

## PAID QUARANTINE LEAVE POLICY

Section 8.12 Paid Quarantine Leave – Implemented 09-13-2021

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance in accordance with Section 180.008 of the Local Government Code regarding paid quarantine leave for Firefighters, Peace Officers, Detention Officers and Emergency Medical Technicians. The quarantine leave will be used to quarantine or isolate Firefighters and Peace Officers due to a possible or known exposure to a communicable disease **while on duty**. The City of Snyder recognizes that employee health and safety is important. The City supports establishing a workplace that is comfortable, healthy, safe, and supportive.

This policy will be applied with the Workers Compensation Policy, as this leave is granted only for **on-duty exposures**.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all Firefighters and Peace Officers employed by the City of Snyder.

### DEFINITIONS

“Fire fighter” means a paid employee of the fire department who:

- A. holds a position that requires substantial knowledge of firefighting;
- B. has met the requirements for certification by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection under Chapter 419, Government Code; and
- C. performs at least one of the following functions:
  - i. fire suppression;
  - ii. fire prevention;
  - iii. fire training;
  - iv. fire safety education;
  - v. fire maintenance;
  - vi. fire communications;
  - vii. fire medical emergency technology;
  - viii. fire photography;
  - ix. fire administration; or
  - x. fire arson investigation.

“Health authority” means a physician appointed by the County to administer state and local laws relating to public health within the city's jurisdiction.

“Peace officer” means police officers licensed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement and employed by the city.

### POLICY

A City Fire fighter or Peace officer who is ordered to quarantine or isolate by the person's supervisor or the county's health authority due to a possible or known exposure to a communicable disease **while on duty** is entitled to receive paid quarantine leave for the

duration of the leave. Employees will be released from quarantine leave based on guidance from the local health authority.

Employees are required to file all workers compensation notifications, as this leave will run concurrently with the worker's compensation process.

Applicable employees on paid quarantine leave will be treated consistently with other worker's compensation claims and continue to be eligible for all employment benefits and compensation, including continuing their leave accrual, pension benefits and eligibility for health benefit plan benefits for the duration of the quarantine leave. While on quarantine leave, the employee may not use any other paid leave type (vacation, sick, holiday).

The City will not reduce a fire fighter's or peace officer's sick leave balance, vacation leave balance, holiday leave balance, or other paid leave balance in connection with paid quarantine leave taken in accordance with this policy.

When applicable, employees who must be quarantined may be eligible for reimbursement for reasonable costs related to the quarantine, including lodging, medical and transportation. The employee must receive approval from Human Resources prior to incurring quarantine expenses. Employees will be expected to provide receipts for reimbursement which will be presented to Human Resources for appropriate review and processing in coordination with Finance.

#### **COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The Police and Fire Department will coordinate with Human Resources to ensure this policy is implemented as applicable. Upon notification, Human Resources will follow appropriate steps to ensure applicable leave is communicated to the employee and will ensure any and all ADA and FMLA is applied when necessary.

## MENTAL HEALTH LEAVE POLICY

Section 8.13            Mental Health Leave – Implemented 09-13-2021

### **Definitions**

*Traumatic event* – an event which occurs in the peace officer(s) scope of employment when the officer is involved in the response to, or investigation of, an event that causes the officer to experience unusually strong emotional reactions or feelings which have the potential to interfere with their ability to function during or after the incident.

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

1. Major disasters which may include response to weather related events involving multiple casualties; or explosions with multiple casualties; or search and recovery missions involving multiple casualties;
2. Incidents involving multiple casualties which may include shootings or traffic accidents;
3. Line of duty death or suicide of a department member;
4. Death of a child resulting from violence or neglect;
5. Officer(s) involved shooting of a person.

*Mental health leave* – administrative leave with pay granted in response to a traumatic event that occurred in the scope of the peace officer's employment.

*Mental Health Professional* – a licensed social or mental health worker, counselor, psychotherapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist.

### **Requesting mental health leave**

An officer directly involved in a traumatic event may request the use of mental health leave. The request shall be made in writing through the chain of command. The request shall be treated as a priority matter and a decision on the granting of the leave shall be made no later than 24 hours following the submission of the request. The request shall be granted unless the chain of command can articulate specific compelling reasons to deny granting the leave.

A supervisor or coworker who becomes aware of behavioral changes in an officer directly involved in a traumatic event should suggest to the officer that he or she seek mental health leave and the assistance of a mental health professional.

### **Confidentiality of request**

Any request for mental health leave shall be treated as strictly confidential by all parties involved and shall not be discussed or disclosed outside the officer's immediate chain of command, and only as necessary to facilitate the use of the leave. Any officer or supervisor who becomes aware of behavioral changes and suggests the officer seek mental health leave shall not discuss that matter with any third party. Any breach of this confidentiality shall be grounds for discipline.

Confidentiality may be waived by the officer seeking mental health leave. Confidentiality may be waived under circumstances which indicate the officer is a danger to himself or herself or others and department personnel must confer with mental health professionals.

### **Duration of mental health leave**

An officer directly involved in a traumatic event may request up to three working days of mental health leave.

Extensions of mental health leave may be available under certain circumstances. Any request for an extension shall be accompanied by documentation from a mental health professional who is counseling the officer. The request may extend the leave by three working days. Each officer may request no more than two extensions, each supported by sufficient documentation by the mental health professional. The Chief shall grant the extension(s) upon the receipt of sufficient documentation explain the need for the extension.

### **Mental health services available to the officer**

- Deer Oaks EAP Services
- TML Health
- A list of certified councilors is also available, please contact HR for names.