

PTSD & PENNSYLVANIA LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Impact of HB 1910



DISCLAIMER

The materials provided in this webinar are for general informational and educational purposes only. The materials are not intended to be and should not be considered legal or medical advice or opinions. You should not act upon any information presented without first seeking legal or medical counsel on your specific matter.

The use of information and video from actual incidents is only intended to enhance the training value of the content—not to discredit or criticize officers or agencies. Fact patterns cited are from press sources and/or from the relevant case law and have not been independently verified.

This presentation is being recorded on March 23, 2021.

TODAY'S PRESENTERS



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WHY WE ARE HERE: ACT 59 OF 2020

- Amending Titles 44 (Law and Justice) and 53 (Municipalities Generally), providing for mental health evaluations and treatment for law enforcement officers exhibiting signs of PTSD and providing for powers and duties of the commission
- Signed into law July 14, 2020 – Effective in one year (July 14, 2021)
- By March 14, 2021 (60 days + 6 months) Commission will promulgate regulations to establish procedures to guarantee confidentiality of requests or recommendations for mental health evaluations and confidentiality of mental health records.

OFFICER WELLNESS – NATIONAL TRENDS

- Social Unrest + COVID-19
- Attacks on Police
- “Defund the Police”
- Recruiting
- Retention
- Extreme Change + Instability
- Officer Wellness + Suicides

ENTERING THE PROFESSION

P+M FIT

IDEALISTIC

RESILIENT

ENTERING THE PROFESSION

P+M FIT

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RESILIENT

LE VS. GENERAL POPULATION

- Psychological Screening
Very Low Psychopathology
vs. General Population
- High Rates of Trauma + Stress
- Low Rates of Seeking Help

188
CRITICAL
INCIDENTS
IN CAREER

TRAGEDY UPON TRAGEDY

- How many lives are impacted by this incident?



TRAGEDY UPON TRAGEDY

- Violent protests, property destruction – rage against the police
- Disconnect with officer perspective causes internal conflict:
 - ✓ “Why doesn’t the officer have a right to live?”
 - ✓ “We never asked to be sent to these calls so why are we being blamed?”
- Impact can be longstanding and far-reaching:
 - ✓ Family of the victim AND the officer(s)
 - ✓ Officers across the country are impacted with same conflict – *decision making*

OFFICER SAFETY

Officer Safety is
more than just
Physical Safety

Physical Safety

Mental Wellness

External issues

- Image, reputation & community impact
- Liability

DEFINITIONS - 44 PA. C.S. § 7202

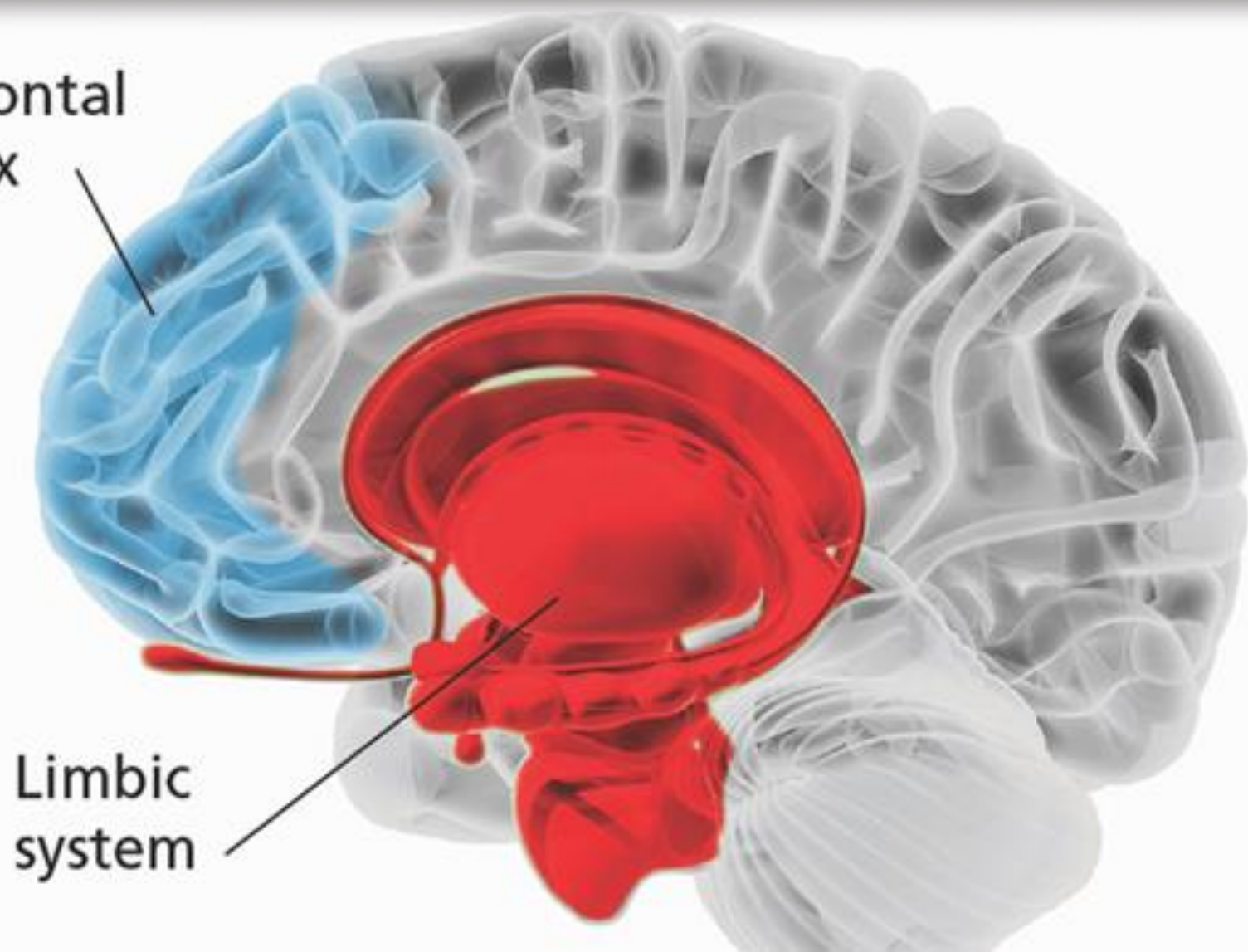
- Administrative duty – An administrative law enforcement duty that is designed to limit a law enforcement officer's day-to-day work-related interactions with the public.
- Law enforcement agency – (1) A police department of a county, city, borough, incorporated town or township.
(2) A county district attorney's office.
- Law enforcement officer – An individual employed by a law enforcement agency who is required to be trained under 53 Pa.C.S. Ch. 21 Subch. D (relating to municipal police education and training).

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

- 44 PA. C.S. § 7202 – As defined by the American Psychiatric Association and documented in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition.
- American Psychiatric Association – A psychiatric disorder that may occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event such as a natural disaster, a serious accident, a terrorist act, war/combat, or rape or who have been threatened with death, sexual violence or serious injury.

STRESS AND THE BRAIN

Prefrontal
cortex



Limbic
system

TRAGEDY UPON TRAGEDY

How many lives are impacted by this incident?



TRAGEDY UPON TRAGEDY

- How does any person process something as horrible as this?
- People see it in the *news*, officers *live it*
- Cumulative effect of lesser situations
- Pinning on a badge does not create an emotional shield
- Within our profession we must be cognizant of the fact we could make it worse...

INITIATION OF MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATIONS

As a condition of continued employment, and without cost to the law enforcement officer, a law enforcement agency shall provide a law enforcement officer with a mental health evaluation for post-traumatic stress disorder by a licensed mental health professional:

- 1) Upon request of the law enforcement officer
- 2) Upon recommendation of a police chief or other supervising law enforcement officer
- 3) Within 30 days of an incident of the use of lethal force during the course of law enforcement duties

TREATMENT

If a licensed mental health professional determines during the mental health evaluation under subsection (a) that a law enforcement officer has symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, the law enforcement officer shall be provided with treatment under a licensed physician's care until the licensed physician determines in writing that the law enforcement officer is able to resume full duties.

ADMINISTRATIVE DUTY

A law enforcement officer shall be assigned to administrative duty if the law enforcement officer:

- 1) fails to undergo a mental health evaluation for post-traumatic stress disorder when required under subsection (a); or
- 2) is experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder as determined by a licensed mental health professional under subsection (a) and whom the licensed physician has not yet determined is able to resume full duties under subsection (b).

BARRIERS TO GETTING HELP

- 90% report cultural stigma against getting help
- 85% fear being seen as weak or unfit for duty
- 80% have not used EAP services
- 59% found services unhelpful

OFFICER WELLNESS TRAP



HIGH
STRESS
+
STIGMA



BUILDING A WELLNESS CULTURE

- Importance of confidentiality
- 24/7 support
- Relevant, easy to use resources
- Modeled by leadership
- Proactive and reactive

The Aftermath of an incident can be as traumatic as the incident itself...



CHAPTER 72 OF TITLE 44

- Mental Health Evaluations
 - ✓ SUBCHAPTER A - PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS
 - ✓ SUBCHAPTER B - GENERAL PROVISIONS
- Questions
 - ✓ Who is affected?
 - ✓ How are evaluations initiated?
 - ✓ What happens after evaluation?
 - ✓ When can officer return to work?

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CORDICO PARTNER AGENCIES

**DESTINATION
ZERO**

COLLABORATING TO ADVANCE
OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS



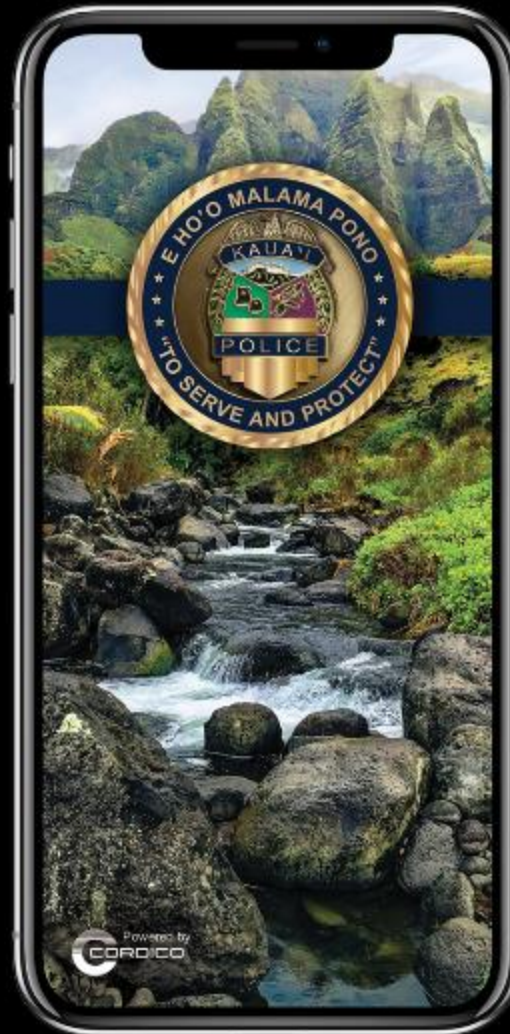
Memphis PD



Vacaville PD

*Destination Zero 2020
National Award Winners
for Officer Safety & Wellness*

POLICE





Anonymous Self-Assessments



- Alcohol
- Anger
- Compassion Fatigue
- Depression
- PTSD
- Resilience
- Sleep
- Social Isolation
- Stress
- Well-Being
- And More



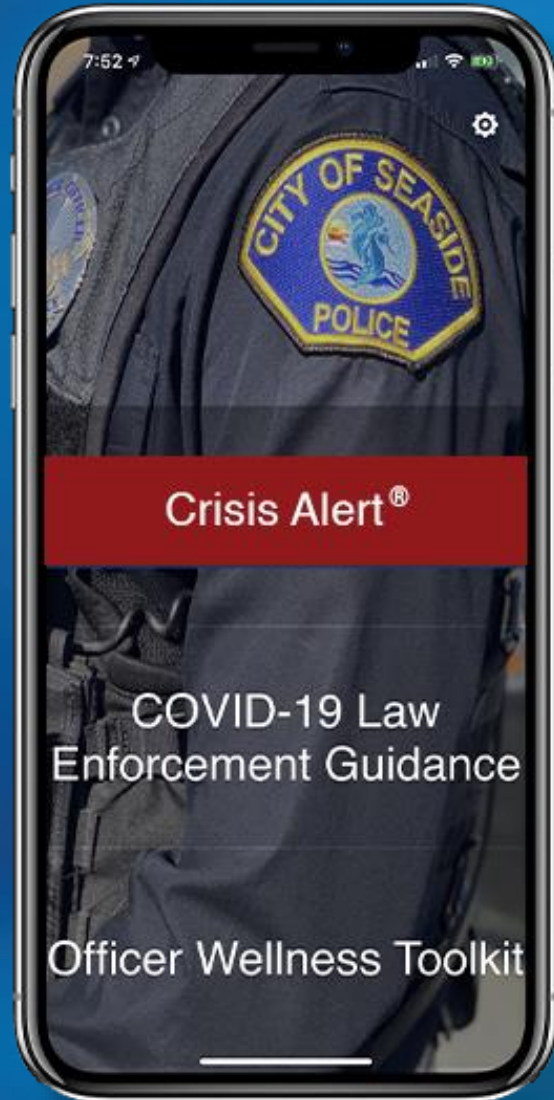
PEER SUPPORT

- Who? How? When? Where?
- Photos & Notes
- One-Touch Dialing

CHAPLAIN SUPPORT

“The GuardianNET phone app enables our first responders to access a Chaplain 24/7. The app takes away the guesswork of identifying and contacting the “On-Call” Chaplain. No more delays identifying “who is available or what’s their number.” First responders, on duty or off, can now contact our Chaplains directly for assistance. Yet another benefit of having the GuardianNET phone app always within arm’s reach.”

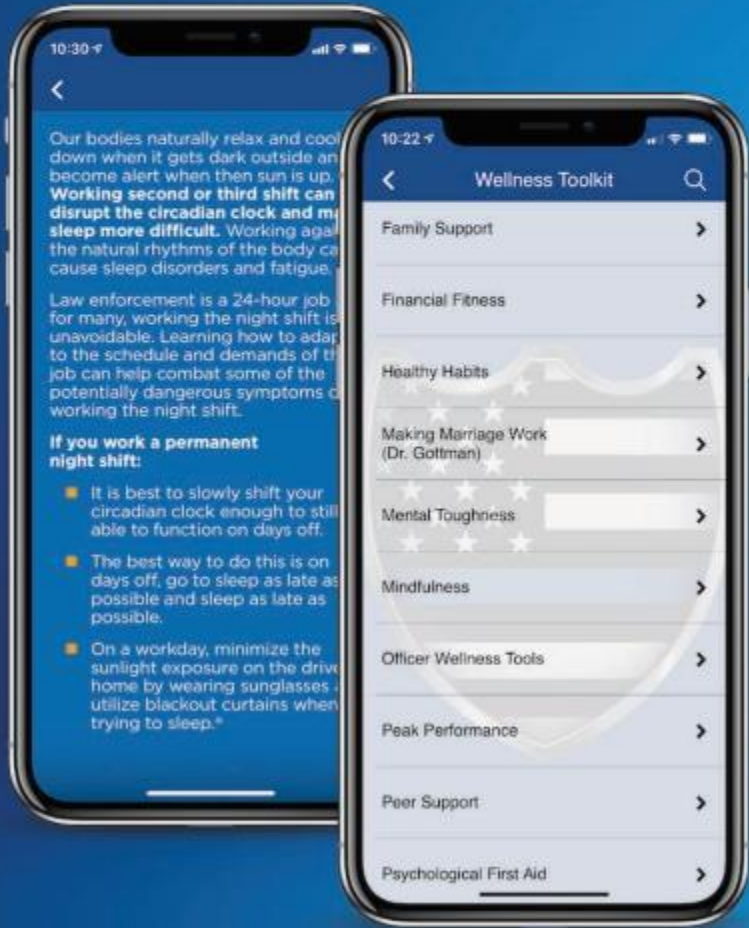
CrisisAlert[®]



24/7 Immediate Support

- Activate Resources
- Immediate Access
- Preserve Confidentiality
- Easy: Push a Button

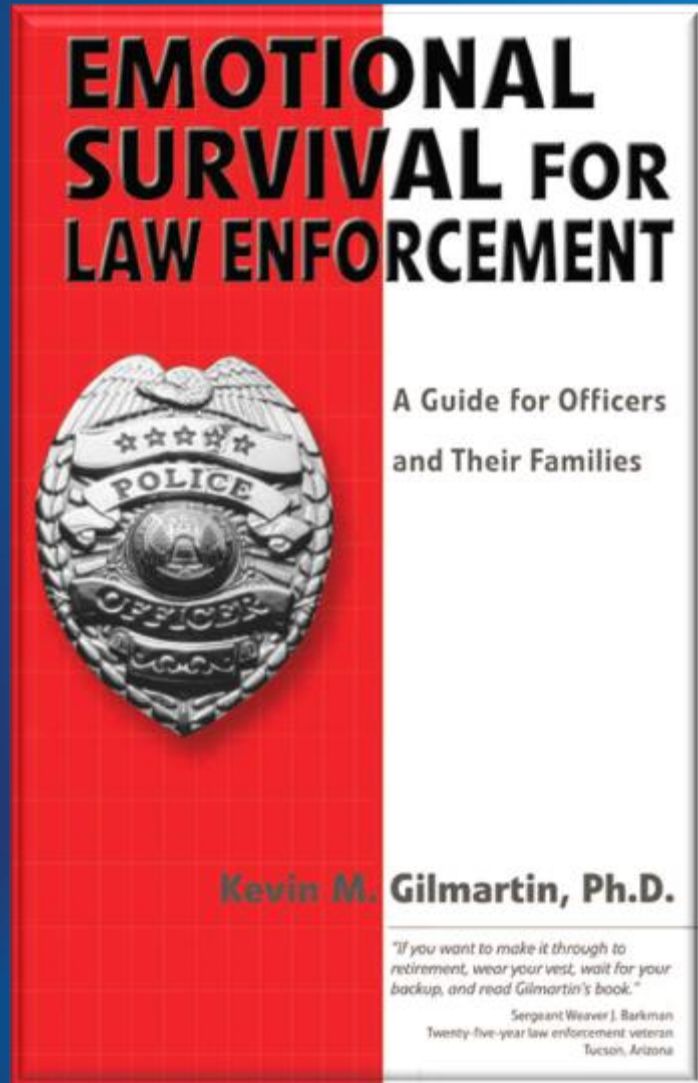
Officer Wellness Toolkit



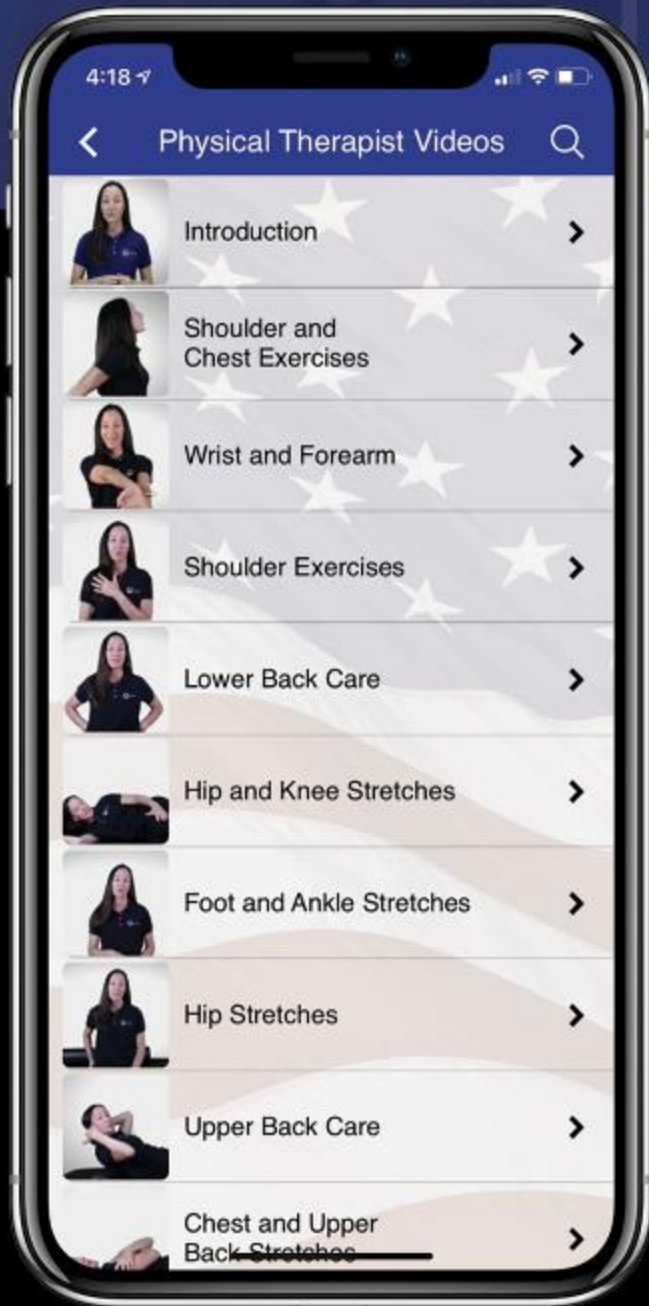
- Alcohol Abuse
- Critical Incidents
- Depression
- Family Support
- Financial Fitness
- Emotional Survival (Dr. Gilmartin)
- ICAC Coping and Resiliency
- Marriage Guidance
- Mindfulness
- New Hire → Retirees
- Officer Wellness
- Parenting Tips
- Peer Support
- Post-Traumatic Stress
- Sleep Optimization
- Suicide Prevention



Emotional Survival



- Dr. Kevin Gilmartin's Legacy
- Officer Safety
- Hypervigilance
- **HBR** Biological Rollercoaster
- Cynicism
- Singular Identity



POLICE



Cordico Therapist Finder



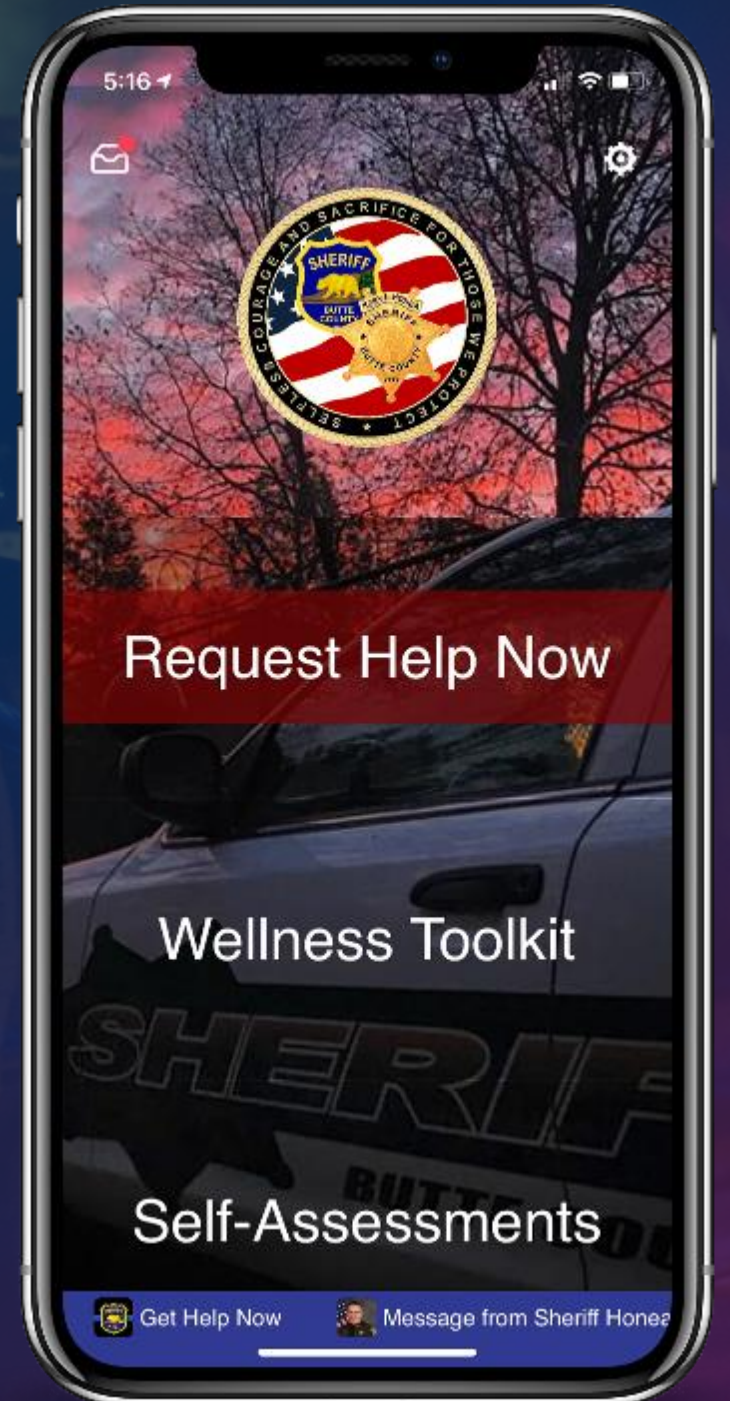
- VETTED Therapists
- Photos
- Specializations
- Notes
 - *Ex: Married to an Officer*
- One-Touch Dialing
 - *Cell Phones*
 - *Rapid Response*
- One-Touch Map Directions
- Teletherapy Portal
 - *HIPAA-Encrypted*

Therapist Vetting



CAMP FIRE – NOVEMBER 8, 2018





QUESTIONS?

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