

Fire Service Mental Health Resource Guide

get the data
FIRST 
Center for Firefighter Injury Research & Safety Trends
Drexel University Dornsife School of Public Health



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Introduction

The FOCUS Survey contains validated scales on mental health conditions and other items that may be considered sensitive. Therefore, the FIRST Center has created a mental health resource guide specifically for the fire and rescue service to ensure that individuals and their families have access to information regarding available resources and services. **This guide is meant to be shared with your membership at the time of FOCUS administration and when survey results are discussed.**

This guide has been organized into three sections. The first section is for departments and their leadership, which contains information regarding programs, trainings, and services that can be implemented at the department-level. This section also contains a policy resource section. The second section is geared towards individual members. This section includes information on mental health hotlines, text lines, and residential and outpatient mental health services. The final section contains additional resources, such as flyers, campaigns, and research opportunities. Please add in any relevant department specific resources and programs.

As our FOCUS survey evolves, we welcome your feedback and ideas on resources you feel should be included in this guide. We hope that this guide is helpful in ensuring your members have access to the information they need to address mental health concerns.

Note: Several studies have shown that asking questions related to suicide does not exacerbate risk. Please see the [article here to read more](#).

If you have any questions about this resource guide, please contact us at FIRST@drexel.edu

Department and Leadership Resources

This section of the guide is organized by programs, trainings, and policies that can be implemented at the department-level.

Programs

IAFF Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery

Who is this for?

- IAFF union members

What conditions do they treat?

- PTSD, substance abuse and addiction, and behavioral health

What services do they provide?

- Evidence-based treatment that combines the expertise of clinicians from different disciplines and focuses on treating the whole person
- Several levels of care
 - Clinically managed detox
 - Inpatient residential
 - Partial hospitalization
 - Intensive outpatient
 - Teletherapy
 - Aftercare planning to prevent relapse
- Several types of therapy
 - Pharmaceutical therapy
 - Cognitive behavioral therapy
 - Group therapy

Cost/Fee

- Accepts most major medical insurances
- Will discuss financial implications prior to assessment

Website: [IAFF Center of Excellence - Rehab & Treatment for Fire Fighters \(iaffrecoverycenter.com\)](http://iaffrecoverycenter.com)

Phone: 855-900-8437

- Reach out to determine the best treatment for your individual needs

National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC)- [Share the Load Program](#)

What is it?

- Program that provides access to critical resources for volunteer firefighters and their families to manage both personal and work-related problems
- Offers stress management including 5 telephone coaching sessions to identify stress triggers, coping strategies, and create a stress management plan
- Has a specific responder helpline: NVFC First Responder Helpline: 1-888-731-FIRE (3473) (must be NVFC member)

Who is it for?

- Members of the National Volunteer Fire Council

Cost/Fee

- Paid for by individual departments

Trainings/Curriculum

Responder Strong - [All Clear Foundation Solution Mental Health Curriculum](#)

What is it?

- 4-hour course developed to provide individuals with knowledge of responder mental health, including suicide, stress, PTSD, and resiliency
- Can be used at any level: entry, peer support, in-service, or family events
- **Main goal is to erase the stigma around mental health and stop individuals from suffering in silence**

Cost/Fee

- Free of charge to responders (funded using grants and donations)

Who can participate?

- All emergency responders

International Association of Fire Fighters - [Resiliency Training](#)

What is it?

- Training course meant for departments and individuals to assess individual resiliency, stress response, managing stress, etc.
- Two components:
 - Pre-course individual assessment
 - One hour video series on organizational resiliency

Cost/Fee

- In-person training: \$6,750 (includes materials, completion certificates, instructors time and travel expenses)
 - 40 student class (have the option to extend class and include more students on additional days)
- Virtual Training: \$3,625
 - Two-day course
 - 25 student class

International Association of Fire Fighters - [Behavioral Health Awareness Course](#)

What is it?

- Two-hour, self-paced, online course with a goal of educating individuals on behavioral health issues in the fire service
- Pre-requisite for IAFF peer support training

Cost/Fee

- Free to everyone regardless of IAFF membership

Who can participate?

- Anyone, regardless of IAFF membership status

International Association of Fire Fighters - [Peer Support Training](#)

What is it?

- Training program to inform members on how to support their peers and educate others about behavioral health
- Must complete IAFF Behavior Health Awareness Course
- Focuses on:
 - Active listening
 - Confidentiality
 - General and suicide assessment
 - Crisis intervention
 - Action planning
 - Outreach
 - Self-care
 - Creating an effective peer support training

Cost/Fee

- In-person: \$9,000
 - 30 students
 - Two consecutive weekday training
- Virtual: \$4,600
 - 25 students
 - Three consecutive weekday training

Who can participate?

- Fire service personnel, active or retired, regardless of rank/position

Policy Resources

SAVER Model Policies- [Link to Article and Policies](#)

What is it?

- Designed to shift the onus of safety and health from that of the individual responder to the organization by focusing on actions that can be instituted through training, policy, and environmental modifications
- Organized into eight thematic areas and six phases of response, forming a framework to address everything that should be in place for every EMS run
- Six “Pause Points” are incorporated at the end of each of phase. These are individual actions that responders take to protect themselves and provide feedback to the system on what is and isn’t working

Standard Operating Procedure for Suicide Postvention- [Link to Article and SOP](#)

What is it?

- Standard operating procedure (SOP) for suicide postvention in the fire service
- Available for implementation and evaluation
- Assists survivors with grief and bereavement to attempt to prevent additional negative outcomes

Member Resources

Hotlines

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- 1-800-273-8255

Safe Call Now

- 206-456-3020 or 1-877-230-6060
- 24-hour crisis referral service for all public safety employees, all EMS personnel, and their family members

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

- NAMI Helpline
 - Monday through Friday between 10am and 10pm ET
 - 800-950-6264
- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
 - Free, confidential crisis counseling 24/7/365

24/7 Warm Line

- Non-emergent line for individuals seeking emotional and mental support
- 855-845-7415

SAMHSA Responders Resource Portal

- Disaster Distress Helpline
 - 1-800-985-5990
 - 24/7, 365 days crisis counseling and support line for individuals experiencing emotional distress related to disasters.
 - Can either call or text

Text-lines/Confidential Chat

Crisis Text Line: All Clear Foundation-Responder Strong

- Text BADGE to 741741

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Rosecrance Florian Program for Uniformed Service Personnel

Who is this for?

- A specialized substance abuse and mental health program for those who serve
- For all uniformed service personnel: firefighters, paramedics, law enforcement officers, military, dispatchers, correctional officers, medical personnel, etc.
- Approved Veterans Affairs-Community Care Network

What conditions do they treat?

- Examples of conditions treated: PTSD, anxiety, depression, etc.

What services do they provide?

- Offers residential and outpatient care
 - Services provided: psychiatric evaluations, individual, group, and family therapy, etc.

Cost/Fees:

- Accepts most major medical insurances
- Goal of making care as affordable as possible
- Provide easy to understand financial information

Website: <https://rosecrance.org/addiction-treatment/florian-program/>

Phone Number: (866) 330-8729

Stepstone Connect

What is it?

- Utah-based tele behavioral-health company with licensed, trauma-certified clinicians in Alaska, Hawaii, and throughout the continental United States. Stepstone's Responder Assistance Program focuses exclusively on first responders and their families and has expertise treating PTSD and other forms of trauma.

Who is this for?

- First responders and healthcare workers in the United States

What conditions do they treat?

- Substance use disorder, alcohol addiction, dual diagnosis, PTSD, anxiety, depression, grief and loss, etc.

What services do they provide?

- Cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness-based therapy, schema therapy, trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, etc.

Cost/Fees:

- Accepts most major medical insurances

Website: <https://www.stepstoneconnect.org/>

Additional Resources

RESCUES: Emergency Services Ergonomics and Wellness Handbook

- See Chapter 10: Behavioral Health for Firefighters and Emergency Medical Service Personnel in the Presence of Repeated Exposures to Stressful and Traumatic Events
- [Emergency Services Ergonomics and Wellness \(iafc.org\)](https://www.iafc.org/)

National Volunteer Fire Council Directory of Behavioral Health Professionals

- [Directory of Behavioral Health Professionals](#)

Fire Fighter Behavioral Health Alliance

- Educational and advocacy organization for firefighter mental health, especially suicide prevention.
- [Suicide Rapid Response Flyer](#)

Code Green Campaign

- Suicide prevention and mental wellness advocacy organization created by first responders, dedicated to first responders. The organization has seen an increase in the need for mental health services in places hit hard by the pandemic.
- [Resource Database with immediate crisis resources and state by state resources](#)

YOU/Responder Strong (All Clear Foundation)

- Free, confidential space for responders and their families to take charge of their well-being
- [Website](#)

SAMHSA Responders Resource Portal

- [Understanding Compassion Fatigue Infographic](#)
- [Tips for Health Care Practitioners and Responders: HELPING SURVIVORS COPE WITH GRIEF AFTER A DISASTER OR TRAUMATIC EVENT](#)

Warriors Research Institute

- Does someone you know need help? [Flyer](#)
- PTSD [Flyer](#)

Research

The following are research organizations working with the fire and rescue service on mental health and their corresponding websites.

[*Warriors Research Institute – Dr. Suzy Gulliver*](#)

[*Laboratory for the Study and Prevention of Suicide-Related Conditions and Behaviors – Dr. Thomas Joiner*](#)

[*NDRI-USA – Dr. Sara Jahnke*](#)

[*Center for Firefighter Injury Research & Safety Trends – Dr. Jennifer Taylor*](#)