

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT: EMERGENCY SERVICES EMOTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

BACKGROUND:

Police officers and firefighters experience traumatic incidents from time to time in the course of their duties. In addition, these individuals frequently work with members of the public who have undergone a traumatic experience (e.g., crime victims and family members). Outside professionals who are regularly on call can provide emotional support to police officers, firefighters, and members of the public who have experienced a traumatic incident. Utilizing a single provider for these services can help build relationships with officers and firefighters, which results in improved emotional support during times of need.

Historically, the Police Department has partnered with a member of the local religious community to provide support services. That person has moved away from the area and the Police Department has been unable to find a replacement. The Police Department was approached by the Central Iowa Emergency Services Chaplaincy (CIESC) to provide support services for Police and Fire Department needs.

CIESC is a non-profit organization which recruits and screens experienced applicants to serve emergency response organizations in Story and Marshall Counties. Chaplains provided through the agency must have professional training and experience in counseling in emergency, high stress, and family situations. Chaplains also undergo a screening process, attend periodic training, and are required to be able to communicate in a variety of circumstances and to diverse cultures.

CIESC requires that participating chaplains provide services without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, creed, or religion. In addition, the services are provided without being subject to proselytizing and at no cost to the City.

A memorandum of understanding has been prepared to formalize the expectations regarding the services provided, roles, and responsibilities.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the attached Memorandum of Understanding with Central Iowa Emergency Services Chaplaincy.

2. Do not approve a Memorandum of Understanding with Central Iowa Emergency Services Chaplaincy.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Professional support services for City staff and members of the public can help address traumatic experiences. CIESC is willing to facilitate these services and has trained individuals capable of providing them when the need arises.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as described above.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
EMERGENCY SERVICES EMOTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM**

**CITY OF AMES FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS
AND
CENTRAL IOWA EMERGENCY SERVICES CHAPLAINCY**

We do hereby agree that it is mutually beneficial to all parties for CENTRAL IOWA EMERGENCY SERVICE CHAPLAINCY (hereinafter CIESC) to assign one or more volunteers to assist police and fire personnel (hereinafter personnel). It is understood by all parties that CIESC volunteers are not employees of the City of Ames. The purpose of this document is to facilitate a clear understanding of the roles, duties, and responsibilities of the parties under the Emergency Services Emotional Support Program. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being set forth on this _____ day of _____, 2021.

MISSION STATEMENT – VOLUNTEER EMOTIONAL SUPPORT STAFF

Through supportive involvement and presence with emergency responders, CIESC volunteers will assist with emotional support of personnel and community members.

**CITY OF AMES FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS
EMERGENCY SERVICES EMOTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM**

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Encourage personnel to remain emotionally healthy
- Respond to personal issues of personnel with support and referral, if requested
- Assist with death notifications
- Assist with emotional support of families and personnel at suicide and murder incidents
- Assist with emotional support at fatal or serious injury accidents and fires
- Serious incident counseling/debriefing
- Assist with emotional support during major community disasters
- Comfort victims and families
- Assist personnel in areas of stress management, ethics, and family life
- Assist in public ceremonies, funerals, retirements and promotions
- Support personnel, their families and those they serve by supporting them emotionally, physically and if requested, spiritually
- Connecting personnel and community members to desired religious/faith resource
- Serve as a liaison with other religious and faith leaders in the community
- Partner with other emotional support services such as the Mental Health Advocate, Violent Crime Advocate, Peer Support Team, and/or EAP.

OPERATIONS

CIESC volunteers are available at variable hours. CIESC volunteers, while not always available, are expected to make some effort to build relationships with personnel and be available for emergency callout.

The Police and Fire Departments will work with individual volunteers to create mechanisms and opportunities for informal interaction between department personnel and CIESC volunteers. Occasional formal introductions or presentations may be requested.

Call handling and information sharing: Through their assistance under this agreement, CIESC volunteers may gain access to confidential or private information. The volunteers are not to provide confidential or private information to parties outside the departments unless it is in the form of a referral or assistance with personal services.

CIESC volunteers assist the police and fire departments, personnel of each department, and the public. As such, CIESC volunteers should take guidance from each department's command structure and follow appropriate direction. Operational concerns may be reported to a supervisor or the appropriate Chief.

CIESC volunteers will operate within the scope of their assignment and responsibility at all times. Clarification of these roles may be addressed with any police or fire supervisor.

CIESC volunteers will be provided with building access as needed.

Travel in personal vehicles is the responsibility of the CIESC volunteer. CIESC volunteers will maintain auto liability insurance and adhere to all traffic regulations when involved in their volunteer activities.

CIESC will provide insurance that covers the scope of CIESC volunteer activities engaged in under this agreement. CIESC will maintain liability insurance for automobile use and social service practitioner coverage of all CIESC volunteers placed with the City of Ames. CIESC will provide the City of Ames with a certificate of insurance showing said coverage.

CIESC volunteers will maintain automobile liability coverage on their personal automobile and health care coverage of some kind.

The City will not provide either personal injury coverage or health insurance for CIESC volunteers.

SELECTION

Volunteers will be screened by CIESC prior to review by each department. Candidates for department level volunteers may be interviewed by department personnel as part of the selection process. A background evaluation will be conducted by the Ames Police Department in consultation with the Ames Fire Department.

The continuing volunteer relationship should be reevaluated by all parties on an annual basis. While this may not be a formal meeting, it is understood that the circumstances of the volunteer may change and at some point, they may elect to not continue these duties. CIESC or the departments may also discontinue relationship with the volunteer at any time.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Memorandum of Understanding is effective January 1, 2021, and shall remain in effect through January 1, 2026, unless renewed by agreement of both parties or terminated as provided herein.

TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

Either party may terminate this agreement upon thirty (30) days written notice to the other party.

NOTICE

All notices under this Agreement shall be in writing. Notices shall be deemed to have been given: (i) upon hand delivery, (ii) the next business day after sending by a nationally recognized overnight carrier with written confirmation of receipt, or (iii) if sent by electronic mail, when the recipient acknowledges having received the electronic mail. Notices shall be sent to the other parties at the addresses set forth below. Any party may change its address by giving notice in writing thereof to the other parties.

Ames Police Department:
Geoff Huff
515 Clark St., Ames, IA 50010
geoff.huff@cityofames.org

Ames Fire Department:
Rich Higgins
1300 Burnett Ave., Ames, IA 50010
rich.higgins@cityofames.org

Central Iowa Emergency Services Chaplaincy:
Ron Matthews
P.O. Box 2301, Ames, IA 50010

This Agreement may be amended at any time by mutual agreement of the parties. No modification of this Agreement shall be valid or binding unless the modification is in writing, duly dated and signed by both parties.

Executed this ____ day of _____, 2021.

CENTRAL IOWA EMERGENCY SERVICES CHAPLAINCY

By: _____
BOARD CHAIRPERSON

AMES POLICE DEPARTMENT

By: _____
CHIEF OF POLICE

AMES FIRE DEPARTMENT

By: _____
FIRE CHIEF