



ACTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT MANUAL; P&P: Operations		
POLICY & PROCEDURE # 1.33	DATE OF ISSUE: 04/09/2025	EFFECTIVE DATE: 04/09/2025
SUBJECT: LOSSteam Services	ISSUING AUTHORITY: Chief James Cogan	
REFERENCE(S): Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission # None	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> AMENDS <input type="checkbox"/> RESCINDS	

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines for the Acton Police Department personnel on when and how to contact the LOSSteam for immediate crisis support following a suicide. The LOSSteam, a volunteer group of suicide loss survivors, provides immediate assistance to those who have lost a loved one to suicide, offering emotional support, resources, and hope during a difficult and traumatic time. By promptly reaching out to the LOSSteam, the Acton Police Department can significantly aid in mitigating the immediate emotional and psychological effects of suicide on the survivors, ensuring they are provided with compassionate care and necessary resources as they begin their healing journey.

II. POLICY

The Acton Police Department personnel should contact the LOSSteam when responding to a suicide death in the community. The LOSSteam's trained volunteers will provide timely support to survivors and ensure they are connected to local resources that can assist them in their healing process.

The LOSSteam should be called under the following circumstances:

1. Immediate Response to a Suicide Death:

- When the death is confirmed to be by suicide, and the family or loved ones are still present or are being notified, the LOSSteam should be called to provide immediate support to those grieving.
- The team will respond to the scene within 12-24 hours to offer emotional support, comfort, and guidance.

2. Suicide Deaths in the Community:

- If the department is involved in investigating or responding to a suicide death in a private home, public space, or workplace, and there are surviving family members or loved ones, the LOSSteam should be contacted to ensure that the survivors receive proper crisis support.

3. Referral of Survivors in Crisis:

- If Police Officers and/or Clinical Staff Responders encounter individuals who are struggling emotionally or are in crisis as a result of a suicide death (such as witnessing the event or having a close connection to the deceased), officers should call the LOSSteam for immediate intervention.

4. When Survivors Express Difficulty Coping:

- If survivors express difficulty coping, intense grief, or feelings of hopelessness, they should be referred to the LOSSteam for professional and peer support.

5. Special Circumstances:

- If the survivor is in immediate danger of self-harm or exhibiting signs of a mental health crisis, officers should consider arranging for voluntary or involuntary (Section 12) transport to a hospital for a mental health evaluation. Once the evaluation is completed, the LOSSteam can be notified to offer continued support.

III. PROCEDURE

1. Upon Confirmation of Suicide:

- The responding officer will notify the supervisor and the supervisor will determine whether to contact the LOSSteam hotline.

2. Provide Information to LOSSteam:

A. When contacting the LOSSteam, the following details should be provided

- The location of the incident
- The relationship of survivors to the deceased
- The immediate needs of the survivors (e.g., if they are present at the scene or need a follow-up visit)
- Any relevant background information that could assist the LOSSteam in providing the best possible support.

3. Response from LOSSteam:

- The LOSSteam will respond to the scene or follow up with survivors as soon as possible (within 12-24 hours) to offer support.
- A volunteer will offer comfort, provide a binder of local resources, and schedule any follow-up contact as necessary.

- In cases where the survivor is not ready for immediate support, the LOSSteam will offer information on how to contact them later.

4. Expectations:

- The LOSSteam volunteers will not replace law enforcement duties, department clinicians, or emergency medical services but will serve as an additional layer of support for those affected by the suicide.
- The department should always encourage the survivor to seek follow-up care and resources, which the LOSSteam can assist with.
- Officers and/or Clinical Staff Responders should be sensitive to the survivor's needs and recognize the importance of early intervention in preventing further trauma and promoting healing.

5. Contact Information

- **LOSS Team Hotline:** 508-532-CALL (2255)
- **Mass211 Call Center:** 211 (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline)

LOSSteam INFORMATION

History: None