



“First responders witness horror on a daily basis. These men and women, including firefighters, law enforcement personnel, and emergency medical services workers, have front-row seats to the horrendous aftermath of natural disasters, terrorist attacks, violent domestic disputes, traffic accidents, and more. These professionals embody astounding bravery and resilience, but at the end of the day, they are only human. Constant exposure to death and destruction exerts a psychological toll on first responders, resulting in post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, depression, and even suicide.”

— The Ruddeman White Paper on Mental Health and Suicide of First Responders

Do you need help locating a clinician in your area who understands the unique needs of first responders?

Do you work for an agency that is seeking information on how to start a wellness program or peer assistance team?

If so, please contact:

First Responder Liaison
Ohio Department of Mental Health and
Addiction Services

Bureau of Criminal Justice Services

30 E. Broad St., 8th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

(614) 752-9311

FirstResponderHelp@mha.ohio.gov

Ohio's first responders stand ready to protect, defend and provide life-saving services to our citizens, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. However, the often dangerous nature of their work places them in constant risk, physically, mentally, and emotionally. OhioMHAS' first responder liaison serves as a resource to first responders, their agencies, Ohio's vast network of behavioral health care providers and the community and is available for trainings and information.



**Department of
Mental Health &
Addiction Services**

30 E. Broad St., 36th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215
careers.ohio.gov | mha.ohio.gov



**Department of
Mental Health &
Addiction Services**

Linking Ohio's First Responders to Local Resources

**Law Enforcement • Fire • EMS
• Dispatch • Corrections •
Ohio-Based Military**





Don't Wait to Ask for Help

- In 2023, there were **167** reported first responder suicides, according to bluehelp.org.
- The average number of critical events officers reported witnessing during their career was **188**.

We all have responsibilities and people counting on us outside of work. There are many resources in your area that can assist you in maintaining or regaining that necessary work/home life balance. See back cover for contact information.

About OhioMHAS

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) strives to end suffering from mental illness, substance use disorders, and problem gambling for Ohioans of all ages, their families, and communities.

Learn more about our efforts to help first responders be well, get well, and stay well: <https://mha.ohio.gov/community-partners/first-responders/first-responders>.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Ohioans who are experiencing a mental health or addiction crisis, and their family members, can **call, text, or chat 988** to reach a trained call specialist who can offer help and support.

Learn more: 988.ohio.gov.



Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation

The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation is a non-profit organization that works to eliminate one of our most preventable causes of death: suicide. Its work includes reducing the stigma of suicide, promoting evidence-based prevention strategies, and raising awareness about the relationship between suicide and mental illness and substance use.

Learn more: ohiospf.org.

First Responders' Bridge

The First Responders' Bridge provides free, confidential retreats for first responders and their significant others who have experienced a traumatic or life-altering event, depression, anxiety, or hopelessness from the things first responders see and hear on the job every day.

Learn more: firstrespondersbridge.org.

Ohio ASSIST

Ohio ASSIST hosts three-day Post Critical Incident Seminars (PCIS) in Ohio and can help safety service personnel from Ohio apply for PCIS events in partner states. These events are free of charge for Ohio's safety services personnel and a support person.

Learn more: statepatrol.ohio.gov/about-us/ohio-assist.

