



***Each Trainer and Consultant listed on the LOSSteam.com website is certified to conduct training and consultations, adhering to the LOSS Team principles outlined in this document.***

### **The Definition and Structure of a LOSS Team is as follows:**

A LOSS Team consists of at least two trained volunteers who, when activated by an official first responder, arrive at the scene of a suicide to offer immediate support, resources, and understanding to those left behind. At least one of these trained volunteers is a survivor of a suicide loss.

Additionally, A LOSS Team may provide a delayed response, where a trained volunteer, upon receiving notification from a Coroner/Medical Examiner, proactively reaches out to the newly bereaved through a phone call. This outreach may lead to an in-person visit, where at least one of the two trained volunteers is a survivor of a suicide loss.

While LOSS Teams are unique across communities, every LOSS Team response shares three essential elements:

- The response is proactive. Newly bereaved do not have to initiate the need for support
- The response is peer-based. At least one of the trained volunteers is a loss survivor
- The response purpose is to instill hope by providing support, understanding, and resources. A LOSS Team response is not to treat or assess.

### **Examples of LOSS Team Volunteer Response Makeup:**

- Good: A trained volunteer who is a loss survivor (having lost a spouse, fiancé, child, parent, sibling, significant other, or close friend to suicide) paired with either a second trained volunteer or law enforcement official (such as during a death notification).
- Better: A trained volunteer who is a loss survivor who lost a close family member to suicide (spouse, fiancé, child, parent, sibling), with the second trained volunteer being either another loss survivor (though not an immediate family member) or a mental health professional serving in a volunteer capacity.
- Best: A trained volunteer who is a loss survivor who lost a close family member to suicide (spouse, fiancé, child, parent, sibling), paired with a second trained volunteer who is also a loss survivor of a close family member (spouse, fiancé, child, parent, sibling) or a mental health professional serving in a volunteer capacity who is also a loss survivor.

### **Qualifications of Certified Trainers and Consultants:**

Each Trainer and Consultant has undergone training and brings a distinct set of skills and experience to their role, including, at a minimum:

- Experience as a LOSS Team on-scene volunteer,
- Completion of evidence-based suicide prevention and suicide intervention certifications,
- Evidence-based trauma-informed care skills,
- Skills for delivering evidence-based support for suicide-specific grief.

Additionally, each Trainer and Consultant upholds:

- **A Commitment to Ongoing Learning** – Engaging in continuous education to enhance skills and stay informed on best practices in suicide postvention.
- **Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing** – Actively exchanging insights, experiences, and strategies with fellow LOSS Team Trainers and Consultants to strengthen the effectiveness of LOSS Teams.
- **Accountability and Ethical Practice** – Maintaining professionalism, ethical integrity, and adherence to established LOSS Team principles.

This structured approach ensures that LOSS Teams offer compassionate, informed, and meaningful support to those impacted by suicide loss while continuously improving and evolving in their mission.

### Every On-Scene Skills Training Session Conducted by a Certified LOSS Team Trainer Includes:

- **Understanding the Role of a LOSS Team Volunteer** – Clarifying responsibilities and expectations during on-scene responses.
- **Volunteer Motivation Exploration** – Encouraging volunteers to reflect on their personal motivations for serving on a LOSS Team, fostering deeper commitment and resilience.
- **Utilization of Practical Tools** – Providing resources such as a sample volunteer code of conduct that can be adapted to meet the specific needs of different communities.
- **Collaboration with Law Enforcement and First Responders** – Understanding protocols for working effectively within emergency response systems.
- **Effective Communication Strategies** – Learning how to engage sensitively with newly bereaved individuals and coordinate with first responders.
- **Evidence-informed On-Scene Support** – Applying trauma-informed and suicide postvention strategies to offer meaningful assistance.
- **Volunteer Self-Care and Resilience** – Recognizing the emotional impact of on-scene responses and developing strategies for maintaining well-being. This includes a debriefing protocol.
- **Experiential Learning** – Incorporating role plays and real-world scenarios to practice and reinforce key skills in a hands-on learning environment.
- **Compassionate Aftercare** – Providing ongoing, empathetic support and connection to fellow loss survivors and resources that promote healing and resilience.

This comprehensive training approach ensures that every LOSS Team leader and volunteer is well-prepared to provide compassionate, informed, and practical support in the aftermath of suicide loss.