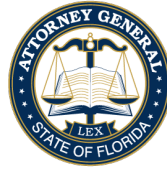


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OFFICE OF
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— Stronger, Safer Florida —

Attorney General Ashley Moody News Release

VIDEO: AG Moody Unveils Statewide Expansion of Critical Hope Line Offering Lifesaving Support to First Responders After Deadly Hurricanes



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—On National First Responders Day, Attorney General Ashley Moody, Tampa Bay Crisis Center President & CEO Clara Reynolds, Senator Jay Collins and law enforcement leaders announced the statewide expansion of the First Responder Hope Line. The Hope Line provides 24/7, lifesaving assistance to first responders and officers struggling with PTSD and other mental-health challenges. The Hope Line reports that more than 6.6% of first responders have attempted suicide—10 times the national average. Two recent storms may be compounding the stress and trauma facing first responders who abandoned property and risked safety to help others in need.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Law enforcement officers and first responders sacrifice so much to keep us safe. Often, they carry the tremendous weight of service and feel they have no one to help lighten their load. This burden may be compounded by the devastating storms we recently encountered—where first responders abandoned their own property and safety to rescue others. Today’s announcement will help ensure these heroes have access to lifesaving

mental-health services.”

Tampa Bay Crisis Center President & CEO Clara Reynolds said, “Florida’s first responders face unique stress and trauma that is hard to comprehend. They are the first to run toward danger to help people. The recent hurricanes are just one example of this. Unfortunately, they are often the last to seek help. We are so thankful to Senator Jay Collins and the Office of Attorney General Moody for supporting the statewide expansion of the First Responder Hope Line so first responders can connect to a network of support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.”

Since 2019, more than 80 first responders committed suicide, with 12 more lives lost this year alone. Attorney General Moody worked with Senator Collins and other legislative leaders to expand the Tampa Bay Crisis Center’s Hope Line statewide during the last legislative session—resulting in a \$1 million allocation for the expansion.

A [study found that in North America](#), the prevalence of depression appeared in 34% of first responders, while the prevalence of anxiety showed up in 33% of first responders. According to one report, law enforcement officers are [more likely to commit suicide](#) than be killed in the line of duty.

The Tampa Bay Crisis Center created the Hope Line in 2020, originally covering only five counties. At that time, Attorney General Moody [presented a cabinet resolution](#) to the Tampa Bay Crisis Center for its innovative efforts in tackling first-responder mental-health challenges. The center has received nearly 400 calls from first responders since the creation of the Hope Line. That same year, Attorney General Moody also [embarked on a statewide mental health and law enforcement round table tour](#) that focused on mental-health challenges and Florida’s criminal justice system.

Last year, the Hope Line expanded to cover 11 counties. Since that time, the First Responder Hope Line website, [LastToAsk.com](#), received more than 74,000 visitors. Now, thanks to the support of Attorney General Moody and state legislative leaders, the helpline is expanded across the state.

First responders or law enforcement officers struggling with mental-health challenges can reach the Hope Line by calling 1(866) 4FL-HERO.

More information about the Hope Line and where to find resources can be found on [LastToAsk.com](#).

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