechanical device.

Administration:

David Martinez, Manager, Regulatory Compliance will be responsible for ensuring that all managers and supervisors advise and remind any affected employee(s) involved in a critical incident of their options under this policy.

Molly Blechl, Department Head, Medical Services is responsible for provisions of counselors who are licensed to provide mental health counseling services to directly-involved employee(s).

Metra's EAP (Bensinger DuPont and Associates) will be responsible for the provisions of counselors to employees involved in a critical incident. The contact information for Metra's EAP is: (312) 726-8620 and (800)227-8620.
[<http://www.bensingerdupont.com/employee-assistance-programs>]

SECTION 3: Definitions

1. Critical Incident- An accident or incident reportable to FRA under 49 CFR 225 that results in a fatality, loss of limb or a similarly serious bodily injury, or a catastrophic accident/incident reportable to the FRA under 49 CFR 225 that could be reasonably expected to impair a directly involved employee(s) ability to perform his or her job duties safely.
2. Highway User- Automobiles, busses, trucks, motorcycles, bicycles, farm vehicles, pedestrians and all other modes of surface transportation motorized and un-motorized.
3. Accident/Incident (CFR Part 225)
 - Any impact between railroad on-track equipment and a highway user at highway rail grade crossing.
 - Any collision, derailment, fire explosion, act of God, or other event involving operation of railroad on-track equipment (standing or moving) that results in reportable damages greater than the current reporting threshold to railroad on-track equipment, signals, track, track structures and roadbed.
 - Each death, injury, or occupational illness that is a new case and meets the general reporting criteria listed in 49 CFR 225.19(d)(1) through (d)(6)
4. Directly Involved Employee- is a railroad covered employee under the scope of this policy and:
 - Whose actions are closely connected to the critical incident;
 - Who witnesses the critical incident in person as it occurs or
 - Who witnesses the immediate effects of the critical incident in person or
 - Who is charged directly to intervene in, or respond to the critical incident.
5. Excluded Employees- Railroad police officers or investigators who routinely respond to and are specially trained to handle emergencies.
6. Metra Medical Department- Responsible for EAP services which is currently Bensinger DuPont and Associates.

SECTION 4: Program Outline

Following a critical incident, all managers or supervisors of a directly involved employee must follow the steps listed below that are specifically between the directly-involved employee and a manager or supervisor:

- A manager or supervisor has determined at the scene that the incident meets the regulatory requirement of a critical incident.
- Must identify directly involved employees as soon as safely possible. If the employee(s) need to seek immediate medical attention, the manager or supervisor will arrange or transport the employee to seek immediate medical attention.
- Must offer and remind the employee(s) of their option to be relieved when it is safe to do so, and would not place any other employee or the general public in danger. (See Appendix A)
- Must inform the directly-involved employee(s) of the EAP provider that will help with dealing with post incident experiences or difficulties that have the potential to affect the employee(s) performance. The directly-involved employee will be advised of the counseling, guidance and other support services provided by the EAP.
- A supervisor must offer and remind the directly involved employee(s) of the EAP program that will help with dealing with post incident experiences or difficulties that have the potential to affect the employee(s) performance.(See Appendix A)
- Must ensure timely relief for the remainder of their duty tour, if requested, after the performance of any actions necessary to ensure the safety of those affected by the incident or any duties related to the initial response.
An employee may take relief for up to three days following the critical incident without necessitating a diagnosis. Metra's EAP, currently Bensinger DuPont and Associates, contact information is: (312) 726-8620 and (800)227-8620. After contacting Metra's EAP provider, employees involved in a critical incident will work with one of the EAP counselors which will provide immediate support and expertise in addition to the development of short and long-term plans for change. However, if the employee(s) elects to utilize their own health care professional, this would also be acceptable. Metra may require an employee to submit a certificate from a health care professional supporting that the employee is in consultation with the health care professional for their leave.
- Must transport employee from the incident to their home terminal as soon as practicable by the first means of transportation available.
- If an employee needs additional time off beyond three days as a result of the critical incident, each employee directly involved shall be reminded and provided the option of additional leave from normal duty as may be necessary and reasonable to receive treatment or other supportive services. If the employee(s) clinical diagnosis supports the need for additional time off or is in consultation with a health care professional supporting the need for additional time, the employee(s) is entitled to receive treatment or preventive services, directly related to the critical incident. Metra may require an employee to submit a certificate from a health care professional supporting that the employee is in consultation with the health care professional for their leave.
- If an employee requests additional relief time beyond the three days covered under this policy, either EAP or the employees(s) health care professional will work with the Department Head, Medical Services (Currently Molly Blechl 312-322-4095) for the need for additional relief.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- A manager or supervisor at the scene must, when safe to do so, contact EAP and provide them with the name or names of persons involved with the critical incident and their contact information.
- While speaking to the EAP counselor the manager or supervisor must provide them with an overview of the critical incident and provide as much detail as possible.
- EAP will contact the directly involved employee or employees as soon as possible.
- If EAP contacts an employee's home and the employee is not home, they will leave a message. They should not provide any information that may unnecessarily upset the employee family member.
- The day following a critical incident, a supervisor will contact employee to ensure that they have been contacted by EAP and see if the employee needs additional assistance unless employee will utilize their own health care practitioner.
- EAP will provide short term counseling or referral services to those employees involved in a critical incident.
- EAP will maintain contact with affected employee during their time out of service and coordinate any additional care or, if necessary, additional leave. EAP will contact Metra's Medical Dept. and notify them of their evaluation and any need for medical leave.
- The employee(s) may elect to utilize their own health care professional for services related to the critical incident. Metra may require the employee to submit a certificate from a health care practitioner supporting the employee is in consultation with a health care practitioner to receive up to three days off without necessitating a diagnosis as a result of the critical incident.

SECTION 5: Additional Information

All training will be covered under FRA's new training rule CFR Part 243:

Managers and Supervisors will attend a course on Mental Health First Aid that will cover at a minimum;

- How a Manager or Supervisor should interact with an employee directly involved in a critical incident.
- What every directly involved employee should do following a critical incident.
- Skill sets that can be used to provide directly involved employee(s) situational knowledge that would help the employee gain access to counseling and other supportive services as needed by the employee.
- Techniques that can be used to reduce the initial psychological distress that an employee, may experience after being involved with a critical incident.
- Newly promoted Managers will attend a course on Mental Health First Aid or similar program within 90 days of being promoted.

Employees covered under the scope of this policy will be informed about this policy in the following manner;

- A review of Metra's Critical Incident Stress Plan.
- A bulletin notice to all affected employees covered under the scope of this policy regarding their options when involved in a critical incident. This will be posted at all locations where employees are required to check bulletins prior to beginning each day's work. A copy of this policy can be made at these locations or by asking their manager or supervisor.
- Ensure that all employees covered under the scope of this policy know their options, if involved in a critical incident.
- Any employee involved in a critical incident will be given a critical incident card that will list their options when involved in a critical incident. (See Appendix A)
- An employee(s) option for leave, counseling and other supportive services that may be necessary following involvement with a critical incident.

Appendix A

FRONT OF CARD



Metra Critical Incident Stress Plan

As an employee directly involved in a Critical Incident you have the following rights:

- Timely relief from the remainder of your "tour of duty" directly pertaining to the Critical Incident
- Timely transportation back to your home terminal
- Support and counseling services are available through Bensinger, DuPont & Associates at [800.227.8620](tel:800.227.8620) or your personal health care professional.
- Additional time off should be coordinated through EAP or your health care professional and Molly Blechl, Medical Services at 312.322.4095

Bensinger, DuPont & Associates 800.227.8620

If you were not offered the above services, please contact David Martinez, Manager of Regulatory of Compliance at 312.322.2814

BACK OF CARD

Metra is committed to supporting its employees and offering them the opportunity to seek counseling services in the event they are involved in a critical incident. Promoting and preserving a safe work environment with a focus upon the health and welfare of our workforce is the cornerstone of our organization. I value the well-being of each and every member of the Metra family and encourage those affected by these incidents to utilize the provided services.

Don Orseno
Executive Director/CEO

Bensinger, DuPont and Associates B.D.A. 800.227.8620

Medical Department 312.322.4095

