

Louisville Metro Police Department

Standard Operating Procedures	SOP Number: 8.12
	Effective Date: 05/15/04
	Prv. Rev. Date: 09/19/22
	Revised Date: 12/26/25
Chapter: Field Operations	Accreditation Standards: KACP: 1.11, 1.12, 10.2, 10.6
Subject: Critical Incidents	

8.12 CRITICAL INCIDENTS

8.12.1 OVERVIEW

For officers who are involved in critical incidents, please refer to the procedures outlined in SOP 2.5 regarding administrative leave and administrative reassignment.

8.12.2 DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident: The use of force and/or any action taken by an officer of the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) that does, or potentially could, result in death or serious physical injury. Critical incidents include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Incidents resulting in the death or serious physical injury to persons while in the custody of departmental personnel (KACP 1.11b);
- All traffic-related deaths or serious physical injuries resulting from pursuits or other officer-involved traffic collisions. These incidents will be investigated in conjunction with the Traffic Unit. The Traffic Unit will not investigate minor injuries involving pursuits or other officer-involved traffic collisions;
- Incidents where an officer's actions resulted in the death or serious physical injury to the public or to another officer (KACP 1.11b);
- Other officer-related incidents resulting in death or serious physical injury to the public (KACP 1.11b);
- Incidents resulting in the death or serious physical injury to a departmental member while in the performance of their official duties; or
- Incidents involving the discharge of firearms by an officer during police action, regardless of injuries. The only exceptions are departmental members discharging firearms for target practice or the shooting of animals (refer to SOP 8.33) (KACP 1.11a).

Escort Officer: A member of the Peer Support Team (PST) who will remain with the involved officer(s) throughout the initial investigation unless there are exigent circumstances.

Fitness for Duty Evaluation: A psychological assessment to determine if a member can safely and effectively perform their job duties.

Involved Officer(s): An officer who has discharged their weapon, was in control of a motor vehicle involved in a collision, or whose actions resulted in the death or serious physical injury to the public or to another officer.

Witness Officer: An officer who witnessed a critical incident, rendered medical aid, or was involved in the arrest.

8.12.3 UNITS RESPONSIBLE FOR CRITICAL INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

The Public Integrity Unit (PIU) is responsible for investigating critical incidents. Members with special investigative knowledge or experience may be utilized by the PIU (e.g., Traffic Unit, Homicide Unit, etc.). Members who assist the PIU with a critical incident will report all findings and conclusions directly to the PIU Commander. All information will be held in the strictest of confidence.

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8.12.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMANDING OFFICERS

Responsibilities of commanding officers include:

- Verifying proper crime scene maintenance;
- Notifying MetroSafe and appropriate support personnel (e.g., Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Homicide Unit, PIU, Traffic Unit, etc.);
- Gathering basic information from the officers involved and starting a preliminary investigation;
- Contacting the PST for scene response;
- Identifying the involved officer(s) and witness officer(s) to the critical incident;
- Assigning escort officers, to be conducted by on-scene PST command; and
- Verifying that the required forms are completed (Administrative Incident Report (AIR) (refer to SOP 3.1), [Workers' Compensation – First Report of Injury or Illness forms \(IA-1 form\)](#), Exposure Report forms (LMPD #04-08-0303), etc.).

Commanding officers will not secure an officer's weapon, unless exigent circumstances are present (e.g., officer is being transported to the hospital by EMS, officer used the weapon against a family member, officer is distraught, etc.).

8.12.5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHERS

At the scene of any critical incident, either the PIU investigator or the Crime Scene Unit (CSU) will photograph the involved officer(s). Mobile Video System (MVS) and Body-Worn Camera (BWC) footage of any involved or witness officer(s) will be secured by the PIU. The CSU will collect the involved officer's weapon and any other evidence related to the critical incident.

The PIU will also request a recorded interview with any involved officer(s) in which a standard interview format will be utilized and, if applicable, constitutional rights (Miranda Rights) are advised prior to questioning. The officer may be required to submit a written statement for administrative purposes only.

The responsibilities of escort officers include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Explaining the investigative process to the involved officer(s);
- Assisting the involved officer(s) in contacting family members and/or friends, as requested;
- Transporting the involved officer(s) to the PIU office, when requested by the PIU Commander or investigators;
- Verifying that the involved officer(s) is isolated from all non-essential individuals for the remainder of the initial investigation;
- Transporting the involved officer(s) for a urinalysis following the Professional Standards Unit's (PSU's) request for same; and
- Transporting the involved officer(s) home at the conclusion of the initial investigation, upon request.

The responsibilities of witness officer(s) include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Notifying the commanding officer at the critical incident scene that they are a witness officer;

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8.12.5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHERS (CONTINUED)

- Remaining at the critical incident scene and await further instructions from an escort officer, PST member, or PIU investigator;
- Not discussing any details regarding the critical incident; and
- Physically separating themselves from involved officer(s) and other witness officer(s).

The PST will make contact with all witness officers on the critical incident scene and provide resources and the next directives in the investigative process. The PST will make reasonable attempts to give the same support to witness officers.

8.12.6 PROCEDURES

Critical incidents involving use of force actions or motor vehicle collisions as a result of a police action, resulting in death or serious physical injury, requires officers to be immediately placed on administrative leave or administrative reassignment (KACP 1.12). Officers who are involved in any other critical incident may be placed on administrative leave or administrative reassignment at the discretion of the Chief of Police, or their designee (refer to SOP 2.5) (KACP 10.2a).

The Special Investigations Division (SID) Commander, or their designee, will serve the involved officer(s) with a Notification of Limitation of Police Powers form (LMPD #11-0008) and provide a copy to Police Human Resources (HR). At the discretion of leadership (i.e., SID Commander, division commander, Chief's executive staff), an involved officer(s) may be required to surrender some, or all, of their departmental equipment.

Every officer who is involved in a critical incident will be assigned an escort officer at the scene unless there are exigent circumstances preventing assignment. As such, involved officer(s) are not permitted to self-transport to the PIU immediately following a critical incident. Upon release by the PIU Commander, the involved officer(s) may be transported home by a member of the PST, upon request.

Any involved officer(s) may meet with the police psychologist (refer to SOP 2.5) in a confidential manner following the involved officer's departure from the critical incident scene, notwithstanding exigent circumstances (i.e., transported to hospital for medical attention, etc.).

8.12.7 POLICE PSYCHOLOGIST (KACP 10.6)

The police psychologist may respond to the scene of any critical incident or the PIU office once the involved officer(s) have been transported. Regarding critical incidents, the police psychologist will monitor and support the affected involved officer(s) at regular intervals following the critical incident, as needed and agreed upon. Support may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Providing information on critical incident stress;
- Monitoring the well-being of the involved officer(s);
- Explaining follow-up procedures; and
- Providing support and referrals, as needed.

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8.12.8 RESOURCE & RESILIENCE (R&R)

R&R is conducted by the PST and is designed to work with a small group of PST members who have experienced a critical incident. Due to the sensitive nature of the critical incident, no details of the incident will be disclosed. However, members in this small group will be encouraged to seek out further assistance from the police psychologist.

8.12.9 WELLNESS MEETING

The involved officer(s) will attend a meeting scheduled by the Wellness Unit. During the meeting, the Wellness Unit will provide contact information and details of available Wellness Unit resources, and answer questions regarding the administrative leave or administrative reassignment processes and/or return to duty protocols.

8.12.10 FITNESS FOR DUTY EVALUATION (KACP 10.6)

The fitness for duty evaluation is an evaluation conducted by the police psychologist. The fitness for duty evaluation is completely unrelated to PST assistance offered to an involved officer(s) during the critical incident and post-incident process (KACP 10.6). The police psychologist will provide a determination of the fitness for duty evaluation to Police HR and the commanding officer of the Wellness Unit.

The determination of the fitness for duty evaluation will be communicated to the involved officer(s) by Police HR. Police HR will advise the Assistant Chief of Police/Accountability and Improvement Bureau (AIB) on the determination.

8.12.11 POST-INCIDENT

During a critical incident investigation, the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney will review the incident to determine whether any charges should be filed against the officer as a result of the officer's action(s). If the officer is cleared of any wrongdoing or indictments, the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney will send a letter of confirmation to the SID Commander. The SID Commander will forward a copy of the confirmation letter to the Chief of Police, or their designee, and Police HR.

For return to duty procedures following a critical incident, refer to SOP 2.5.