



Law Enforcement Assistance Program

Law enforcement personnel and their families are exposed to unique stressors that require a different kind of Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Federal Occupational Health's (FOH) Law Enforcement Assistance Program is designed to meet the particular needs of this specialized group of professionals and their families

FOH is a non-appropriated agency that provides occupational health and wellness services exclusively to federal employees. FOH was created by Congress in 1946 by an amendment to the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C.), and is a service unit within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Program Support Center. Our **mission** is to improve the health, safety, and productivity of the federal workforce.

Law enforcement personnel are frequently exposed to dangerous work environments, risks of civil liability, public scrutiny, and repeated exposure to traumatic events. Shift work schedules affect family life and family members must cope with the threat of potential harm to, or loss of, their loved one.

Law enforcement officers are often reluctant to seek out professional support for a variety of reasons. Often, the traits that help officers perform their jobs effectively can also prevent them from acknowledging a need for help. Trained with an emphasis on independence and emotional control, these officers often view the need for support services as a sign of personal weakness, even if they realize they would benefit from support.

Furthermore, the law enforcement community often accepts the negative effects of prolonged stress as "part of the job." As a result, they are less likely to acknowledge feeling overwhelmed, fatigued, or "burned out."

Finally, law enforcement professionals have been known to avoid the EAP if they feel that the counselors are "civilians," who will not understand the nature of their work. The Law Enforcement Assistance Program is especially sensitive to this issue and is staffed with professionals who have law enforcement experience.

These are some of the services that the FOH Law Enforcement Assistance Program offers:

Panel of Law Enforcement Counselors

By dialing a toll-free telephone number and requesting entry into the *law enforcement network*, law enforcement personnel and their families have access to FOH's nationwide panel of counselors with law enforcement experience.

Confidentiality

Law Enforcement Assistance Program counselors are bound by ethics and individual state laws that protect communications with clients. Various state and federal statutes and federal regulations protect these communications and, except for rare instances such as the intent to commit harm to self or others, contacts with counselors are held in strict confidence.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

FOH has a network of professionally trained counselors with experience in providing CISM services to law enforcement personnel. Counselors provide management consultations, defusings and/or debriefings in the aftermath of critical incidents.

Law Enforcement Management Consultations

When employees are having personal difficulties it can affect their job performance or behavior on the job. When the troubled employee is a weapon-carrying law enforcement officer, appropriate manager intervention is critical.

FOH counselors are available to assist managers by identifying problematic behavior, discussing alternatives, and supporting the manager in making crucial decisions about an officer or employee, such as a decision to make a formal referral to the Law Enforcement Assistance Program.

Training

FOH offers a variety of workshops that are targeted toward law enforcement issues. Sample topics include: Prevention of Workplace Violence, Officer Suicide Prevention, Stress Management for Law Enforcement, Sexual Harassment Prevention, and Critical Incident Management for Supervisors.

FOH, the Occupational Health Provider of Choice for the Federal Government

The mission of FOH is to improve the health, safety, and productivity of the federal workforce. Created by Congress in 1946, FOH is a non-appropriated service agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Program Support Center.

Federal agencies throughout the U.S. and overseas can access FOH services. FOH provides worksite health services, Wellness/Fitness, Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), Work/Life, Environmental Health and Safety, Organizational and Professional Development, and Training and Education.

Make Federal Occupational Health your partner in building a healthier, more productive work force. For more information, please visit us at www.foh.dhhs.gov or call us today at **1-800-457-9808**.
