

## How Do You Activate The CISM Team?

Any member of an emergency response organization may request the CISM Team by calling the 24-hour toll free number.

**1.800.237.6822**

Be prepared to give your:

- name
- telephone number
- affiliation

Do **not** discuss the incident at this time. You will receive a telephone call within a few minutes from a CISM Team representative who will discuss the incident and Debriefing arrangements.

The individual requesting the service selects the date, time, and site for the Debriefing.

The CISM services are available **at no cost** to any southeastern Minnesota emergency response organization.



## Additional Information On CISM Program?

### Individual Support Services

If an individual is experiencing difficulty following an incident, please contact the CISM Program. We have stress management services available which can facilitate the individual's recovery.

### Continuing Education Services

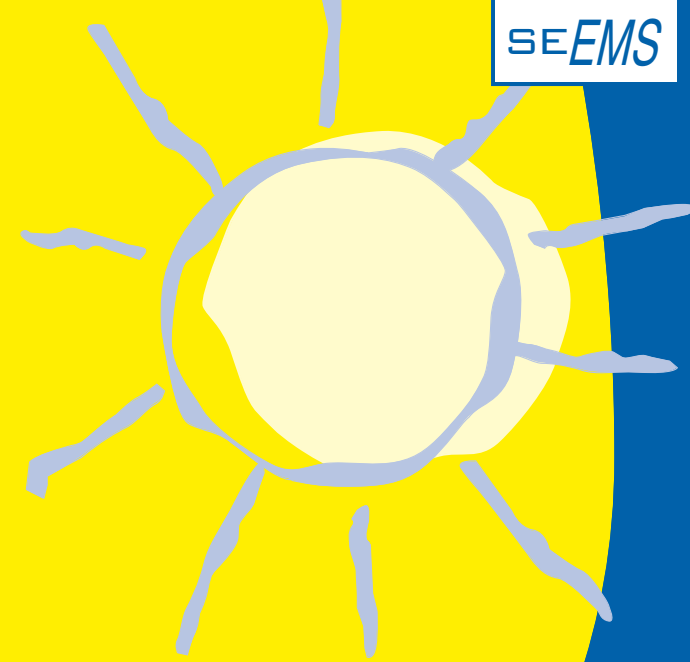
If your organization is interested in having a continuing education presentation on the CISM Program or if you wish to receive additional information, please contact:

SE Minnesota Emergency Medical Services  
1130 1/2 7th Street NW Ste. 201  
Rochester, MN 55901  
507.536.9333



**1.800.237.6822**

SEEMS



Critical  
Incident Stress  
Management  
Program  
For  
Emergency  
Response  
Personnel



## What Is A Critical Incident?

Emergency response personnel operate under a variety of stressors: the uncertainty of the next call, the human tragedies involved, the hazards associated with the rescue, and the fear of doing something wrong.

Most often we can cope with these stressors and consider them as “part of the job.” Some situations, however, cause lasting impressions which can challenge our ability to function on the job and at home. It is these situations which produce the unusually strong emotional reactions that are referred to as **critical incidents**.

It can be:

- a sudden death or serious injury of an infant or child
- a prolonged rescue effort
- a responder knowing the victim or family
- an injury or death of co-worker

*“There is no training in the world, no person in the world who can stand the constant bombardment of human misery without help.”*

Jeffrey T. Mitchell, PhD

## How Can A Critical Incident Affect Me?

Normal symptoms following a critical incident can include preoccupation, insomnia, loss of appetite, difficulty in concentration, flashbacks, or feelings such as guilt, hopelessness, anxiety, or simply helplessness.

Although these reactions are considered **normal**, they can have a serious effect on the emergency responder’s physical and emotional well-being.

## What Is A Critical Incident Stress Debriefing?

A Debriefing:

- is a group session led by a CISM Team of specially trained individuals
- is not a critique or a performance evaluation
- helps participants to focus on the event and share their thoughts and feelings
- is confidential
- is usually conducted within a 60-90 minute time frame

## How Does A Debriefing Help?

Emergency response personnel benefit from a Debriefing because it:

- provides a supportive and caring atmosphere

- helps participants to identify the signs/symptoms of normal reactions
- reduces feelings of isolation and inadequacy
- contributes to the prevention of burn-out
- provides reassurance and support to others
- provides better coping skills for future incidents

## Who Can Use This Program?

CISM services are available to first responders, ambulance crews, hospital staff, dispatchers, peace officers, fire-fighters, and other members of the emergency response system in the eleven-county area of southeastern Minnesota.

