

Abstract on Short Reports and Model Policy

COPS Office Resources to Address Officer Suicide



COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

SPC St. Petersburg College
Center for Public Safety Innovation

This comprehensive awareness project includes four short reports documenting innovative interventions currently being used across the country and a protocol for agencies on how to address an officer suicide. This project's outcomes will include an increase in law enforcement agencies', officers', and family members' ability to recognize signs and symptoms of potential suicide attempts and knowledge of intervention strategies and community resources.

The four short reports and model policy are listed here:

1. *Innovative Interventions and Practices for Suicide Prevention: Spotlight On Kenosha (Wisconsin) Police Department* by Mary van Haute

It is useful to study various agencies' model programs and extrapolate applicable strategies, practices, and procedures. Various successful model programs of other agencies and extrapolate applicable strategies, practices, and procedures. One such agency is the Kenosha (Wisconsin) Police Department. This document spotlights their implementation of a broad-based suicide prevention program that encompasses complementary programs of peer support and chaplaincy.

2. *Developing a Critical Incident Peer Support Program* by James D. Sewell

This report discusses the use of peer support programs to effectively deal with the stress of law enforcement officers nationwide. Recognizing that peer support programs offer an effective complement to the provision of professional mental health services in contemporary law enforcement agencies, this paper examines three areas:

- a. The elements of an effective peer support program
- b. Confidentiality in such a program
- c. The activities of five existing peer support programs

3. *Best Practices for Family Programs: A Call to Action* by Barbara Palomino deVelasco, Tracy Mallett, and Donna Schulz

The goal of this report is to highlight known agencies that are presently using law enforcement family programs as part of their training, review what experts are reporting as the imperative components for successful law enforcement programs, and create a call to action to make recommendations for modeling or implementing more programs for law enforcement families.

4. *Effective Leadership Response to the Challenges of Law Enforcement Suicide* by James D. Sewell

The focus of this report is the importance of progressive law enforcement leadership. Contemporary law enforcement leadership cannot ignore the existence of the problems caused by stress, deny that job stress is an issue in any agency, or avoid taking action to ensure the health and well-being of their employees. The author will focus on several specific elements of effective leadership needed when dealing with the stress of law enforcement personnel.

5. *Guide on Developing an Effective Stress Management Policy for Law Enforcement* by James D. Sewell

This model policy provides suggestions to fill gaps in current agency policies that deal with psychological support, training of agency personnel, cardiovascular disease, and police suicide. Each of these sections is accompanied by a commentary to support the basic information contained in the model policy and to encourage discussion and communication within a law enforcement agency. The policy is also designed to supplement existing policies, procedures, and protocols used in many agencies today.