



MARCH 2021 ISSUE #3

EYE

EALTH

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC., - A Service Organization of the ASSOCIATION COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GEORGIA and the GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author's and do not reflect the views of LGRMS, ACCG, or GMA.

SAFETY THE "EYES" OF MARCH **AND WORKPLACE INJURIES.**

LGRMS IS SEARCHING FOR A

SOUTH GEORGIA RISK CONSULTANT

SEE PAGE 35 FOR MORE

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INFORMATION

SAFETY THEME DOWNLOAD THIS MONTH'S SAFETY POSTER

HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICES

CHECK OUT THE LIVING WELL **GEORGIA CORNER**

RISK/LIABILITY

NOTES FROM THE ROAD AND OTHER GREAT ARTICLES

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3500 Parkway Lane Suite 110 Peachtree Corners, GA 30092

www.lgrms.com

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UPCOMING WEBINARS AND TRAINING EVENTS

For a current list of training events, please visit:

www.lgrms.com/trainingcalendar

Virtual Safety Coordinator - Session 1 Thursday, March 25, 2021 // 10:00am - 11:00am

Virtual Below 100 Tuesday, March 30, 2021 // 10:00am - 11:30am

Virtual Below 100 Thursday, April 1, 2021 // 2:00pm - 3:30pm

Virtual Safety Coordinator - Session 2 Tuesday, April 13, 2021 // 10:00am - 11:00am

Virtual Safety Coordinator - Session 2 Wednesday, April 21, 2021 // 2:00pm - 3:00pm

Virtual Below 100 <u>Tuesday, April 27, 2021 // 10:00am - 11:30am</u>

Please log into the LGRMS Website/training calendar for a complete list of training events.



New Publication Format and Name Change

Welcome to the third edition of SHARE, the new combined monthly publication of Local Government Risk Management Services (LGRMS). Previously LGRMS published three Risk and Safety Bulletins. The monthly Safety Theme, geared toward our Worker Compensation (WC) members and one focused safety topic, the monthly Liability Beat, geared toward our GIRMA and IRMA Liability members, and heavily focused on law enforcement and personnel liability issues, and finally our quarterly Risk Connection, geared toward all pool members. Starting in January, all three were combined into a new publication called Safety Health and Risk E-connect (SHARE). SHARE will be sent to all GIRMA/IRMA, WC, and Health Promotion members 10 times per year.

SHARE will have two sections: (1) a general safety, risk, and health section, and (2) a worker safety- focused section similar to the old Safety Theme.

Rest assured we will still cover those topics and issues most relevant to Local Governments in Georgia, plus some new features. We look forward to your feedback. The LGRMS SHARE is published on or around the 20th of each month. If you are not currently on the distribution list to receive our monthly newsletter, it can be downloaded for free from the LGRMS website (www.lgrms.com).

In this issue

We focus on eye safety in this issue using two approaches. The first is eye health which focuses on key nutrients needed for healthy eyes. The second is eye safety. What is the point of healthy eyes if we lose one by not being safety conscious? Eye protection is the key here. This issue also features an article by Mike O'Quinn on mobile crisis units who provide help to persons experiencing a mental health crisis within the county. The unit consists of a police officer cross trained as a paramedic, and a licensed mental health clinician. See the details in the article.

Finally our worker safety theme focuses on Tornado safety. Georgia had 69 tornados in 2019, be aware, know what to do if you receive a tornado watch or warning.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact: Dennis Watts, <u>dwatts@lgrms.com</u>, or Tammy Chapman, <u>tchapman@lgrms.com</u>.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



By Dan Beck, LGRMS Director

ARE YOU ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS?

I hope you and yours are safe and healthy. Do you ever wonder if your leader thinks you are doing a good job? Do you know what is important to your leaders? Most good managers will provide clear direction and share feedback to ensure alignment with goals and tasks, but most of us know what is truly important to our manager by the questions they ask and the tone of their comments. For example, if every time you see your manager they ask, "How are you doing on the TPS report?" then you would realize that the TPS report is important to your manager. You would at that point focus your attention to ensure the report is completed in a quality and timely manner.

I've been in risk management and safety for almost 30 years. Throughout my career, I have worked with and for managers/leaders at all levels, from front-line supervisors to CEOs. Typically, when I meet with leaders, I want to understand their business and their priorities. During these meetings, I ask, "When you start work in the morning, who are the people you talk with first?" Most indicate they call members of their team that directly report to them - the supervisors, managers, directors, or vice presidents. Next, I ask, "What questions do you ask them?" Depending on their function, they would say: I ask about sales, or utilization, or productivity, or whatever measure that was important for them to drive their business success. I then ask, "When do you ask about safety?" The most typical answer is, "Well, if there was an accident/incident, I will ask what happened."

Although asking about accidents/incidents is good, these questions don't really show others that employee safety and risk management is top of mind and/or important to you. Leaders who value and prioritize safety and risk management will know their organization's risks and what is driving their losses. They will develop questions that focus on reducing those risks within their organizations.

For example, if the organization's loss trend shows a high rate of motor vehicle crashes, the leader might:

- Ask the Risk Manager if they have a strong motor vehicle policy.
- Ask the Department Manager if they are implementing the motor vehicle policy and how motor vehicle incident trends look this year compared to previous years.
- Ask the supervisors if they are providing quality defensive driver training to employees and holding them accountable for poor driving behavior.
- Ask front-line employees if they are following their defensive driver training and wearing their seatbelt.

There are endless questions that leaders can pose to ensure there is a better focus on loss trends. **The more questions asked, the more your employees will know that safety is important to you.**

Leaders also need to be aware of how other questions might drive improper or risk-related behavior by causing employees to cut corners or rush riskreduction procedures.

For example, if after an emergency call the leader asks, "Who was the first to respond to the scene?" and then holds this person up as an example. Other employees will conclude that getting to the scene first is more important than using safe driving procedures to get there. Leaders should consider the impact of their questions and employee recognition; and ensure a safety and risk management component is included.

Remember, any question you ask and any statement you make can impact your employee's behavior and the culture of your organization. Stay safe and choose your words carefully.





MARCH 2021 ISSUE 3

HARE

LIABILITY BEAT



by Chris Ryan, LGRMS Loss Control Representative Local Government Risk Management Services (LGRMS) would like to thank Ms. Angela E. Davis, Esq. of the law firm Jarrard & Davis, LLP for answering the question on the minds of members of the ACCG and GMA insurance pools. On January 27, 2021, Ms. Davis conducted a webinar discussing the question, "Should cities and counties mandate or not mandate the COVID-19 vaccine shot for their employees when it becomes available?" Her presentation can be broken down into three sections of discussion: (1) an overview of liability issues, (2) whether the mandate is practical based off questions from ACCG and GMA insurance pool members, and (3) her recommendation for city and county members.

Section one, the discussion was on an overview of the liability issues a city or county might deal with in mandating a COVID-19 vaccine policy. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) brings the issue of disability of the employee and the reasonable accommodation standard for those who can't or will not take the vaccine. Title VII may bring up the issue declining based on religious beliefs. The Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act (GINA) brings to light the example of pre-screening for genetic information. Another question arose of could an employee be fired for declining to take the vaccine because it has not been FDA approved. If the vaccine was part of an incentive program, the city or county would need to make sure the incentive was legal and is a "de minimus benefit" in light of a proposed EEOC rule on the subject under consideration. It was also recommended if an employee did not take the vaccine and gets the virus, they would still need to look at the exceptions before deciding to make the employee use emergency paid leave may lead

to legal implications based on discrimination and/or retaliation.

Section two, the discussion was on developing a mandatory vaccine policy and was it practical to do so. Could this become a workers' compensation claims if an employee had an adverse reaction to the vaccine and if this type of policy could affect the employer-employee relationship. Also, if an employee did not take the vaccine or spoke out against anyone getting the vaccine, could the employee be fired. If the vaccine was part of an incentive program, the city or county would need to make sure the incentive is comparable for everyone whether they take the vaccine or decline it. An example she used was to give every employee the same amount of time off whether they take or don't take the vaccine. Just like it is not practical to make an employee take the vaccine, the same goes for inmates in jails or prison.

The final section after reviewing all of the subsequent legal and practical issues a city or county may face, Ms. Davis recommended cities and counties should not mandate the COVID-19 vaccine for their employees, but an employee may volunteer to get the vaccine. If any city or county is interested in viewing the webinar, please click the link below (webinar starts at 6:23). https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/ recording/8600316593403549454.

Below are some frequently asked questions

1. Can a City of County require its employees to take the COVID-19 vaccine? Ms. Davis does not recommend it due to numerous legal liability and general practicality issues the City or County would need to go through to implement it. This type of policy could be drafted, but it would need to have a lot of exceptions and considerations to apply it.

 Can an employee be fired for not taking the COVID-19 vaccine, if required by their employer?
 Possibly, but the employer must be aware of the exemptions.

3. Can an employee be forced to take the vaccine if it is not FDA approved? The vaccine was given an emergency use authorization and not being FDA approved does increase the risk for the employee.

4. What should the Employer do if an Employee claims an exemption to your policy based upon DISABILITY? Begin the discussion with an interactive process and be aware a reasonable accommodation may need to be implemented.

5. What should the Employer do if an Employee claims an exemption to your policy based upon having a sincerely held religious belief? Begin the discussion with an interactive process and be aware a reasonable may need to be implemented in this situation also.

6. If the Employee gets the virus from the vaccine and gets sick or dies, will this result in a workers' compensation claim? Likely yes, if taking the vaccine was arising out of and in the course of maintaining the employee's job. It is also to consider where, when, who administered and who paid for the shot

7. Can a City or County offer an incentive for the employee who receives the vaccine? Yes, but Ms. Davis did not recommend it to be part of the wellness program. The City or County needs to be aware if reasonable accommodations or alternative benefits in the legal issues of disability and religion. It is better to make sure the taking of the vaccine is voluntary.



8. Would a Vaccine Incentive Program be considered a wellness program? If the incentive program was established separately and the City or County did not engage in participating in the administration of the vaccine, it could likely avoid the characterization of a wellness program.

9. Would a gift card or cash equivalent as a vaccine incentive be taxable to employees? Yes, a cash equivalent is currently taxable under IRS Rules.

10. What kind of incentive is appropriate? A water bottle or nominal amount that meets the IRS de minimus regulation.

11. What are some other options for incentives? Options like paid time off (2hrs/half day) for all employees with no proof of vaccine required; paid time off only to get vaccine and/or pay for costs of vaccine in form of voucher after the employee gets their shot.

12. If the City or County develops an incentive program that requires employee to show proof of vaccination, do we need to maintain that vaccine record on file? Yes, it would be best to retain the proof of vaccination for financial audit purposes to support the incentive given. Make sure this proof is put into the employee's medical file.

13. We have continued to follow the FFCRA (all except the 2/3 pay for school being closed) even though we are not required to. We are not making the vaccine mandatory for employees, but we are giving an incentive to those employees who do get the vaccine. Can the City discontinue the FFCRA for those employees who elect not to get the vaccine, but continue it for those who do? This is not recommended because it could result in legal implications against the employer premised on discrimination and/or retaliation.

14. Can a City or County extend into 2021 aid leave rights previously mandated under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act ("FFCRA")? Yes, but they don't have to. This would be a budgetary decision for the governing authority, and it must be applied uniformly and free from discrimination.

15. Can we require our Public Safety staff to use emergency paid sick leave if they have declined the COVID-19 vaccine or have not yet received the COVID-19 vaccine that is readily available? Ms. Davis said she would caution against requiring emergency paid sick leave be taken based solely on that employee not getting vaccinated or refusing emergency paid sick leave benefits in the event that unvaccinated employee becomes infected with COVID-19.

16. Can we fire or discipline an employee who is complaining about or speaking out against vaccines or our vaccine policy? Probably not since the specific context, form, and content of the employee's speech would have to be known for any analysis of this inquiry and the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or even the Georgia Whistleblower Act may be being implicated in this situation.

17. Are inmates incarcerated in jails or corrections

facilities operated by local government law enforcement agencies required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine? No, since there is not currently any federal or Georgia law mandating inmates to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and it has not been mandated by the Federal Bureau of Prison.

 Would local government law enforcement agencies face liability exposure if they do not adopt policies requiring mandatory vaccination of inmates?
 Ms. Davis said she did not think so.

19. Would requiring inmates to be vaccinated against COVID-19 present any legal issues for local government law enforcement agencies? Yes. All the same considerations apply as to employees, including also the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act ("RLUIPA").



TRAINING SAFETY

by Steve Shields, LGRMS Loss Control Manager

As you read this article, we are marking the one-year anniversary when our lives changed forever. COVID-19 virus hit us and hit us hard. I can remember on Friday, March 13th, the staff at LGRMS were pulled off the road. We expected to be off the road for a couple of weeks, maybe a little longer, but then back out doing our normal job functions. As I am writing this, we still are not back on the road fulltime and who would have believed a large portion of our society would be teleworking for over a year?

The changes we have gone through has been unbelievable. We have gone through an election cycle, had a number of retirements (both of which has impacted the safety efforts locally), moved the majority of our meetings to virtual platforms, limited face to face, limited our onsite training to a virtual platform, and our regional training has taken on a completely different look. We were looking forward to rolling out additional Safety Coordinator Modules, however we had to adapt to the new world environment. Therefore, we rolled out the Virtual Safety Coordinator training, which you will see in this issue. We are holding session one virtually in March, session two in April, and session three in May. Be sure to register.

We are still available for onsite visits, and if you feel you need one, please contact your field representative to schedule it. There are a few hoops to jump through, but it can be done. The exposures our employees face have only increased with the virus and we want to make sure we are doing everything we can to protect our members, so keep safety front and center. Don't let up and use the resources available. We are here if you need us.

As I started this article, I talked about how life on the road has taken on new meaning for the staff of LGRMS. I can assure you that the LGRMS staff are eager and ready to resume our field visits, regional and/or focused training, for every member of the ACCG and GMA insurance pools. Until next month, this is Steve Shields with Notes from the Road.

by David Trotter, LGRMS Senior Public Safety Risk Consultant

Daylight Savings Time is Sunday March 14. Its one of two times a year we must reset every clock in the house, our cars, and for those who do not have smart watches, wind those too, one hour ahead. This is also a great time of the year to remind everyone to do safety checks of your home, office, and vehicle. Some simple things can make those places safer.

At home and possibly office, change the batteries in your smoke/carbon monoxide detectors. Also test them to make sure they are working correctly. Check the expiration date on your fire extinguishers and make sure they are still charged. If expired or not charged replace or have it recharged. A small fire in the kitchen or garage can be safely extinguished while firefighters are on the way and may save the house and everyone inside. If you do not have fire extinguishers in your home, please get them. National Fire Protection Association recommends that homes have at least one fire extinguisher on each level of a home. These should be multipurpose fire extinguishers (can be used on all types of home fires). These should be installed next to an exit. The kitchen, garage, laundry, and utility room are ideal places to have a fire extinguisher. These are the most likely places a fire may start.

Check the first aid kit. Make sure it is stocked and nothing is expired. Yes, Medical supplies have expiration dates as well. Again, it is suggested to have at least one first aid kit on every level of the house and in an easy to find location. Also check the fire extinguisher and first aid kit in your vehicle. Emergencies can happen anywhere. For more information about fire safety visit the National Fire Prevention Association website at https://www.nfpa.org.

RECRUITIVEN RETENTION



by Natalie Sellers, LGRMS Law Enforcement Risk Consultant

Across the Country, law enforcement agencies are operating understaffed. This poses a risk to the communities they serve and can also have a financial impact on City and County budgets. The continued toxic national narrative surrounding this profession; along with attrition rates, dwindling applicant pools, and low salaries are challenging recruitment and retention efforts.

Not all departments are alike. Thus, they all have different reasons why they are experiencing staff turnover or a shortage in eligible applicants. This profession is experiencing the same problem nationwide; however, the solution cannot be standardized. There is no one-size-fitsall step by step remedy.

The risk management approach may be one way to help. Using this approach will assist in identifying agency specific causes for recruitment and retention rates. In addition to, developing and implementing controls that will help reduce hiring and firing, and cultivate successful recruitment programs.

Using risk management is a great way to discover what is the root cause of personnel management issues. It involves three easy steps: 1. Identify or assess the rate/reason for your agency turnover and pinpoint recruitment challenges, 2. Assess the risks or impact that current personnel management procedures are having on the agency's recruitment and retention, and 3. Implement controls and develop a plan that will help reduce turnover and provide a robust recruitment program. Taking this comprehensive approach will ensure a systematic proactive program can improve organizational effectiveness.

RECRUITMENT

Concerns with recruitment can vary greatly. Some agencies struggle with a lack of qualified applicants. Others may lack competitive salary and benefits. Departmental reputation or lack of upward mobility could also be affecting the applicant pool. Work-life balance is of great concern to the younger generation. And when it comes to the new fitness for duty testing, are qualified candidates reluctant to apply or fail out due to the new standards?

The above is certainly a short list of recruitment challenges. Identifying exactly what is causing your department deficiencies and then implementing a strategy to address the problem is one approach. This will ensure there is an available abundance of qualified candidates. Avoid waiting until there is an opening to start recruiting. Recruitment should be a continuous endeavor that is performed by a diverse recruitment team to ensure there are well qualified applicants. Hiring and onboarding is a lengthy process and must be factored into your recruitment strategy.

Engage current employees, community leaders, schools, churches, and other social organizations when looking for new employees. Some are having success using social media campaigns and recruiting videos to attract candidates. College and University partnerships, as well as benefits and incentives, can also increase interest. Finally, define what makes your department unique. Branding your organization could attract more candidates. And when it comes to fitness for duty testing, offer classes and training to help candidates prepare and be successful.

RETENTION

Equally as important and close kin to recruitment is retention. With diminishing applicants, increasing retention efforts will help combat recruitment issues. One effort to quantify the costs of turnover suggests that replacing an officer with three years' experience costs more than twice his or her annual salary (Orrick, 2002). It can be a time consuming and costly endeavor.

When discussing retention rates, it is imperative to take into consideration the voluntary and involuntary types of turnover. Voluntary, being those who left the agency on their own accord and involuntary referring to someone being terminated. Terminations are usually the result of bad hiring.

In reviewing research, there is a plethora of reasons for voluntary turnover. Therefore, it is much more difficult to assess and control. Job stability and longevity historically were deep rooted personal values. Multigenerational careers in law enforcement are becoming rare. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), longevity is a thing of the past and professional pivoting is on the rise. Studies show the median number of years today's average worker has been at his or her current employer is 4.2 years. (https://www.bls.gov/news.release/tenure.nr0.htm)

Job hopping is prevalent in law enforcement and should be taken into consideration when developing a strategy. An exit interview can help gather information needed for future planning. For example, the reason(s) they left. Did they leave for more pay, a take home car, or because of poor supervision and leadership, dysfunctional organizational culture, lack of career growth, inadequate training? These are just some reasons listed in IACP Best Practice Guide, Recruitment, Retention, and Turnover of Law Enforcement Personnel. (W. Dwayne Orrick, 2008)

Professional pivoting refers to a change in careers and not just changing departments. The military model demonstrates that planning for the inevitable loss of employees/recruits is a great way to avoid manpower shortage.

"The military has adapted to the idea that many who enlist will find the stressful, regimented work of being a service member to be a career choice that does not suit them as decades long calling. And the military presumably understands that it is in the best interest of the organization and the individual in question that those who do not want to be there leave considering the stakes." (Considering the Military Model for Recruiting and Retention in Law Enforcement, Matt Dolan, January 2021)

Law enforcement, like the military, can be a regimented stressful job. Some may get the job, only to discover the job wasn't meant for them. A career in law enforcement can lead to fatigue, health issues, and frustration due to lack of pay and appreciation, which all can cause professional pivot. Knowing why employees leave your organization is just as important as why you hired them. Developing a diverse strategy team for recruitment and retention will help avoid manpower shortage. Managing retention issues is vital to law enforcement leaders in this labor market. Departmental success is contingent on the retention of good employees. As well as, the discharging of those that may compromise the mission.

Orrick also suggests that the sooner you are made aware of an employee that is considering a job change, the better. Intervention from a supervisor or command staff may prevent the employee from leaving the department. Efforts should always be made to keep good officers.

When personnel matters are handled improperly, issues can sneak up like an earthquake leaving little time to prepare and wreaking havoc in the organization. When managed correctly, HR issues will resemble a hurricane alert system. Ample warning and sufficient time to prepare for the problems ahead. They can also be easily resolved, or take a different path, just like a hurricane.





by Vincent Scott, LGRMS Loss Control Representative

Our eyes are one of our greatest assets. They give us the ability to see the world around us. If we do not protect our eyes from injuries while at work, we could easily lose that ability. According to the CDC, every single day, about 2,000 U.S. workers sustain a job-related eye injury that requires medical treatment. Common causes of workplace eye injuries are flying debris, tools, chemicals, and eye strain due to digital devices. Most injuries occur when eye protection is worn but it is improper or ill-fitting and when eye protection isn't worn at all. In an office setting, excessive computer, table, and smart phone use throughout the day increases the risk of digital eye strain. Symptoms include blurred vision, dry eyes, and headaches. Being careful by taking some precautions and wearing the right protection may be all that's necessary to protect our precious eyes from harm or the risk of losing our vision.



Best Practices

The eyewear you need depends on the hazards you face.

- Safety glasses with side protection (side shields) if you work around particles, flying objects or dust.
- Goggles if you handle chemicals.
- Specially designed safety glasses, goggles, face shields or helmets if you work near hazards such as welding, lasers, or fiber optics.

While computer video display terminals do not damage vision, you might still experience eyestrain. Eye strain is characterized by difficulty in focusing, fatigue and discomfort in the eye. To pinpoint cause of discomfort, have eyes examined by an ophthalmologist.

- Position yourself approximately 20 inches away from the monitor, with the top of the screen at, or below, eye level.
- Choose a monitor that tilts or swivels and adjust it appropriately for the lighting in the room.
- Use a glare reduction screen on the monitor, if necessary.
- Every 20 minutes take a 20 second break and look away 20 feet to give your eyes a rest. Move them up, down and to both sides focusing on something at least 20 feet away.

Proper prevention measures must be followed in the workplace to reduce the risk of eye injuries. It is important to pay attention to your working environment and always wear eye protection according to the task. If you feel you are at risk, it's vital that you talk with your supervisor about your job or task before an injury occurs.

References

https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/ injuries-work

https://www.gov.vg/sites/default/files/resources/ safety_in_the_office_toolbox_talks.pdf



RENOTE SINDLATOR OPERATORS

LGRMS Training, Communication, and Public Safety Manager

To improve safety and continue training members is a key goal for LGRMS. COVID-19 guidelines for classroom training translates into maintaining distance between students and requiring mask wear, which allows safer training for both students and instructors. One significant challenge is, how do we safely train in a small, enclosed space (Driving Simulator)"? Our driving simulator program has been in effect since 2001. It is a proven training tool to help reduce accidents and improve the decision thought process of public safety drivers. The issue is our simulators are trailer mounted. The student sits in the driver station, the instructor is at a console. The maximum distance between the two is approximately six feet. That is pretty close contact even with masks, for the hour and a half they are together.

loading 100%

J.467834

To mitigate this, we have been using off-the-shelf components to build in the ability to have the instructor facilitate the training remotely, from outside the simulator trailer. Our first challenge was to wirelessly create an interface with the instructor station, so we can load scenarios from a distant location. Pilot program testing has shown it is successful. Our instructor can operate the system from their vehicle (or other outside location) while the student is in the simulator. The second challenge is maintaining the effectiveness of the facilitation process used in the simulator. Typically, while the student is negotiating a scenario, the instructor is observing their actions and decisions as they happen. At the end of a scenario, the instructor provides a facilitated discussion with the student on their actions and decisions. To overcome this challenge, we have installed cameras behind the student and facing the student, as well as a microphone and speakers. The instructor will be able to observe both views, watching the scenario as it happens (behind student camera), and watching the student's reaction to the scenario (facing student camera). The camera system works, but could use



significant improvement in clarity. The microphone and speakers are substandard at this point. We experienced a lag in the back-and-forth communication, and quality of sound is poor. You can see by the pictures our instructor had to use voice communication outside the simulator to communicate with the student.



Bottom line is LGRMS is continuing to refine this process, with the goal of solving remaining technical challenges, so we can train our members safely and effectively. Even when COVID-19 restrictions might be relaxed, having the option of remote facilitation adds value to our training ability.

For questions, contact David Trotter, Senior Public Safety Risk Consultant (<u>dtrotter@lgrms.com</u>) or Dennis Watts, Training and Public Safety Risk Manager (<u>dwatts@lgrms.</u> <u>com</u>).

CARROLL COUNTY FORMS FORMS MOBILE CRISIS UNIT

By **MICHAEL A. O'QUINN,** ACCG County Consulting Services Associate

Carroll County, partnering with the City of Carrollton, Sheriff Terry Langley, Willowbrooke at Tanner Medical Center, and Pathways Behavioral Health (a Community Service Board), has formed a Mobile Crisis Unit to provide help to persons experiencing a mental health crisis within the county. The unit consists of a police officer cross-trained as a paramedic, and a licensed mental health clinician. The unit will respond to 911 calls where a mental health crisis is indicated, and provide follow up visits to connect patients and their families to community services, and to help patients stay committed to their treatment regimen.

On average, approximately 25% of the inmates at the Carroll County Jail need mental health services, and one goal of the Mobile Crisis Unit is to divert such persons from the jail and into a treatment program where possible. Another goal is to reduce the amount of public safety resources taken out of service when a mental health crisis occurs—the licensed clinician will be able to complete an admission certification for a mental health evaluation on the scene, as opposed to having one or more law enforcement officers remain with the patient while additional officers seek a court order.

A local businessperson, Steve Adams, has donated a Ford Explorer for the Mobile Crisis Unit, and it will be equipped as both a law enforcement and emergency medical unit. It will be unmarked, and the members of the unit will not wear traditional police uniforms, in order to provide a more calming presence.

The effort to address mental health treatment in Carroll County began in 2008, when local citizens met with representatives from law enforcement, the probate court and treatment providers, leading to the creation of an organization known as Carroll County Mental Health Advocates (CMHA). The goal is to have trained Advocates work with individuals facing mental illness, provide information about the disease and treatment, and to connect them with available resources. Initially CMHA was an allvolunteer organization, and grew to include approximately 25 volunteers from the local community. With funding from a grant provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), CMHA has been able to hire a full-time Director (Jodie Carroll Goodman), and a part-time Peer Support Specialist and a Program Assistant.

CMHA, in cooperation with local judicial and law enforcement officials, implemented an Early Diversion Program and a

Mental Health Pre-Trial Diversion Program. Persons with a serious mental health diagnosis or co-occurring disorder and charged with a qualifying misdemeanor offense can be placed into a structured treatment program and kept out of the county jail. The treatment program will last between 6 to 12 months, and participants must comply with a treatment plan developed for their unique situation, maintain regular contact with CMHA staff or their assigned Advocate, utilize Peer Support services, and not have any additional charges filed against them. To improve outcomes, participants may be evaluated based on their social connectedness, mental and physical health, military history, housing stability, education and employment history, and their prior involvement in the criminal justice system. CMHA Advocates help participants keep track of appointments and meeting times, and help them navigate the mental health care system. As of September 2020, almost 50 persons have been enrolled in these programs.





Who said safety can't be fun? Test your knowledge and see how much you have retained from the articles in this month's SHARE Newsletter. The puzzles below and on the adjoining page can be solved using words and clues scattered throughout the publication. *Check your answers to the crossword puzzle on p. 29.*

Т ОВ С С Ν Е L А Κ S L Α 0 G R Ρ Α Е D I C V RΗ А R М 0 Α Е S Α ΝI A R Т S Е Υ Е] С R Ρ G ΝI R F V L ΝI Α Т Υ L R Е S I R R E В W S 0 I L Α R Т D Х А А ΚA Е R В Т U 0 А J Т S Υ Т EF Α Ρ W L Т ΝI Ι S Ν С S Ρ RO Е R D U Е S н Е J В Т W ΕM Т Ι URC Е 0 YW Ν R 0 Ρ н Т н А L Μ O L 0 G Ι S Т ΑL Κ V Ι R Т U R A ΡU Q J Ν Т L V С L Е νт Е R R A I N B S Ρ W Υ D W Т Ν Е M Ν G I L Α L В Μ R 0 F Т A L Ρ Ι В В Κ М Е Е D Κ U R т Ν т Ι O N Т V R

ALIGNMENT GOALS PROCEDURES PARAMEDIC DIVERT VIRTUAL TRAINING PLATFORM RECRUITMENT RETENTION EYESTRAIN OPHTHALMOLOGIST CARROTS KALE STRAWBERRIES OUTBREAK TERRAIN SAFETY



What's Wrong With This Picture?

Safety should be top of mind when working with large equipment, flammable chemicals, and in noisy environments. Apparently this crew did not get the memo. Test your observational skills, and put your knowledge of safety to the test. Circle all of the things that are wrong with this scene.





<u>Across</u>

1. This treatment is required to help workers who sustain a job-related eye injury.

4. Foods and their nutrition may help fight age-related macular degeneration and this type of loss.

5. Improperly handled personnel matters can wreak this in the organization.

6. LGRMS wants to _____ our members; so keep safety front and center.

8. This refers to a change in careers and not just changing departments

11. LGRMS instructors use innovative components to facilitate remote training outside this trailer

13. This mobile unit responds to 911 mental health calls in Carroll County

15. Any question asked or statement made can impact your organization's

Savings Time is great to conduct safety checks of your home,

office, and vehicle

17. The average number days for these in GA are six

<u>Down</u>

1. This Mobile Unit consists of a police officer cross-trained as a paramedic

2. LGRMS is still not back on the road full-time, but Field Reps are a available for onsite these.

3. In this state, tornadoes are often hard to see as they are wrapped in areas of rain and hail.

6. Leaders who do this will know their organization's risks and what is driving their losses.

7. This provides tools to promote health in your organization

Tackling behavioral health needs may prevent cycling through this justice system

10. Various types of these determine the eyewear you need

12. These rates challenge recruitment and retention efforts, applicant pools and low salaries

14. This LGRMS publication goes out on or around the 20th of each month



IPS

SHARE LIVING WELL GEORGIA

LIVING WELL GEORGIA

Save Your Vision Month

MARCH 2021

ISSUE #3



by Candace Amos, LGRMS Health Promotion Representative

Carrots are known for helping our eyes. However, other foods and their nutrients are just as important in keeping our eyesight keen.

Nutrients, such as vitamin C, vitamin E, lutein, omega-3 fatty acids, zeaxanthin, and zinc, may help reduce the risk of certain eye diseases. They may help prevent cataracts, which is the clouding of our eye lens. They may also help fight age-related macular degeneration (AMD). AMD is almost certainly the underlying cause of vision loss as we grow older. In preventing AMD, significant evidence shows that vitamin D plays a role as well.

Try to get the aforementioned nutrients from foods. More than likely, these foods contain a variety of other nutrients (micronutrients and macronutrients) that we need. And may help our body defend against diseases.

Some powerhouse foods with eye-friendly nutrients are:

Brussels sprout, carrots, crab, grapefruit, herring, kale, nuts, oysters, pumpkin, salmon, sardines, seeds, spinach, strawberries, sweet potato, turkey, and wheat germ. These foods and their nutrients may help protect our eyesight. Thus, it is important to include them in our daily diet. The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that people, at the 2,000-calorie level, eat 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables per day.

If you're not getting the recommended dietary allowance of these nutrients, ask your eye doctor about taking supplements. According to the American Optometric Association (AOA), consider taking multivitamin/mineral and eye health supplements if you find it difficult to increase the level of these nutrients in your diet. A major clinical study of older adults concluded that taking an antioxidant vitamin or mineral supplement significantly reduced the risk of advanced AMD progression in some people. Adding powerful antioxidants to your diet may improve your eye health. And there are many ways you can improve your health, as well as your employees' health. You can start by participating in the LGRMS HPS Forum Call, in which we'll go over a Health Toolkit that provides "tools" to promote health in your organization.

The Health Toolkit will be placed in the next issue of the SHARE newsletter, following the Forum Call, but it will be for the upcoming month. You'll receive all the tools you'll need beforehand to start planning.

The Forum Call is for Health Promotion Champions and individuals responsible as health promotion leaders, administrators, HR and personnel directors, clerks, health/safety coordinators, and wellness/health benefit coordinators. All are welcome to participate. You'll receive an invite each month. Please stay on the lookout!

Sources/References:

Diet and Nutrition | AOA 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Good Foods for Eye Health (webmd.com)



CARROTS ARE KNOWN FOR HELPING OUR EYES. "



SAFETY THEME MARCH 2021 ISSUE #3

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC., - A Service Organization of the ASSOCIATION COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GEORGIA and the GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

TORNADO Be Alert for Tornadoe

Be Alert for Tornadoes Know the Signs...Know What to Do **Editor's Note:** All of Georgia is prone to tornadoes, as shown in this map depicting Georgia tornadoes from 1950-2014. The average number of days with reported tornadoes is 6 in Georgia. Tornadoes have been reported throughout the year, but are most likely to occur from March to May, with the peak in April. Tornadoes are also most likely in the midafternoon to early evening time frame, but can occur any time of the day or night.

The most notable tornado event of 2020 was the Tornado Outbreak that occurred on Easter. Twenty-one (21) tornadoes were confirmed in the NWS Atlanta/Peachtree City forecast area during that tornado outbreak. Sadly, a number of fatalities occurred as a result. In Georgia, tornadoes are often hard to see as they are wrapped in areas of rain and hail. The hilly terrain can also limit your ability to see a tornado.

The National Weather Service and the American Red Cross share a common goal of protecting lives through public education. Regarding tornado safety, we both agree that the best options are to go to an underground shelter, basement or safe room. We have been giving this advice for decades, and it is recognized as the most effective way to stay safe in a tornado.

The National Weather Service and Red Cross also agree on the critical importance of preparedness and quick action when conditions are right for tornadoes to develop like during a severe thunderstorm warning or tornado watch. When a tornado warning is issued, immediate action is required. Preparedness begins by identifying a safe location well in advance of any severe weather and having a way to get weather alerts wherever you are, such as from a NOAA weather radio. When a watch or warning is broadcast, people should already have a plan on what to do and where to go. They should take action immediately and never wait until they actually see a tornado. The National Weather Service and the Red Cross continue to agree that if no underground shelter or safe room is available, the safest alternative is a small windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest level of a sturdy building, such as an interior bathroom. We also recommend that residents of mobile homes go to the nearest sturdy building or shelter if a tornado threatens.

The Red Cross and Weather Service believe that if you are caught outdoors, you should seek shelter in a basement, shelter or sturdy building. If you cannot quickly walk to a shelter:

- Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter.
- If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park.



Now you have the following options as a last resort:

- Stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible.
- If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.

Your choice should be driven by your specific circumstances.

The important thing to understand is that if you find yourself outside or in a car with a tornado approaching and you are unable to get to a safe shelter, you are at risk from a number of things outside your control, such as the strength and path of the tornado and debris from your surroundings. This is the case whether you stay in your car or seek shelter in a depression or ditch, both of which are considered last resort options that provide little protection. The safest place to be is in an underground shelter, basement or safe room.

Dated: June 22, 2009

Tornadoes

Although tornadoes occur in many parts of the world, they are found most frequently in the United States. In an average year, 1,200 tornadoes cause 60-65 fatalities and 1,500 injuries nationwide. You can find more information on tornadoes at www.spc.noaa.gov.

Tornado Facts

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending from a cumuliform cloud, such as a thunderstorm, to the ground.

- Tornadoes may appear nearly transparent until dust and debris are picked up or a cloud forms within the funnel. The average tornado moves from southwest to northeast, but tornadoes can move in any direction and can suddenly change their direction of motion.
- The average forward speed of a tornado is 30 mph but may vary from nearly stationary to 70 mph.
- The strongest tornadoes have rotating winds of more than 200 mph.
- Tornadoes can accompany tropical storms and hurricanes as they move onto land.
- Waterspouts are tornadoes that form over warm water. Water spouts can move onshore and cause damage to coastal areas.
- Tornadoes can occur at any time of day, any day of the year.

Have a plan of action before severe weather threatens. You need to respond quickly when a warning is issued or a tornado is spotted. When conditions are warm, humid, and windy, or skies are threatening, monitor for severe weather watches and warnings by listening to NOAA Weather Radio, logging onto weather.gov or tuning in to your favorite television or radio weather information source.

www.spc.noaa.gov/efscale/

Tornado Fiction and Fact

Fiction: Lakes, rivers, and mountains protect areas from tornadoes. Fact: No geographic location is safe from tornadoes. A tornado near Yellowstone National Park left a path of destruction up and down a 10,000 foot mountain.

Fiction: A tornado causes buildings to "explode" as the tornado passes overhead.

Fact: Violent winds and debris slamming into buildings cause the most structural damage.

Fiction: Open windows before a tornado approaches to equalize pressure and minimize damage.

Fact: Virtually all buildings leak. Leave the windows closed. Take shelter immediately. An underground shelter, basement, or safe room are the safest places. If none of those options are available, go to a



windowless interior room or hallway.

Fiction: Highway overpasses provide safe shelter from tornadoes. Fact: The area under a highway overpass is very dangerous in a tornado. If you are in a vehicle, you should immediately seek shelter in a sturdy building. As a last resort, you can either: stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible, OR if you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands. Your choice should be driven by your specific circumstances.

FICTION: It is safe to take shelter in the bathroom, hallway, or closet of a mobile home.

FACT: Mobile homes are not safe during tornadoes! Abandon your mobile home to seek shelter in a sturdy building immediately. If you live in a mobile home, ensure you have a plan in place that identifies the closest sturdy buildings.



Answer Key: Crossword Down: J. Mental Z. Visits J. Georgia 6. Prioritize 7. Toolkit 9. Criminal 10. Hazards J2. Attrition 14. SHARE Across: J. Medical 4. Vision 5. Havoc 6. Protect 8. Pivoting II. Simulator 13. Crisis 15. Culture 16. Daylight 17. Tornadoes



Tornado **Warning**

A thunderstorm capable of producing a tornado is imminent.

Take shelter now! Go to a basement or interior room. Stay informed of forecast updates.

Tornado **Watch**

Conditions are favorable for the development of thunderstorms capable of producing tornadoes.

Stay informed in case a warning is issued, and know where to take shelter.

NORR

weather.gov/safety/tornado

Take action.

Be prepared.



Click the infographic above for the full printable version

General Self Inspection Program

Location, Ar	ea, or Department:	Date:	Date:				
Surveyor: _							
General	Evaluation	Needs Action	Needs Improvement	Good	Very Good		
b. c.	y/Liability Fire protection Housekeeping Slip/trip/fall Public safety						
a. b. c.	ee Safety Safety meetings Safety rules Work conditions Auto/equipment				 		
Property/Liability Fire protection Emergency numbers posted Fire extinguishers available/serviced Fire alarm panel showing system is operational; no warning lights. Automatic sprinkler system control valve locked in open position. Automatic sprinkler heads clear of storage within three feet. Flammable, combustible liquids stored in UL-listed containers. Flammable, combustible liquid containers stored in proper cabinet or container. Smoking, No Smoking areas designated/marked. Any cigarette butts noticed in No Smoking areas. Comments:							No
Furnace, ho Work and pu Floor surfac Stored item	ear of combustible items t water heater, and electr ublic areas are clear of ex es kept clear of oils, other s are not leaning or impro	ical panel areas clea tension cords, boxe r fluids, or water. operly supported; h	s, equipment, or oth eavy items are not u	er tripping ha: p high.	zards.		
Handrails fo Guardrails fo Stair handra Floor surfac All rugs are Any holes, p	are in good condition; no r all stairs/steps. or all elevated platforms. ils are in good condition, es are even, with non-slip held down or have non-s its or depressions are ma gns are available and use	not loose or broke wax if applicable. lip backing. ırked with tape, bar	n.				

General Self Inspection Program

Public Safety	Yes	No
Public areas kept clear of storage and supplies. Emergency lighting for public assembly areas in buildings. Evacuation plans posted for public assembly areas in buildings. Public areas have necessary warning or directional signs. Construction work has barriers, covers, and markings. Street and road signs noted in good condition, clear of obstructions. Sidewalks smooth and even; no holes, no raised or broken areas. Comments:		
Employee Safety		
Safety Meetings		
Held in the department. Meetings held monthly quarterly other; documented Different topic each time. Covers department safety rules.		
Safety Rules		
Rules specific for this department. Rules are written, posted in the department. Reviewed with new employees.		
Work Conditions		
Employees exposed to: HeatColdRain/sleet/snowUse of chemicals NoiseWork in confined spacesWork in trenches TrafficBlood/body fluidsOther Proper personal protective equipment available		
Respirators, goggles, face shields, chemical gloves, traffic vests, appropriate clothing Trench boxes/shoring for trenching, ear plugs/muffs, body armor (law enforcement) Confined space equipment, harness, air testing equipment, ventilation equipment, tripod Fire department turn-out gear, blood-borne pathogens kits		
Personal protective equipment required to be worn.		
Employees trained on proper use. Equipment properly maintained. Shop equipment has proper guards to protect from pinch or caught-between type injuries. Chemicals used in the department. MSDS sheets available; employees trained on hazards, proper use, proper PPE to use.		
Comments:		
Auto and Equipment		
Seat belts provided.		
Seat belts required to be used. Drivers noted wearing seat belts.		
All lights working including strobe lights, turn signals. Tires in good condition, tread, sidewalls.		

Tires in good condition, tread, sidewalls.Glass in good condition; not cracked, broken.Reflective tape, signs in good condition.Any periodic, documented, self-inspection of the vehicles/equipment.Proper guards on mowers, other equipment.

Comments: ____

Safety Meeting Attendance Sign Up Sheet

City/County:		
Date:		
Department:		
Topic:		
Attendees:		
Attendees.		
	-	
Next meeting scheduled for		



LGRMS HOME OFFICE

Dan Beck LGRMS Director dbeck@lgrms.com O: 678-686-6280 C: 404.558-1874

Tamara Chapman Office Manager tchapman@lgrms.com O: 678-686-6283 C: 404.623-8055

Cortney Stepter Administrative Coordinator <u>cstepter@lgrms.com</u> O: 678-686-6282

PUBLIC SAFETY RISK CONTROL

Dennis Watts Training, Communication, and Public Safety Risk Manager dwatts@lgrms.com 404.821.3974

Mike Earl Public Safety Risk Consultant <u>mearl@lgrms.com</u> 404.558.8525

David Trotter Senior Public Safety Risk Consultant <u>dtrotter@lgrms.com</u> 404.295.4979 Natalie Sellers Law Enforcement Risk Consultant nsellers@lgrms.com 404.904.0074

RISK CONTROL

Steve Shields Loss Control Manager sshields@lgrms.com 404.416.3920

Chris Ryan Loss Control Representative SW Region cryan@lgrms.com 229.942.2241

Vincent Scott Loss Control Representative SE Region vscott@lgrms.com 404.698.9614

HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICES

Sherea Robinson Health Promotion Services Manager srobinson@lgrms.com 404.821.4741

Candace Amos Health Promotion Representative SW Central Region camos@lgrms.com 404.416.3379

HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICES (continued)

Paige Rinehart Health Promotion Representative NE Central Region prinehart@lgrms.com 404.295.4979

JOB POSTING

Do you possess a high level of customer service, team membership, communication and influence skills? Would you like to see your name listed among our team members? If so, this may be the position for you.

LGRMS IS SEARCHING FOR A

SOUTH GEORGIA RISK CONSULTANT

If Interested, please send your cover letter and resume to: applications@gmanet.com



SHARE ANNOUNCEMENTS

MARCH 2021 ISSUE #3

INTERESTED IN APPLYING

Send your cover letter and resume to: applications@gmanet.com

LGRMS IS SEARCHING FOR A

SOUTH GEORGIA RISK CONSULTANT

Go to:

www.lgrms.com/resources for more information.

SEE DESCRIPTION BELOW

Location:

This position will be responsible for supporting approximately 200 members within Southern Georgia Region. The Southern Georgia Region has not been formally defined, but it is roughly the line from Quitman County/Georgetown to Effingham County/Springfield. It is preferable the person that holds the position live within or near the Southern Georgia Region.

Salary/Benefits:

- Strong family and team working environment
- Ability to positively impact member employees' and citizens
 lives
- Based on the candidate's experience, we offer a six-month to two-year onboarding process to ensure their success in this new role

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor's degree in related field required; some experience in program administration or a related field; or an equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Must possess and maintain a valid Georgia driver's license.

- Career development strongly encouraged, with a potential for growth/advancement within LGRMS, GMA and ACCG
- Competitive salary and strong benefits package

The Ideal Candidate's Background/Experience:

- Although the Loss Control Consultant position reports to the Loss Control Manager, there is a great deal of independence and autonomy. Candidates should have a proven record of self-management and motivation.
- The position requires a high level of customer service, team membership, communication (written/verbal), and influence skills. Candidates should have a proven record of presenting, influencing or leading people from all levels of an organization.
- This position requires a high level of analytical and problem-solving skills. Candidates should have a proven record of conducting surveys or evaluations, loss & root-cause analysis, and making sound recommendations for long-term sustainable corrective actions.

SHARE

MARCH 2021 - ISSUE 3.0

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC., - A Service Organization of the ASSOCIATION COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GEORGIA and the GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

VISITTHE LGRMS UGRMS VEBSITE For more information. www.lgrms.com

Has your organization undergone any changes in personnel? Are there other staff members that you would like to receive a copy of our publications? If so, please click the link below to download our contact list form.

Contact List Form



Local Government Risk Management Services 3500 Parkway Lane . Suite 110 Peachtree Corners, Georgia 30092