



Supporting Mental Wellness Initiatives: A Podcast for Law Enforcement Leaders Implementation Guide

Description

Wellness programs are an essential piece of every successful law enforcement agency. Nick Breul, Senior Project Manager with the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF), talks with Chief Maggie DeBoard of the Herndon, Virginia, Police Department about the need for agencies to promote and educate officers about wellbeing and how dedicated wellness programs can be created to support this goal.

Suggested Activities for Executives and Administrative Team Staff

1. Listen to the podcast.
2. Distribute or assign the podcast to agency executives and command staff members.
3. Discuss with agency leaders the effectiveness of existing wellness programs and the opportunity to improve and/or create new wellness initiatives.
4. Consider establishing a working group comprised of agency executives, leaders, and patrol members to evaluate and develop wellness initiatives.

Takeaways

- Executive support for wellness initiatives is essential to the success of those initiatives.
- Wellness checks can familiarize officers with your wellness initiatives and emphasize the importance of receiving support.
- Well-rounded programs consider all aspects of wellness by providing a variety of options, such as meditation, space for recuperative rest, therapy animals, counseling on demand, peer support, and retiree involvement.
- Working on wellness concerns is an ongoing effort at the agency and individual levels.

Resources

10 Ways to Support an Officer in Crisis: Agency Action Plan for Supporting an Officer in Crisis

<https://www.safleo.org/ResourceLibrary/Resource/aafeebed-ab23-4330-f023-08da379930bb>

Five Steps to Help an Officer Seeking Support

<https://www.safleo.org/ResourceLibrary/Resource/08d39882-6b24-4dc3-92ca-08da33500451>

Warning Signs: How to Recognize Burnout

<https://www.safleo.org/ResourceLibrary/Resource/5225e894-6316-41b5-92ce-08da33500451>

Speaker Biographies

Chief Maggie DeBoard has served as Chief of Police for the Town of Herndon, Virginia, Police Department since 2012. She spent her first 26 years as a law enforcement officer with the Fairfax County, Virginia, Police Department, where she retired as a Deputy Chief. Chief DeBoard has developed a progressive mental health program to support her officers and telecommunicators. This program includes a multitude of resources to assist personnel in coping with trauma exposure and stress.

Chief DeBoard also serves as the Legislative Committee Chair and past President of the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police (VACP). In addition, as a governor appointee, Chief DeBoard serves as a law enforcement representative to the Virginia Forensic Science Board, and she is serving a four-year term on the Criminal Justice Services Board (CJSB), serving on that body's Executive Board and Committee on Training.

Chief DeBoard received her bachelor of science degree in criminology from George Mason University in 1986 and completed her master of arts degree in homeland security and defense from the Naval Postgraduate School in 2015. Chief DeBoard is also a graduate of the 228th session of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Academy and the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar (LEEDS) Program and is a VACP Certified Law Enforcement Chief Executive.

Lieutenant Nick Breul (retired) is a Senior Project Manager at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund and is the former Director of NLEOMF's Officer Safety, Wellness, and Research Division, where his team completed in-depth analyses of line-of-duty deaths, especially traffic-related deaths. Before joining NLEOMF, he served as the Director of Security for the Washington National Cathedral for two years. Prior to that, he worked for the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) in Washington, DC, for 26 years. Lieutenant Breul worked in many capacities during his law enforcement career, serving as detective, patrol sergeant, homicide supervisor, and finally, lieutenant, managing the department's Traffic Safety Branch. In that capacity, he oversaw the Major Crash Investigative Unit as well as all the traffic-focused enforcement and public safety education initiatives. Lieutenant Breul earned a bachelor of arts degree in history from Hobart College and still serves as the MPD historian.

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