

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES**



<b>PROCEDURE</b>	
Subject: Duty Officer	Procedure No.: 2012-DDA-PR012
Responsible Program or Office:  Developmental Disabilities Administration	Effective Date: March 1, 2013
	Number of Pages: 3
Cross References, Related Policies and Procedures, and Related Documents: Duty Officer Policy; Mortality Reporting Procedure; Incident Management Enforcement Unit Policy and Procedure.	

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to establish the operations that govern the Department on Disability Services (“DDS”) Duty Officer Program for the Developmental Disabilities Administration (“DDA”) to ensure that supervisory staff are available to advise, guide and support people who receive services from DDA and their support teams during an emergency that may occur outside of regular DDA business hours; and that people who receive services from DDA and their support teams are aware of how to request afterhours assistance.

**2. APPLICABILITY**

The procedure applies to all DDS and DDA Management Supervisory Services (“MSS”) Employees (Grade MS-12 and above), designated by the DDS Director based upon their job classification, experience, sound judgment, and training, as well as their knowledge of government agencies and providers/vendors who provide services to all people receiving support as part of the DDA service delivery system.

**3. PROCEDURES**

- A. DDS shall create a rotating roster of DDS and DDA MSS management level staff members (Grade MS-12 and above), designated by the DDS Director, who, based upon their job description, experience and training are available as assigned after regular business hours to respond by telephone and email to requests for advice, guidance, and decision-making assistance to service providers, people receiving supports and services from DDA, other DDS staff, family/community members, and other governmental entities (“Duty Officer Roster”).

- B. DDS shall maintain and update as needed a Duty Officer Manual. DDA shall ensure that all members of the Duty Officer Roster have received training and are familiar with the contents of the manual. The manual may be in either hard copy (paper) format, or electronic. If electronic only, DDS shall ensure that duty officers have a portable way to access it afterhours.
- C. DDS shall train all members of the Duty Office Roster on how to triage serious reportable incidents involving abuse, neglect, exploitation, serious physical injury and death to determine whether a rapid response to the scene is needed to protect the health and safety of the person and/or other people served in the same location or by the same staff; and/or to secure the scene or evidence.
- D. DDS shall train all members of the Duty Office Roster on reporting and notification protocols (including notification of DDS leadership regarding events that may become newsworthy); and customer service expectations.
- E. The Supervisory Investigator of the Incident Management and Enforcement Unit or his or her designee, will maintain the Duty Officer Manual, roster, orientation material, orientation completion list; will administer the orientation to new eligible employees; and will coordinate scheduling, including any changes that need to be made based on duty officer illness, or personal emergencies that prevents the duty officer from being able to complete his or her tour of duty.
- F. The “Tour of Duty” shall regularly consist of seven (7) consecutive days of coverage starting on Thursdays at the official DDS close of business at 4:45 p.m. and ending on Thursday of the following week at 8:15 a.m., when the office reopens. This includes all after hours coverage on regular business days and 24-hours coverage on Saturday, Sunday, official government holidays, or any day of official government closing. At the end of his or her shift, the duty officer is responsible for returning the communication device, manual, and for passing along any relevant information to the new duty officer. In the unusual event that the new duty officer is not available to start his or her shift, the current officer may be required to extend their tour of duty to ensure continuing coverage. If DDS is closed during regular business hours due to weather, or for any other reason, the tour of duty shall be extended until the office reopens and the regularly scheduled duty officer is available to provide coverage.
- G. During their tour of duty the assigned duty officer shall:
  - i. Stay within 30 miles of District of Columbia boundaries.
  - ii. Not ingest any food, drink, or medication which would impede his or her decision making ability.
  - iii. Be available at all times to answer the duty officer communication device and conduct subsequent required actions.
  - iv. Check the duty officer communication device regularly for messages and respond to all communications within 30 minutes of receipt.

- v. Document all communications, incidents, and anything else noteworthy in accordance with DDS policies and procedures, and with instructions in the Duty Office Manual, which may include using designated electronic or paper forms.
  - vi. Closely coordinate with DDS leadership staff, as needed, to ensure prompt notification to the Director and Deputy Director.
  - vii. Seek clinical or professional guidance, if needed, from DDS leadership staff. For example, the duty officer may need to coordinate with the Health and Wellness Supervisor for health emergencies.
  - viii. Be available to respond to the scene of an incident, crime, medical treatment facility, etc.
- H. Duty officers must follow all DDA policies and procedures during the Tour of Duty, including but not limited to the Incident Management and Enforcement policy and procedure and the Mortality Reporting procedure.
- I. For emergency situations in which the duty officer is required to come to the scene, the duty officer shall first ensure the health, safety and well-being of the people involved. Once the people involved are safe the duty officer shall report the incident, if appropriate, to the proper authorities. Additionally, the duty officer will secure the scene and document a detailed description of events.
- J. When a duty officer is notified about the death of a person supported by DDA, he or she will refer to and follow the DDA Mortality Reporting procedure, a copy of which shall be included in the Duty Officer Manual.
- K. The duty officer shall contact the DDS Director, DDA Deputy Director and/or DDS Chief of Staff in the event that they are contacted by a representative of the press prior to making any comments.
- L. MSS employees assigned as duty officers are not eligible for overtime payment or compensatory time while serving as the duty officer. However, duty officers shall receive one eight-hour allocation of “recognition hours” upon completion of their seven (7) consecutive day assigned tour of duty. Recognition hours are not recorded in the People Soft time and labor system but are maintained separately by the Office of the DDS Deputy Director for DDA. All recognition hours must be used within twelve (12) months of accrual or will be forfeited, with no option to appeal. Recognition hours are not payable upon separation and are not transferable. Use of recognition hours must be approved prior to use.