

ANNEXURE 6 - VICTIM EMPOWERMENT GUIDELINES

SINOVILLE CRISIS CENTRE PROTOCOL FOR ASSISTANCE TO SAPS AND THE SCPF

1. HOURS

The Crisis Centre provides a 24-hour support service in the Sinoville SAPS area. Counsellors are available from 08h00 to 20h00 from Monday to Friday at the Crisis Centre. Additional standby Counsellors will attend to all other matters within the area of jurisdiction of the Sinoville SAPS.

2. SERVICES OFFERED BY THE CRISIS CENTRE

2.1. The Sinoville Crises Centre (SCC) offers Counselling Services and Emotional support at the Crisis Centre.

2.2. Emotional support is also offered at the following places:

- 2.2.1. At a crime scene;
- 2.2.2. At an accident scene;
- 2.2.3. Montana Netcare Hospital;
- 2.2.4. Montana MED 24; and
- 2.2.5. Sinoville SAPS.

3. LIST OF COUNSELLORS ON STANDBY

3.1. A standby list with names of Counsellors on standby, will be provided monthly to the following:

- 3.1.1. The SCPF Victim Empowerment members;
- 3.1.2. SCPF Secretary;
- 3.1.3. Montana Netcare Hospital;
- 3.1.4. Montana Med 24; and
- 3.1.5. Sinoville SAPS.

3.2. The standby list contains the name and telephone number of the person who is on standby for a particular day and can be called directly to a scene when needed. If the person on standby cannot be reached, contact the CEO of the Sinoville Crisis Centre or alternatively the Sinoville Crisis Centre Co-ordinator. Both names and numbers will be published on the monthly standby list. Counsellors whose names appear on the standby list may not be called randomly, only the person designated for a specific day, may be contacted.

4. ATTENDING TO CRIME-AND ACCIDENT SCENES

4.1. An SCC counsellor will go out to a crime or accident scene only when the police are at the scene. The counsellor may be called by:

- 4.1.1. Sinoville SAPS;
- 4.1.2. Sinoville SCPF Victim Empowerment member;
- 4.1.3. Any CPF Sector Control member;
- 4.1.4. Montana Netcare Hospital; and
- 4.1.5. Montana 24-hour Med.

5. IDENTIFICATION

Counsellors who visit a crime or accident scene will, for ease of identification, wear a T-shirt or some form of jacket or reflective jacket with the name of the SCC clearly displayed on the jacket or shirt. Counsellors at a scene will also display a SCC ID card with a photo, to serve as identification.

6. AGREEMENT OF CO-OPERATION BETWEEN SINOVILLE SAPS AND THE SCC

- 6.1. The SCC Counsellors do not have the authority to enter private property without a SAPS member present at a scene and therefor only visit scenes where SAPS members are present.
- 6.2. It is the prerogative of the Sinoville SAPS whom they allow at a scene.
- 6.3. Sinoville SAPS are familiar with the SCC Counsellors and comfortable with their approach and prefer their counselling services at a scene.
- 6.4. The SCC is both the official Victim Empowerment institution of the Sinoville SAPS and, as such, is recognized by the Department of Safety and Security to whom the SCC have to submit monthly written reports about their activities, while the officials from the same Department, regularly visit the SCC.
- 6.5. The SCC is registered with the Department of Welfare and is subject to specific rules and regulations. Their service is constantly monitored by this Department to ensure that they operate within their mandate.
- 6.6. Due to the registration with the Department of Welfare, the SCC may only use volunteers who are registered and trained by the SCC and whose services can be monitored by the SCC.
- 6.7. It is a requirement of the Department of Welfare, that the SCC only make use of Counsellors that they can monitor and therefor the SCC do not make use of outside Counsellors.
- 6.8. Sinoville SAPS are free to make use of any Counsellor, as they have jurisdiction over who they allow at a scene.
- 6.9. Sinoville SAPS sometimes require affidavits or additional information from SCC Counsellors who attended at a scene, and because of the close co-operation, this can be dealt with effectively.
- 6.10. Counsellors working at the Crisis Centre, must complete a case file on every case and this case file is kept for a period of 5 years.
- 6.11. The SCC has a list of shelters and when a person must be placed in a place of safety that was arranged by the SCC, it is the duty of the Sinoville SAPS to transport such a person to the place of safety.
- 6.12. Sinoville SAPS has appointed a dedicated Officer appointed by the Station Commander of SAPS Sinoville to be the liaison between SAPS and the SCC.

- 6.13. The SCC has an agreement of co-operation with several other organizations including the CMR, Department of Welfare, various universities, Pretoria North Regional Court, Pretoria Supreme Court, Director of Public Prosecutions, Department of Justice, Children's Commissioner, Department of Education, churches and other welfare organizations, Solidarity, the Rape Clinic at Steve Biko, and other hospitals and schools and can, therefor, offer a comprehensive aftercare service to victims of crime.
- 6.14. Counsellors who leave the service of the SCC, may not on behalf of the Crisis Centre, visit any scenes. The SCC currently experience problems with ex Counsellors in this regard, as they prey on people and sometimes charge fees for their services. This is not allowed.
- 6.15. In order to address this problem, the Police and the SCPF are requested to ensure that they only make use of Counsellors on the standby list.

7. TRANSPORT TO SCENES

- 7.1. During the day (06h00 - 18h00) from Monday to Sunday, the Counsellor on call will use his / her own personal transport to visit a scene.
- 7.2. During the evening / night (18h00 - 06h00) from Monday to Sunday, the Counsellor on call will, for safety reasons, be transported by either the SAPS patrol vehicle or by a SCPF member.
- 7.3. This above is only applicable within the area of jurisdiction of the Sinoville SAPS.

8. SUICIDE

- 8.1. Suicides should always be regarded seriously. Each case must be judged on its own merits.
- 8.2. In the case of a threat to commit suicide, attempts to commit suicide or any other action to commit suicide, the Police must be called to the scene immediately.
- 8.3. When a person is threatening to commit suicide, and there is a gun (or other dangerous weapon) available, the Police must first secure the scene.
- 8.4. When the person is unconscious, but still alive, an ambulance must be called so that the person can receive medical assistance immediately.
- 8.5. If a person has a history of threats and / or previous attempts to commit suicide, the situation is extremely risky, and the person should be hospitalized for at least 24 hours and then placed under the care of a psychiatrist.
- 8.6. The Counsellor present will explain the seriousness of the matter with the patient's family and will recommend that the patient be hospitalised.
- 8.7. The decision to hospitalise a person, the cost of transport to the hospital, the cost of the hospital and all relevant treatments, remains the responsibility of the person or their family.
- 8.8. The Counsellor can only make a recommendation based on their experience and, should the family or partner decline this recommendation, the SCC or the Counsellor cannot be held responsible should anything happen to the person. It is the responsibility of the family or partner, to safeguard the person.
- 8.9. The SCC is required, by law, to keep records of each case being handled. Comprehensive records, recommendations and how the case was handled, are contained in this record to avoid future prosecution.

- 8.10. When a person threatens to commit suicide, but is still in his / her right frame of mind, the person can be brought to the SCC, where an evaluation will be done to determine the risk in conjunction with his / her family / friends. A decision will be taken in relation to the person's welfare.

9. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- 9.1. When there is a case of domestic violence and firearm(s) or other potentially dangerous weapon(s) present, the police must first secure the area.
- 9.2. When the people involved in domestic violence are under the influence of alcohol or drugs / prescription pills, the police must intervene if they believe that someone's life is in danger.
- 9.3. Counsellors cannot resolve cases where people are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. People under the influence are mostly unable to make rational decisions and, therefore, not amenable to counselling.
- 9.4. Counsellors will not enter a scene of domestic violence when firearms or dangerous weapons are present.
- 9.5. When there is family violence (with or without the threat of a firearm or other potentially dangerous weapons) and children are present, the Counsellor, with the help of the Police, will immediately act in the best interest of the children.
- 9.6. If the Counsellor believes that the child must be safeguarded, he / she may make the necessary arrangements (temporary, if after hours, weekends or holidays) and immediately report the case to the Department of Social Services / CMR or other organizations involved in this field.

10. HOMELESS

- 10.1. SCPF members are not allowed to drop off homeless people at the SCC and request accommodation for them.
- 10.2. Homeless people on the streets are a social issue and homeless people are not considered victims of crime.
- 10.3. When children are brought to the SCC, they will be placed in a place of safety by SAPS Sinoville or Department of Social Development or SCC, but in line with the requirements and prescriptions as contained in the Children's Act, 38 of 2005 (as amended).

11. BEGGARS ON STREET CORNERS

Beggars are the responsibility of the Metro Social Crime Prevention Unit and should be referred to the TMPD.

12. MISSING PERSONS

A Counsellor may be called to support the family of a missing person emotionally. However, it is the responsibility of SAPS to look for the person.