

May 19, 2023

Contact Kylie Mason

Phone (850) 245-0150



Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General Moody Highlights Support Resources for LEOs During National Police Week and Mental Health Awareness Month

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—In recognition of National Police Week and Mental Health Awareness Month, Attorney General Ashley Moody is highlighting available resources for Florida law enforcement officers. Statistics show, in previous years, that law enforcement officers are more likely to die by suicide than in the line of duty. According to [BlueHelp.org](https://www.bluehelp.org), the national law enforcement suicide rate increased in 2022—however, Florida’s rate decreased. In an effort to further protect Florida's officers, Attorney General Moody is encouraging any first responder struggling with mental health issues to seek help.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “We received some encouraging news this National Police Week and Mental Health Awareness Month. The suicide rate among Florida law enforcement officers declined last year. I want to thank all the mental health experts in Florida who focus efforts on helping our first responders who struggle with the mental health issues brought on because of their service to others. I also encourage anyone struggling to seek help. There are caring professionals available 24/7 who want to help.”

Crisis Center of Tampa Bay President & CEO Clara Reynolds said, “The Crisis Center of Tampa Bay would not be able to support the community to the extent that it does without partnering with local law enforcement agencies. We are so appreciative of their support of the victims of assault they bring to our door, the interventions they provide when someone is contemplating taking their life, and the numerous other ways they step in to keep us all safe. Thank you for choosing this very vital but difficult work each and every day.”

Law enforcement officers face challenging work daily that can take a serious toll on mental health. The [Blue H.E.L.P.](https://www.bluehelpline.org) program seeks to bring awareness to suicide and mental health issues law enforcement officers face. The program, created by Karen Soloman and Jeffrey McGill, offers mental health education, advocates for law enforcement officers and their families and recognizes those lost to mental health causes.

Attorney General Moody wants all law enforcement officers struggling with mental health issues to know that help is available. There are caring people available 24/7 who understand the struggles and challenges that often accompany protecting the public from danger and violence.

The Crisis Center of Tampa Bay is a nonprofit organization developed in 1972 to offer comprehensive services to people in the Tampa Bay community through collaboration and partnerships. With more than 10 different programs that offer a wide range of services and

resources to all individuals, the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay is determined to ensure no one in the Tampa Bay community has to face a crisis alone. To learn more, click [here](#).

Since taking office, Attorney General Moody continues to take action to support Florida law enforcement officer mental health, including:

- Urging Congress to pass the Public Safety Officer Support Act of 2022: Last year, Attorney General Moody, joined by 52 other attorneys general, urged Congress to pass the Public Safety Officer Support Act of 2022. The legislation addresses gaps in support for public safety officers who suffer from PTSD associated with the high-risk nature of their jobs. To learn more, click [here](#).
- Presented a Back the Blue Award to an Officer for Supporting Mental Health Awareness: Attorney General Moody presented a Back the Blue Award to a Tallahassee Police Department officer who co-wrote a book with information on mental health awareness and treatment strategies for first responders. Officer Sean Wyman co-authored *Going Beyond the Call: Mental Health Fitness for Public Safety Professionals*. The book focuses on social-emotional trauma, stress impacts and communication strategies to reduce the number of suicides within the public safety industry. To learn more, click [here](#).
- Recognizing CCTB's Law Enforcement Suicide Help Line: Attorney General Moody presented a Florida Cabinet [resolution](#) recognizing National Suicide Prevention Month in Florida in September 2019. Attorney General Moody then visited CCTB to recognize the then-pilot program called "First to Respond, Last to Ask For Help." At the time, the program served officers in Hillsborough County with a help line to call for immediate, confidential support. Now, the help line is extended statewide—any officer in the state needing assistance can call 1(866) 4FL-HERO.

Law enforcement officers who are suffering and need help should immediately contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741. Law enforcement officers wishing to speak to someone can also call the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay's helpline at 1(866) 4FL-HERO to be connected to an individual for immediate and confidential support. To learn more about the help line, visit [LastToAsk.com](#).