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DEVELOPMENT OF A LEGAL MECHANISM FOR ENGAGING PSYCHOLOGISTS OF THE SSNS OF UKRAINE TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE

Since the beginning of the large-scale invasion of Ukraine, the activities of psychologists of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine have expanded significantly. They carry out evacuation activities, provide first psychological aid, work in the points of invincibility, carry out recovery activities and psychological support for rescue personnel.

In addition to the identified issues of providing psychological assistance by SES psychologists, which are fully covered and highlighted in the publications of scientists, the problem of regulatory and legal support for the activities of SES psychologists remains equally important. It should be noted that the activity of psychologists is regulated by several normative legal acts, namely the Civil Protection Code, namely Article 38 "Psychological Protection of the Population", Order No. 747 of 31.07.2017 "On Approval of the Procedure for Psychological Support in the State Emergency Service of Ukraine", which covers and regulates the activities of a psychologist with all categories of persons with whom a psychologist can work both within the service and with the affected population in the center of an emergency. As well as the Order of the SES of Ukraine of 29.11.2024 No. NS-1277 "On Approval of the Procedure for the SES Psychologists to Provide Emergency Psychological Assistance to Victims of Emergencies". In terms of our theoretical research, in terms regarding the involvement of psychologists, the Order

No. NS-1277 is of the greatest interest because it regulates the procedure for involving SES psychologists, defines interaction with psychologists from other departments, and identifies security measures for psychologists in wartime.

Based on the results of the theoretical analysis of the defined regulatory framework, the article analyzes the changes in the orders that regulated the activities of psychologists of the Ministry of Emergencies and later the SES of Ukraine. Based on the available publications, it is noted that the greatest impetus for the development and expansion of the regulatory framework was the amendment to the Civil Protection Code of 2012 and the subsequently the beginning of military operations in the eastern Ukraine, and subsequently a large-scale invasion.

The article emphasizes the dynamics of changes in the regulatory framework governing the involvement of SES psychologists, the formation of consolidated groups of psychologists and the importance of observing security measures under martial law. However, the authors emphasize the importance of amending other regulatory legal acts regarding the regulation of psychologist's work in the current conditions, which in turn is more in line with modern conditions and takes into account the experience gained and the results of scientific work within the framework of modern psychological science. In turn, such updates will create a modern regulatory framework that will allow the use of experience and effective practices within the activities of psychologists of the SES of Ukraine.

Keywords: *legal mechanism, activity of SES psychologists, development of the regulatory framework, involvement of the psychologist SES, emergency psychological assistance, extreme psychologist.*

Introduction. The vector of state policy within the framework of protection and support of various categories of the population of Ukraine clearly outlines the importance of the psychological component in the implementation of these measures. It is worth noting that with the beginning of military aggression that began in 2014, the need for psychological support of the population increased every year, and with the large-scale invasion of 2022, it only confirmed the importance of providing psychological support to the affected population. In order to prevent the development of negative mental states in persons who suffered as a result of military emergencies, which may later develop into psychosomatic and post-traumatic disorders, the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (hereinafter - SES) employs

emergency psychologists. Their main task is to stabilize the mental state of the victim, prevent the development of negative mental states and improve the experience of an acute stress reaction experienced by victims as a result of being in the center of an emergency.

A significant number of modern scientific publications focus on the psychological state of different categories of people who receive and do not receive psychological assistance. Scientists conclude that those individuals who have received psychological assistance are able to overcome traumatic situations and recover much faster, and have a lower risk of secondary traumatization, as opposed to those who haven't received psychological assistance.

Psychologists of the SES of Ukraine provide psychological assistance to affected persons on the basis of regulatory documents governing the activities of psychologists and their involvement in the emergency. For the coordinated organization and effective work of psychologists, the regulatory framework needs to be constantly updated due to changes in society and the development of the service.

Literature review. The problem of regulatory and legal support for the activities of the psychologists SES remains relevant today. It should be taken into account that extrim psychologists work both in the center of an emergency with the affected population and with the personnel of the SES during the elimination of the consequences of an emergency, and within the framework of psychological support of activities. Most of the main publications on the peculiarities of psychologist`s are devoted to the disclosure of the problematic issue of psychological support. In her publication, O. Dyshkant provides am analysis of the regulatory framework within which psychological services of various departments operate as of 2019. At that time, the psychological service of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the National Guard of Ukraine received rapid development and a significant update of the regulations for the work of psychologists. In her works, O. Dyshkant provides an of analysis a number of orders regulating psychological support within the fire service, later the Ministry of Emergency Situations, and later the SES. The main result of the theoretical study was an analysis of the regulatory framework that governed the activities of SES psychologists as of 2019. At that time, these were mainly orders that had not been significantly updated but remained in force [1]. However, unlike the regulatory framework of other departments, the orders that regulate the activities of psychologists of the SES allow the psychologist to use more appropriate methods of assistance in various extreme situations, but only to stabilize the psychological

state of the victim.

N. Onishchenko's work analysis of the activities of psychologists in emergency situations at the state and regional levels and the consistency of actions with the regulatory framework that was in force as of 2014, according to which psychologists were involved in providing psychological assistance to victims, created consolidated groups of psychologists and their role in eliminating the consequences of an emergency [5].

In the available modern publications by M. Kryshchal, M. Fomich, an analysis of the activities of a psychologist within the psychological support of the SES rescuers and the introduction of modern technologies in the form of interactive trainings used as measures for psychological support and recovery of SES personnel and the coordination of this process with the existing regulatory framework is given [4]. In this context, it is worth noting the works of O. Dudnyk and L. Pylypenko [2, 6], the authors define the peculiarities of the activities of psychologists within the regulatory framework, and mostly refer to the main order No. 747 of 31.08.2017, which generally regulates the activities of psychologists in terms of psychological support and in the provision of emergency psychological assistance. It should be noted that this order contains the main provisions for working with SES personnel and providing psychological assistance to victims of emergencies.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the legal framework regulating the procedure for engaging psychologists of the SES of Ukraine to provide psychological assistance to victims of an emergency.

Presentation of the main material. The provision of psychological assistance to the affected population is stipulated by a number of regulatory documents, in particular by the Civil Protection Code (hereinafter - the Code) according to the 38-th article Psychological Protection of the Population:

1. Measures of psychological protection of the population are aimed at reducing and neutralizing negative mental states and reactions among the population in case of threat and occurrence of emergencies and include:

- 1) planning of activities related to psychological protection;
- 2) timely application of information, psychoprophylactic and psychocorrectional methods of influence on a person licensed and authorized for use in Ukraine;
- 3) identification of factors that contribute to the emergence of social and psychological

tension using psychological methods;

4) use of modern psychological technologies to neutralize the negative impact of emergency factors on the population;

5) implementation of other psychological protection measures depending on the situation.

2. The organization and implementation of psychological protection measures for the population are entrusted to the central executive body that implements the state policy in the sphere of civil protection.

{Part two of 38-th article as amended by Law No. 2228-IX of 21.04.2022} [3].

In addition to defining the main content of psychological protection of the population by the Civil Protection Code, the SES (formerly the Ministry of Emergencies) issued a number of documents that regulated and regulate the main activities of psychologists within the framework of performing their assigned tasks. In our opinion, it would be appropriate to indicate those orders that are no longer in force today, but on their basis the modern regulatory framework regulating the activities of psychologists within the SES of Ukraine was created and continues to develop.

These orders include the order of the Ministry of Emergencies of Ukraine dated 27.02.2008 No. 148 "On the creation of freelance mobile groups of emergency psychological assistance of the Ministry of Emergencies", the main provisions of which regulated the creation of freelance groups of psychologists of the Ministry of Emergencies, and then the SES, to be involved in providing emergency psychological assistance to the population affected by emergencies [9].

Subsequently, the involvement of SES psychologists in the form of consolidated mobile groups was regulated by Order of the SES of Ukraine No. 383 of 14.07.2014 on the organization of work to ensure the psychological recovery of the population. Order No. 383 of 14.07.2014 regulated the activities of psychologists during evacuation measures at the beginning of the anti-terrorist operation in eastern Ukraine [8].

As of today, Order No. 148 of 27.02.2008 has been canceled, and its replacement is Order of the SES of Ukraine of 29.11.2024 No. NS-1277 "On Approval of the Procedure for Psychologists of the SES of Ukraine on Providing Emergency Psychological Assistance to Victims of Emergencies", which defines the main regulatory provisions of the psychologist's work with victims:

2. The main tasks of emergency psychological assistance

2.1. Reducing the degree of psychological impact of psychotraumatic disaster factors on the affected population and SES personnel.

2.2. Providing emotional support, listening and acceptance of a person's feelings, helping him/her to realize his/her experiences.

2.3 Using techniques to reduce stress and prevent the development of post-traumatic stress disorders.

2.4. Stabilization of the psycho-emotional state, prevention of acute stress reactions.

2.5. Providing information support about the event and possible further steps, support in decision-making without pressure and coercion.

2.6 Psychological support for the victim, assistance in developing an action plan for the future.

2.7. If necessary, referral to specialized services: psychotherapists, psychiatrists or crisis centers.

4. Preparatory measures for the provision of emergency psychological assistance

4.1 The head of the psychological support unit of the SES territorial authority develops and approves the calculation of psychologists' involvement in providing emergency psychological assistance at the disaster relief site, taking into account the need for additional forces of psychological units' specialists and according to the disaster levels, and is approved by the Head of the Main Department of the SES of Ukraine in the oblasts and the city of Kyiv.

5. Organization of work on providing emergency psychological aid

5.1. The SES psychologists are involved in performing assigned tasks during disaster relief:

5.1.1. SES psychologists - by decision of the SES leadership, and in case of urgent operational actions - by the Director of the SES Personnel Department upon informing the SES duty shift supervisor and the head of the SES psychological support unit.

5.1.2. Psychologists of subordinate units of the SES territorial bodies within the operational response areas - by decision of the heads of the relevant SES territorial bodies. The duty shift of the operational and coordination center of the territorial body of the SES (hereinafter referred to as the OCC) ensures that psychologists are informed about the progress of disaster relief and timely notifies them of their departure to the place of disaster relief.

5.1.3. Psychologists of the units of the SES territorial bodies outside the designated operational response zones - by the decision of the SES leadership and heads of the relevant SES territorial bodies.

5.1.4. Psychologists of central subordinate units and higher education institutions:

by decision of the SES leadership, and in case of urgent operational actions - by the Director of the Department of Personnel of the SES apparatus upon informing the Head of the Psychological Support Unit of the SES apparatus;

by decision of the heads of central subordinate units, higher education institutions, relevant heads of territorial bodies of the SES with the approval of the head of the central subordinate unit and higher education institution

5.1.5. Psychologists of the National Police of Ukraine are involved in accordance with the requirements of the Order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine No. 594 dated 19.07.2023 "On Approval of the Procedure for Interaction of Psychologists of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine and the National Police of Ukraine during Martial Law in Ukraine or in its separate localities on Providing Psychological Assistance to Disaster Victims", registered with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on August 3, 2023 under No. 1313/40369.

5.1.6. If necessary, psychologists of the SES may involve psychologists of non-governmental organizations, non-governmental institutions and organizations in providing emergency psychological assistance during disaster relief.

5.1.7. The decision of officials to involve SES psychologists in providing emergency psychological assistance during disaster relief is formalized in the form of organizational and administrative documents together with preliminary information about the event, organization of logistics and management.

5.1.8. Psychologists are transported to the place of elimination of the consequences of an emergency by a company car assigned to the psychological support unit or by a car that is on round-the-clock duty. From the moment of departure and return to the point of permanent deployment, the senior official of the psychological support unit constantly maintains communication with the OCC, the disaster relief headquarters and assesses the situation at the scene.

5.2. Upon arriving at the scene, the senior official of the psychological support unit reports to the duty shift of the JCC, and in case of establishing a headquarters - to the head of

the disaster relief headquarters on the number, readiness to provide emergency psychological aid and receives information on the operational situation in the disaster relief area.

5.3. If necessary, an emergency psychological aid station is deployed at the scene.

5.4. Psychologists at the place of disaster elimination, while performing their assigned tasks, comply with the requirements of labor protection, wear protective uniforms with the inscription "PSYCHOLOGIST". During martial law, psychologists should be provided with individual means of armor protection (bulletproof vests, bulletproof helmets) and individual medical kits with hemostatic turnstiles.

5.5. At the disaster relief site, psychologists conduct visual monitoring of the situation and provide emergency psychological assistance to certain persons.

5.6. In case of involvement of SES psychologists from other territorial bodies of the SES, centralized subordination units, higher education institutions and the National Police of Ukraine, the SES psychologist of the territorial unit in whose garrison the disaster occurred coordinates their actions at the disaster relief site.

5.7. The psychologist informs the Head of the Department about the beginning, course and completion of emergency psychological assistance [7].

It is worth noting that Order No. 1277 of 29.11.2024 was developed on the basis of previous orders on the provision of psychological assistance to the population, and it also prescribes the specifics of the activities of psychologists under martial law. This was not the case in previous regulatory documents that regulated the activities of psychologists.

Today, the current Order No. 747 of 31.08.2017 "On Approval of the Procedure for Psychological Support in the State Emergency Service of Ukraine" is also in force, which regulates the involvement of SES psychologists in providing psychological assistance to the affected population and generally regulates the activities of SES psychologists. The personnel of the SES psychologists includes psychologists of territorial governing bodies, special regional rapid response centers, central subordination units and educational institutions of the SES of Ukraine and functions in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Protection Code of Ukraine. For further analysis of this order, it is advisable to cite its main provisions on the provision of psychological assistance to victims.

III. Main Tasks of the Psychological Service

The main tasks of the psychological service are:

9) providing psychological assistance and support to persons holding the rank of private and commander, rescuers and employees who have been in extreme conditions and suffered as a result of stress factors

10) providing emergency psychological assistance to victims of emergencies;

IX. Organization of psychological assistance

1. In case of state-level emergencies (hereinafter referred to as “emergencies”), a consolidated group of emergency psychological assistance (hereinafter referred to as “the consolidated group”) is created by the decision of the Head of the SES or a person performing his/her duties to work with victims.

2. In the event of a regional disaster, the head of the territorial body (centralized unit) of the SES where the disaster occurred submits proposals to the Head of the SES or a person acting as such on the need to establish a Consolidated Group to work with victims.

3. The head of the SES psychological service unit prepares proposals on the composition of the Joint Group and its tasks.

4. The consolidated group consists of psychologists and is created according to the territorial principle of the place of emergency.

5. The personnel of the Integrated Team (head and its members) is approved by the Head of the SES or a person acting as such, taking into account the scale and consequences of the disaster.

6. In order to provide emergency psychological assistance to victims, an Emergency Psychological Aid Station is deployed when the SES headquarters for disaster relief is established. The list of items and equipment of the Emergency Psychological Aid Station is given in Annex 15.

7. The main goal of emergency psychological assistance is to preserve the mental health of disaster victims and prevent the development of destructive and deviant behaviors.

8. When working with victims, the Consolidated Group is directly subordinated to the head of disaster relief operations (the person performing his/her duties - the head of the emergency rescue service that eliminates the consequences of a disaster).

9. The duration of the Joint Group's work is 2-3 days and, if necessary, may be extended by the decision of the Head of the SES or a person acting as such.

10. Psychologists carry out their work in accordance with the principle of proactive

position and assistance - they independently identify victims in need of urgent psychological assistance.

11. Tasks and functions of the Joint Group:

- 1) studying the real state of psycho-traumatic factors and working with information that will be communicated to the population;
- 2) preventing negative manifestations and relieving the psycho-emotional burden on the population and staff;
- 3) providing recommendations to representatives of other psychological services on further work with the affected population.

12. Timely notification, gathering and departure of the members of the Consolidated Group to the disaster site are ensured by the heads of civil protection bodies and units.

13. The Head of the Integrated Team organizes and coordinates the activities of psychologists of state and non-governmental institutions, volunteer psychologists with SES psychologists directly during work with victims and persons involved in emergency rescue and other urgent work.

14. The head of the Consolidated Group during disaster elimination is obliged to:

- 1) report to the immediate head of disaster relief operations (the person performing his/her duties - the head of the emergency rescue service that eliminates the consequences of a disaster) on the arrival, composition of the Joint Group and readiness to perform the work;
- 2) assess the situation, have information about the number of people in need of psychological assistance;
- 3) draw up a schedule of duty for psychologists who are members of the Integrated Team, appoint an operational duty officer of the Integrated Team and identify those responsible for collecting and analyzing information;
- 4) set the duration of the duty and determine the time of the daily briefing;
- 5) organize timely replenishment of used items according to the list of items for the "Psychologist's Suitcase" (Annex 16).

15. The head of the Integrated Team is responsible for keeping official documents, summarizing the work of psychologists of the Integrated Team (after the end of emergency psychological assistance).

16. The Head of the Integrated Team during the work in the disaster relief area distributes

psychologists in the following areas:

- 1) operational;
- 2) work with the affected population
- 3) work with relatives of the victims;
- 4) work with persons involved in emergency rescue and other urgent work.

17. Psychologists involved in operational activities:

Make a preliminary forecast of the volume of emergency psychological assistance to be provided.

Summaries and analyses information obtained during the provision of emergency psychological assistance.

They predict the occurrence of delayed stress reactions among victims and individuals involved in emergency rescue and other urgent work.

They also inform local specialist psychologists about general forecasts of possible psychological consequences of trauma and ways to correct them.

18. Psychologists working with victims carry out the following:

- 1) Provide informational support to victims.
- 2) individual work with victims;
- 3) assessing the risk group among the affected population;
- 4) working with acute emotional reactions.

19. Psychologists working with the relatives of the deceased carry out the following:

- 1) collecting and analysing information about the location and identification (burial) procedure;
- 2) preparing relatives for the identification/burial procedure;
- 3) informing relatives about the stages of grief;
- 4) Informing relatives about future steps.

20. Psychologists involved in working with individuals engaged in emergency rescue and other urgent operations shall:

- 1) provide psychological assistance to individuals engaged in emergency rescue and other urgent operations who exhibit signs of fatigue;
- 2) summarize and analyze information obtained during the provision of emergency psychological assistance;

- 3) forecast the emergence of delayed stress reactions;
- 4) monitor the mental condition of individuals engaged in emergency rescue and other urgent operations to provide timely necessary psychological assistance.

If necessary, members of the Joint Group have the right to provide recommendations to the heads of the involved civil protection authorities and units regarding the temporary or complete removal of certain individuals from emergency rescue and other urgent operations for the elimination of emergency consequences.

21. After the completion of emergency psychological assistance, the head of the Joint Group shall report to the head of emergency response operations (or the person acting on their behalf – the head of the emergency rescue service conducting the elimination of the emergency consequences) on the results of the Joint Group's work and readiness to return to the place of permanent deployment. Within five days, a summary report on the work performed shall be prepared for the head of the psychological service unit of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine.

22. Psychologists, who provided emergency psychological assistance shall undergo psychological recovery measures (supervision, intervention groups, etc.).

23. The logistical, transportation support, and reliable communication for the members of the Joint Group, as well as the replenishment of items used from the "Psychologist's Suitcase" during the emergency response, shall be ensured by the head of the civil protection authority or unit in the area where the emergency occurred [11].

The above-mentioned regulatory and legal framework defines the activities of psychologists of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SES) not only within the scope of psychological support for official activities – which includes professional psychological selection, psychological support, individual work, and the provision of psychological assistance to SES employees – but also in providing psychological assistance to victims. The involvement of psychologists to stabilize the emotional state of victims plays a crucial role in mitigating negative psychological conditions that arise as a result of their presence at the epicenter of an emergency.

Thus, Order No. 747 dated August 31, 2017, regulates the main legal principles regarding the provision of psychological assistance not only to victims but also to all employees who require psychological help and support. Naturally, this order requires updates and certain

improvements to meet the conditions of the present time.

In turn, the updated Order No. NS-1277 dated November 29, 2024, regulates the work of joint psychologist groups formed based on territorial proximity to the emergency zone, as well as the involvement of psychologists from other SES units. Given that this order was adopted during the ongoing military aggression against Ukraine, it includes provisions for the safety of psychologists, cooperation with psychologists from other services, and the possibility of involving psychologists from non-governmental organizations to provide psychological assistance.

At the same time, SES psychologists are authorized to provide emergency psychological or first aid, as well as psychological support to employees of the security and defense sector, in accordance with the new legislation "On the Mental Health Care System in Ukraine" No. 4223-IX dated January 15, 2025 [10].

Conclusions. Thus, the analysis of the existing legal framework regulating the engagement and activities of psychologists of the SES of Ukraine determines the specifics of the formation of consolidated groups of psychologists, who are engaged, if necessary, as additional personnel where there is a need for more psychologists. In addition to the regulations for the engagement of psychologists, this order regulates the interaction of psychologists of the SES, the National Police and the National Guard of Ukraine in the event of their joint work in the center of an emergency. In other words, Order No. NS-1277 of 29.11.2024 somewhat repeats the previous regulatory framework for the actions of SES psychologists, but in turn, it harmonized the rules of interaction between psychologists from different agencies and determined the procedure for ensuring security conditions during work under martial law. The existing order No. 747 of 31.07.2017 describes the main provisions of the psychologist's activities in the case of emergency psychological assistance to victims, and also regulates the involvement of psychologists in the provision of assistance, but due to the lack of changes and improvements, this order needs to be updated to reflect the conditions and challenges of today, as well as to be harmonized with other regulations that currently regulate the activities of psychologists in general.

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