

## Fairfax County Police Department 2023 Officer Wellness Summary

Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) has served the community for 80 years. There are approximately 1,341 sworn officers and 344 professional staff employed at the FCPD, patrolling approximately 407 square miles, with a population of 1.2 million.

The department's Incident Support Services (ISS) is an integral part of the FCPD and provides a wide variety of services including Peer Support Team, peer support canine, department contracted psychologists/licensed clinicians, psychiatrist, police chaplains, and the County's Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

ISS provides direct oversight in coordinating the Peer Support Team members and chaplains responding to potential traumatic calls for service. The Peer Support Team consists of sworn officers within the department who volunteer to help their fellow sworn officers and professional staff. The peer support team started in the early 80's and has grown to a team with over 40 members available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. As part of the requirement from the Commonwealth of Virginia, all Peer/ Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) teams are required to be accredited through the Virginia Department of Health. This accreditation allows the Peer Support Team to offer confidentiality to the officers and professional staff they serve. In 2022, The Peer Support Team registered 324 responses for contact with 412 police employees. The ISS team takes on additional activities, to include following up with officers who may have involvement with Internal Affairs, Covid follow-up, and all officers assaulted on duty. Fairfax County is a member of the Northern Virginia Regional Peer Support Team, and has helped other jurisdictions that may lack the resources of FCPD. Peer support services are also available on the department's cell phone wellness app.

In 2007, FCPD hired a police psychologist. The program started with one full-time employee and provided advanced-level clinical work for officers requesting services. Over the years, as the need for a police psychologist significantly increased, the Department hired contracted police psychologists/licensed clinicians. This contracted service made them more available to cover crisis intervention, psychological assessments, testing, evaluation, diagnosis, psychotherapeutic treatment, and coordination of services for all employees and retired law enforcement officers. The wider variety of psychologists/licensed clinicians broadened their ability for them to serve members of the Department.

Department personnel can access a list of the Department's psychologist/licensed clinicians on their intranet page called the **BlueNet**. Department personnel can access this service directly, and they do not require coordination through the Peer Support Team or their supervisor. Understanding the need for privacy and confidentiality for mental health services the FCPD has teamed up with Fairfax County Fire and Rescue to combat this initiative together. Both entities co-share a space called the Fairfax County Public Safety Behavioral Health Center. This off-site facility allows both Department's personnel the ability to seek services in a setting that promotes and encourages their privacy.

FCPD and ISS worked together to provide roll call training to over 1100 officers. The training was held at all eight district stations, the Operations Support Bureau (SWAT, K9, Crash Reconstruction), the Criminal Justice Academy, and Headquarters. All suicide training courses were completed within a year, and subsequent mandatory clinician meetings were scheduled.

The FCPD takes a multi-prong approach to address the importance of mental health. The psychologists/licensed clinicians and ISS members provide training at the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy (FCCJA) while recruits are in basic training, basic supervisor school, and our command college. This approach ensures that officers at all levels know how to address their mental health needs and make sure an employee can access mental health services.

The FCPD has one Peer Support Team Canine that is assigned to the ISS division. The Peer Support Team Canine is named Lennie, and she has been with the FCPD for four years. Lennie and her handler help with the emotional response to critical events, and she improves the workplace environment in a positive way. In 2022 Canine Lennie was deployed 255 times for officers and citizens throughout the year. Lennie was also part of the peer response team that provided long-term assistance to the officers at the US capitol immediately after the insurrection on January 6, 2021.

The FCPD has 11 chaplains that assist the police department with their spiritual needs. The Chaplain Unit also responds to critical incidents. When a potentially traumatic event occurs, the chaplain units respond to the scene and provide spiritual aid to the officers involved. The police chaplain is a part of the Fairfax County Community Corps and will respond to assist the community during critical incidents. This is especially helpful for officers, which allows them to concentrate on the incident while they know that the community/victims are having their spiritual needs met.

The FCPD's Wellness Program is committed to maintaining and improving all employees' health and fitness levels. Through their wellness programs, police and fire departments collectively train their personnel as tactical athletes. Tactical athletes must be physically fit to perform their duties effectively, including foot pursuits, apprehending individuals, and responding to emergencies. Additionally, it is essential to incorporate proper nutrition and recovery techniques to ensure officers are adequately fueled and rested to perform at their best. The FCPD's Wellness Program is designed to accommodate officers of all fitness levels. The program allows for one-on-one consults with a certified strength and conditioning coach and progress tracking through a mobile app to ensure officers are reaching their goals.

Every major police facility has a high-quality gym that officers can use both on-duty and off-duty. All sworn officers may use one hour of duty time each day to work out. All department gyms are all equipped with top-of-the-line equipment from manufacturers such as Rogue Fitness and Sorinex. The WellFit Performance Center (WellFit) is a partnership between the FCPD and the Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department. The mission of WellFit is to provide world-class physical fitness coaching, recovery and rehabilitation services, and overall wellness enhancement to the public safety personnel of Fairfax County. A cadre of strength and conditioning coaches, a registered dietitian, an athletic trainer, and physical therapists staff WellFit. Yoga is also one of the many programs offered through the WellFit Performance Center and offers a range of physical and mental benefits for police officers.

From January 1, 2023, through February 28, 2023, ninety-one (91) different officers used the in-person strength and conditioning services at the WellFit Performance Center for a combined total of 702 workouts. Of that total, 57% of the users participated in group physical fitness classes run by the Strength & Conditioning Coordinator. 41% of the uses were self-guided workouts at the facility. The final 2% consisted of individual consultations and information sessions.

The registered dietician at the WellFit Performance Center uses artificial intelligence (AI) to assist her with on-demand meal planning for our tactical athletes at scale across the police and fire departments. The dietician controls the inputs of the AI-based program from her consultation session with individual officers.

The FCPD mandates that officers placed on temporary medical restricted duty shall work with the WellFit Performance Center staff to augment any medical services that their treating provider concurs will help recovery to full duty. FCPD has mandated use of the physical therapists, athletic trainers, strength and conditioning coaches, and dieticians at WellFit. Additionally, department specialists can provide tailored exercise and nutrition plans specifically designed for the unique needs of the individual police officer – which generally include exercises and techniques that focus on future injury prevention and performance enhancement.

The FCCJA offers classes instructed by Optima Financial on "Retirement Planning in Plain English" class at the Academy and in-person consultation.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all county employees and their families and is a no-cost, confidential resource that offers many programs. Employees can access services through the internet or can call to make an appointment. The program offers services including counseling and support, help with emotional problems such as grief, anxiety and depression, marital and family problems, substance use, stress management, parenting, gambling, chronic or life-threatening illnesses and job and interpersonal relationships. Sworn Employees can get twelve (12) free counseling sessions through EAP, and non-sworn personnel are offered eight free sessions. In addition, an employee can receive referrals for child and elderly care, financial and legal assistance, and job and career support. Employees can self-refer or do voluntary participation.

FCPD Officers receive annual physicals. The physicals are free and are broken down by age group; Age 20-29 every three years, Age 30-39 every two years, and Age 40+ every year.

**\*\* This summary is only a brief overview of many of the agency's programs. In the actual submission you will see that the agency has other programs and incentives to benefit its members. Please review their entire submission and its associated documents to gain a complete understanding of their program.**