

## **13.0. PROGRAMS**

### **13.1. SCOPE:**

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) defines the rules to be adhered to regarding:

- A. Eligibility for all participants when attending any Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.) Programs (Weekends and Camps);
- B. Registration/Cancellation/Travel Assistance.

### **13.2. OBJECTIVE:**

To provide clear and concise information to participants, staff, and chapter boards regarding the items outlined in the scope above.

### **13.3. CRITERIA:**

- A. C.O.P.S. determines someone as a survivor by following a specific criterion which is as follows:  
  
“C.O.P.S. membership is limited to surviving family members (spouse, child {natural, adopted, and step}, parent, and sibling), ‘significant others’, fiancés, other family members and affected co-workers of law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty as determined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Bureau of Justice Assistance’s Public Safety Officers’ Benefit (PSOB), National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF) or Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) criteria.”
- B. Persons referred to as “surviving” or “survivors” meet the above criteria.
- C. Anyone being referred to as a “domestic partner” is defined as a long term committed legal or interpersonal relationship between two individuals who live together and share a common domestic life, i.e., not just a boy/girlfriend.

### **13.4. ELIGIBILITY:**

- A. C.O.P.S. is a non-discriminatory organization and has the mission of helping survivors, regardless of age, race, religious association, disability, or sexual orientation. With regards to the American Disabilities Act, C.O.P.S. further defines the following disability guidelines:
  - 1. C.O.P.S. is a non-discriminatory organization, we are also not trained medical/health professionals. C.O.P.S. reserves the right to require any participant to bring a medical aide to assist the participant in health care while at the program.
  - 2. If the participant is unable to employ a medical health aide to attend the program with them, the participant may bring a family member to assist.
  - 3. The medical aide or family member attending the program with the participant must submit to a background check before attendance at the program will be approved.

4. National C.O.P.S. may be able to provide travel assistance to the medical aide or family member for the participant for one (1) program annually. The availability of travel assistance funds is not guaranteed.
  5. If the participant refuses to bring a medical aide or family member as outlined above, C.O.P.S. reserves the right to deny attendance to the program.
  6. A medical aide or family member who is not qualified to be a participant of the survivorship program will be permitted to assist the disabled person into the session room but then must wait outside of the session room during the session.
- B. C.O.P.S. also recognizes that survivors receive the best help from peers who are experiencing the same survivor issues. A survivor will not be eligible to attend a program unless the program is specific to their survivorship. With peer support in mind, C.O.P.S. has adopted the following guidelines for participation in the program:
1. C.O.P.S. Kids Camp:
    - a. C.O.P.S. Kids Camp is planned for surviving school-aged children, ages 6-14, of the officer as defined in SOP 3.0, paragraph 3.16 and their parent/legal guardian.
      - (1) To attend camp, the child must have turned 6 by the last day of Kids Camp and not be over the age of 14 when camp starts.
      - (2) The C.O.P.S. office receives many requests for exceptions to the age requirement rule; however, no exceptions can be made as there is a need to be consistent with all participants.
    - b. Children at C.O.P.S. Kids Camp must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.
      - (1) If the parent or legal guardian is not able to attend, they can temporarily assign guardianship to another parent attending camp or to a responsible party over the age of 21. There is a "consent to chaperone" form to be signed by the parent or legal guardian turning over responsibility of their child(ren) to another adult. C.O.P.S. reserves the right to ask the designated guardian to submit to a background check if the designated guardian is unknown to C.O.P.S.
      - (2) Due to space limitations, only one parent/guardian is allowed to attend with the child(ren). The only exceptions made to this will be when the physical requirements of keeping up with the child(ren) are too much for one adult. In those cases, approved on an individual basis, a second guardian would be allowed to attend.
    - c. Surviving children whose officer died by suicide are eligible to attend Kids Camp if the officer's suicide occurred on OR after January 1, 2019 and a PSOB claim is in the process of being filed or has been filed.
  2. C.O.P.S. Young Adults Camp:
    - a. C.O.P.S. Young Adults Camp is planned for surviving children as defined in SOP 3.0, paragraph 3.16 and surviving siblings, ages 15-20, of the officer.
    - b. To attend Young Adults Camp, the child or sibling must have turned 15 by the last day of the program and not be over the age of 20 when the program starts.
    - c. Surviving children whose officer died by suicide are eligible to attend Young Adults Camp if the officer's suicide occurred on OR after January 1, 2019 and a PSOB claim is in the process of being filed or has been filed.

3. C.O.P.S. Outward Bound® Adventure:
  - a. Outward Bound® is an adventure-based program for teenagers and young adults, ages 15-20, who are surviving children of the officer as defined in SOP 3.0, paragraph 3.16.
  - b. Due to Outward Bound® permit regulations, space is limited. Priority is given to the registrations of first and second time attending surviving children. The next priority will go by registration date.
  - c. In order for these priorities to be met, the registration of the child must have been received by the registration deadline.
  - d. To attend Outward Bound®, the child must have turned 15 by the last day of the program and not be over the age of 20 when the program starts.
  - e. Outward Bound® has a separate screening process to ensure the safety of the participants. Ultimately, it is the decision of Outward Bound® if the survivor is physically capable to attend.
  - f. Surviving children whose officer died by suicide are eligible to attend Outward Bound ® if the officer's suicide occurred on OR after January 1, 2019 and a PSOB claim is in the process of being filed or has been filed.
4. C.O.P.S. Adult Children's Weekend:
  - a. C.O.P.S. Adult Children's Weekend is planned for surviving adult children.
  - b. Survivors may, optionally, bring their spouse/domestic partner to this weekend.
  - c. All attendees must be 21 years of age by the first day of the weekend.
  - d. Suicide survivors must have an approved PSOB claim to be eligible to attend this program.
5. C.O.P.S. Spouses Weekend:
  - a. C.O.P.S. Spouses Weekend is planned for surviving spouses.
  - b. To attend this weekend, the survivor has to have been the legally married spouse at the time of the officer's death. C.O.P.S. recognizes that spouses' survivor issues can be different than other categories of survivors. Therefore, C.O.P.S. will require that a legal marriage has taken place for the survivor to attend.
  - c. All attendees must be 21 years of age by the first day of the weekend.
  - d. Suicide survivors must have an approved PSOB claim to be eligible to attend this program.
6. C.O.P.S. Fiancés & Significant Others Weekend:
  - a. C.O.P.S. Fiancés & Significant Others Weekend is planned for surviving fiancé/fiancée and significant others as defined in SOP 3.0, paragraph 3.16.
  - b. All attendees must be 21 years of age by the first day of the weekend.
  - c. Suicide survivors must have an approved PSOB claim to be eligible to attend this program.
7. C.O.P.S. Siblings Weekend:
  - a. C.O.P.S. Siblings Weekend is planned for surviving siblings.
  - b. Survivors may, optionally, bring their spouse/domestic partner to this weekend.
  - c. All attendees must be 21 years of age by the first day of the weekend.
  - d. Suicide survivors must have an approved PSOB claim to be eligible to attend this program.

8. C.O.P.S. Extended Family Weekend:
  - a. C.O.P.S. Extended Family Weekend is planned for surviving extended family members.
  - b. Eligible family members include grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, grandchildren and in-laws (on the spouse's side of the family). Other relatives and friends are not eligible to attend.
  - c. Survivors may, optionally, bring their spouse/domestic partner to this weekend.
  - d. All attendees must be 21 years of age by the first day of the weekend.
  - e. Suicide survivors must have an approved PSOB claim to be eligible to attend this program.
9. C.O.P.S. Parents Weekend:
  - a. C.O.P.S. Parents Weekend is planned for surviving parents and step-parents.
  - b. Survivors may, optionally, bring their spouse/domestic partner to this weekend.
  - c. Suicide survivors must have an approved PSOB claim to be eligible to attend this program.
10. C.O.P.S. Co-Workers Weekend:
  - a. C.O.P.S. Co-Workers Weekend is planned for surviving co-workers, as defined in SOP 3.0, paragraph 3.16, active or retired.
  - b. All attendees must be 21 years of age by the first day of the weekend.
  - c. Surviving Co-Workers whose officer died by suicide are eligible to attend Co-Workers Weekend if the officer's suicide occurred on OR after January 1, 2019 and a PSOB claim is in process of being filed or has been filed. Co-workers whose officer died by suicide prior to January 1, 2019 can register to attend this weekend through Survivors of Blue Suicide (SBS) by going to their website at [www.survivorsofbluesuicide.org/retreats](http://www.survivorsofbluesuicide.org/retreats).
11. C.O.P.S. Co-Workers for Couples Weekend:
  - a. C.O.P.S. Co-Workers for Couples Weekend is planned for surviving co-workers, as defined in SOP 3.0, paragraph 3.16, active or retired, and their spouse/domestic partner.
  - b. All attendees must be 21 years of age by the first day of the weekend.
  - c. Suicide survivors must have an approved PSOB claim to be eligible to attend this program.
12. C.O.P.S. Spouses for Couples Weekend:
  - a. C.O.P.S. Spouses for Couples Weekend is planned for surviving spouses and their new spouse/domestic partner.
  - b. All attendees must be 21 years of age by the first day of the weekend.
  - c. Suicide survivors must have an approved PSOB claim to be eligible to attend this program.
13. C.O.P.S. Suicide Survivors Summer Weekend:
  - a. C.O.P.S. Suicide Survivors Summer Weekend is planned for surviving spouses, fiancés, significant others, adult children and their spouses, surviving spouses' parents/stepparents, surviving spouses' siblings and grandchildren of law enforcement suicide.
  - b. The suicide of the law enforcement officer must have occurred on OR after January 1, 2019, to be eligible to attend the weekend. Survivors whose officer

died by suicide prior to January 1, 2019 can register to attend this weekend through Survivors of Blue Suicide (SBS) by going to their website at [www.survivorsofbluesuicide.org/retreats](http://www.survivorsofbluesuicide.org/retreats).

- c. All attendees must be 21 years of age by the first day of the program.
- d. Suicide survivors who wish to attend a survivor specific weekend must have an approved PSOB claim to be eligible to attend. If a suicide survivor is eligible and chooses to attend their survivor specific weekend, they will not be eligible to attend the suicide survivor summer weekend within the same year.

**14. C.O.P.S. Suicide Survivors Fall Weekend:**

- a. C.O.P.S. Suicide Survivors Fall Weekend is planned for surviving parents, stepparents, siblings, grandparents, and other extended family of the law enforcement officer who died by suicide.
- b. The suicide of the law enforcement officer must have occurred on OR after January 1, 2019, to be eligible to attend the weekend. Survivors whose officer died by suicide prior to January 1, 2019 can register to attend this weekend through Survivors of Blue Suicide (SBS) by going to their website at [www.survivorsofbluesuicide.org/retreats](http://www.survivorsofbluesuicide.org/retreats).
- c. All attendees must be 21 years of age by the first day of the retreat.
- d. Suicide survivors who wish to attend a survivor specific weekend must have an approved PSOB claim to be eligible to attend. If a suicide survivor is eligible and chooses to attend their survivor specific weekend, they will not be eligible to attend the suicide survivor fall weekend within the same year.

- C. C.O.P.S. reserves the right to make exceptions to the above guidelines. Individuals whose circumstances do not meet the above criteria but wish to be considered eligible for a program, must apply with the National Office and be approved for inclusion by the Executive Director. If the individual does not agree with the decision of the Executive Director, they can appeal this decision with the C.O.P.S. National Board.

**13.5. REGISTRATION:**

- A. To provide sufficient information to participants and staff on how to handle registrations, handle cancellations, and information on travel assistance to any program.
- B. Registrations shall be submitted no later than the deadline date indicated on the brochure/postcard and website for the specific program.
- C. Participants will follow the C.O.P.S. Code of Conduct, SOP 22.0, while attending their program. After registration has been received at the National Office, participants will be sent the C.O.P.S. Code of Conduct to review. Participants will be required to sign a form that indicates they have received, read and will adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Code of Conduct.

**13.6. CANCELLATIONS:**

- A. Cancellations may be made by calling the Programs Department at the National Office, or in writing, conventional mail or email is acceptable.

- B. Participants who fail to cancel before the program start date without providing documentation of the extenuating or mitigating circumstances will be subject to the following terms:
  - 1. First occurrence:
    - a. C.O.P.S. will require an initial security deposit of \$150 before their registration is accepted for their next eligible program.
    - b. After receipt of this deposit, C.O.P.S. will register the survivor.
    - c. Once the participant has completed the program, they will receive their deposit back.
    - d. If the survivor does not attend that program, C.O.P.S. will not return the security deposit to the survivor.
  - 2. All other occurrences:
    - a. C.O.P.S. will require an initial security deposit of \$300 before their registration is accepted for their next eligible program.
    - b. After receipt of this deposit, C.O.P.S. will register the survivor.
    - c. Once the participant has completed the program, they will receive 50% of their deposit back.
    - d. If the survivor does not attend that program, C.O.P.S. will not return any of the deposit to the survivor.

### **13.7. TRAVEL ASSISTANCE:**

- A. When seeking travel assistance, the participant must take these steps before consideration for National C.O.P.S. travel assistance:
  - 1. Contact your local C.O.P.S. chapter - some chapters offer financial assistance to survivors for their attendance at programs. If the chapter does not offer, or cannot grant the participant travel assistance, the participant can apply for financial assistance through National C.O.P.S.
  - 2. National C.O.P.S. staff may request documentation proving the participant was denied travel assistance or may contact the chapter to confirm.
- B. Travel assistance to programs is generously provided by National C.O.P.S. donors. The amount of assistance is dependent on donations and other funds set aside for certain programs; therefore, the availability of travel assistance funds is not guaranteed. This amount fluctuates, so contact the Programs Department at the National C.O.P.S. Office for the current travel assistance application which will indicate that year's assistance amount.
  - 1. Travel assistance applications must be submitted 30 days prior to the program to be considered.
  - 2. Due to the limited amount of travel assistance available, priority will be given to applications received from survivors who are attending the program for their first or second time.

3. Travel assistance checks will be made payable to the survivor requesting the assistance, unless a minor child, which would then be made payable to the minor child's parent or legal guardian.
  4. Travel assistance checks will be distributed to the survivor on the last day of the program, assuring that the program was successfully completed.
- C. This assistance may be available prior to the event if it is necessary for the participants to attend. Contact National C.O.P.S. for more information.
1. Anyone receiving this assistance and who then fails to participate in their specific program will be required to return the full amount granted to National C.O.P.S.
  2. If the participant fails to do so, that survivor shall be denied access to all eligible programs until the full amount granted is returned to National C.O.P.S.
- D. Any survivor receiving financial support from their local C.O.P.S. chapter to attend a program shall not be eligible for travel assistance from National C.O.P.S. unless the granted amount from the chapter is not enough for the survivor to attend the program.

Approved by the National Board January 31, 2021  
Amended by the National Board July 24, 2025