

Critical Incident Response: Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Critical Incident?

A critical incident is any situation that causes a work group to experience strong reactions that have the potential to interfere with present or future productivity.

A few examples are:

- Natural Disasters
- Robberies
- Employee deaths or serious illnesses
- Assaults
- Industrial accidents
- Other traumatic events

What services does CIGNA Behavioral Health (CBH) provide for critical incidents?

As a first step, one of our Employee Assistance Consultants conducts a crisis management consultation by phone with the manager reporting the incident. The specifics of the incident are discussed and the consultant works with the manager to determine an appropriate level of response. Recommendations can include some or all of the following critical incident stress management services:

- Reminders of EAP availability to all employees at the location
- Referral of a particularly troubled employee to EAP services
- Distribution of educational recovery materials related to the incident
- Communication of online educational resources available through the EAP
- Telephonic meetings for managers/employees
- On-site wellness seminar related to the incident
- On-site defusing or debriefing session

What happens during an on-site debriefing?

Debriefings provide an opportunity to give employees the facts of the incident, while providing a safe environment to normalize their emotional responses to the event. On-site critical incident services also provide an opportunity for education about how to take care of themselves and how work groups cope and support one another in recovering from an incident. These services hasten a return to productivity and health, mitigate long-term stress responses, enhance the employees' overall adjustment at work and at home, and support the organization's normal functioning



How quickly will CBH respond to a critical incident?

CBH's Employee Assistance Consultants are immediately available by phone for response planning and crisis management. Studies show that the most effective time for an on-site group debriefing is 24 to 72 hours after the critical incident. Sooner than that, employees are still in shock and too emotional to focus on facts and recommendations. However, we can have someone on-site the same day if the situation warrants

How do I access Critical Incident Response services?

Critical incident response consultation services are available **24 hours a day, 365 days a year**. Your management staff simply calls your EAP access number and asks for our Employee Assistance Consultant team. The consultant will work with you to determine the most appropriate level of response for the specific incident.

This material is provided by CIGNA Behavioral Health, Inc. for informational/educational purposes only. It is not intended as medical/clinical advice. Only a healthcare provider can make a diagnosis or recommend a treatment plan. For more information about your behavioral health benefits, you can call the member services or behavioral health telephone number listed on your healthcare identification card.

“CIGNA Behavioral Health” is a registered service mark and refers to various operating subsidiaries of CIGNA Corporation. Products and services are provided by these operating subsidiaries and not by CIGNA Corporation.
©2007 CIGNA Behavioral Health