



Helping and Leading in Times of Crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic is creating new challenges and new levels of stress for everyone — but it can be especially trying for the dedicated staff working on the front lines.

The overwhelming impact of COVID-19 is creating traumatic milestones in the lives of critical essential infrastructure workers.

For these individuals, this crisis is unique in that all team members, as well as their leaders, could be potential victims of this virus.

To help our frontline team members during this difficult time, CoreCivic has activated our **Critical Incident Stress Management** or **CISM Team**. The CISM Team is made up of CoreCivic employees like chaplains, mental health professionals and counselors who deploy to offer confidential, emotional support to those impacted by traumatic events like natural disasters. While currently operating in a **virtual** capacity due to travel and social distancing guidelines, the CISM Team offers assistance to any team member in need of emotional support amid COVID-19.

Managing Moments of Crisis

Helping team members balance their duties and responsibilities while personally staying safe and healthy is the priority for any organization. Our approach to support is based on the **SAFER/R** model, developed by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation.

The acronym **SAFER/R** stands for the five components of response during and after a crisis.

Knowing these focus areas can be beneficial to any organization in managing COVID-19 or other stressors like the death of a co-worker or a natural disaster.

STABILIZE your environment.

Basic needs first come first, including rest, food, and mental health. Employees should be doing regular self-assessments and looking out for coworkers who may be struggling with acute stress reactions. Stress reactions can manifest simply in a reluctance to come to work or difficulty concentrating. Be open with team leaders about identifying these stressors.

ACKNOWLEDGE the situation and monitor reactions to the on-going crisis.

COVID-19 is not a typical crisis response in which in-person, interpersonal support is possible. Group meetings and travel are discouraged and social distancing is encouraged to reduce spread of infection. Be supportive when talking with colleagues. Listen calmly and without judgment to their concerns, especially any fears about personal or family safety.

FACILITATE understanding.

Leaders should provide frequent and up-to-date information on the organization's COVID-19 response. Share information with employees often and encourage emotional and physical health care during the crisis. Compassionately dispel rumors, myths, and exaggerations, while validating employees' feelings and concerns.

ENCOURAGE effective coping skills.

Help team members apply the information they need to cope with their own distress as they each experience it. Simple actions such as going for a walk, doing something you enjoy, or helping someone else in need can be great coping mechanisms.

RECOVERY & REFERRAL

Monitor colleagues for signs and symptoms of stress. The goal is to maintain your team's overall health and to address issues as soon as they arise. If your company has an **Employee Assistance Program**, encourage team members to use it and ensure they know how to access it. Check on team members often, and remember — kindness goes a long way in helping people heal.