DESTINATION ZERO
COLLABORATING TO ADVANCE OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS

Officer Wellness Implementation

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Division of Law Enforcement

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Division of Law Enforcement plays an integral role in fulfilling the agency's mission of managing fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people.

The FWC's Division of Law Enforcement consists of 1,072 members, including 878 sworn officers who operate in six regions throughout the state. FWC officers are responsible for uniformed patrol and investigative law enforcement services on more than 8,400 miles of coastline, 13,200 square miles of offshore waters, and more than 34 million acres of land. They are highly trained, versatile law enforcement officers with full police powers and statewide jurisdiction.

The roles and responsibilities of the FWC's law enforcement officers are varied and unique and take them to the most remote corners of the state. Specialized training, equipment and a commitment to a comprehensive wellness program allows FWC law enforcement officers to maintain a high level of professionalism while accomplishing the following:

- Protect and conserve Florida's fish, wildlife and habitats to ensure their long-term well-being and continued viability for educational, recreational and commercial activities.
- Safeguard public safety and enrich the outdoor experience of residents and visitors.
- Conduct search-and-rescue to protect the public statewide – performing hundreds of missions each year on land, sea and in the air.
- Respond to emergencies, natural disasters and other critical incidents through coordinated efforts with local, state and federal mutual-aid partners.
- Provide public safety and law enforcement services in Florida's 175 state parks and nine state trails covering 800,000 acres.
- Enforce laws to protect the resources of Florida and the safety of people using these resources when hunting, boating, freshwater and saltwater fishing, visiting state parks, viewing wildlife, fishing commercially or processing seafood.
- Enforce boating and waterways laws and promotes educational activities to enhance boating safety.
- Enhance boating safety and waterway experiences through maintenance and repair of more than 300 boat ramps, construction of new boat ramps and placement and maintenance of waterway markers.
- Protect the public in rural, semi-wilderness, wilderness and offshore areas where no other law enforcement agencies routinely patrol.

- Provide public safety and ensure animal welfare at captive wildlife facilities throughout the state.
- Investigate the illegal shipping of protected and regulated wildlife into and out of Florida.
- Support domestic and homeland security initiatives in Florida's ports.
- Encourage the next generation of conservationists and enhance outdoor experiences through education, public outreach partnerships and youth-oriented programs.

A Commitment to Wellness

The Division has long recognized the importance of its officers' physical and mental well-being. To offer the highest possible level of wellness services, the Division contracted with a recognized expert to analyze job tasks and assess physical fitness standards and report on the physical requirements related to being an FWC officer.

Using that information, the FWC's Fitness and Wellness Program has evolved to better prioritize the health of law enforcement personnel by providing encouragement and opportunities to enjoy optimal fitness throughout their personal and professional lives, by becoming "Fit for Duty/Fit for Life."

Health and Fitness: A Policy Priority

It is the Division's policy, through General Order 42, to encourage and facilitate physical fitness to reduce the likelihood of serious injury and illness; increase member safety; reduce stress, obesity and other disorders associated with sedentary lifestyles; and live a healthy life. Each member of the Division is required to develop and maintain their physical fitness and readiness to perform the duties required for their position. This program may consist of:

- Medical screening: A screening of health risks for specifically identified positions.
- Fitness assessments: To assess health-related fitness areas.
- Fitness goal setting: Counseling by trained instructors based on assessment results.
- Prescribed training: An individualized exercise and nutrition prescription based on the assessment.
- Education: Formal training to teach safe exercise.

- Feedback and Reinforcement: To assess results and ensure involvement.

Required Fitness Assessment

Each year, all law enforcement officer must make a reasonable effort to complete every component of the Physical Abilities Test (PAT). The PAT is a fitness assessment designed according to the physical demands FWC officers are regularly tasked with and is correlated with fitness for duty. Since 2020, the mandatory PAT has a pass or fail time limit. Additionally, those applying to become an FWC law enforcement officer are required to demonstrate their ability to swim 150 yards continuously and pass the PAT in 8:36 or less. The PAT consists of the following components:

1. RUN. Sprint/run 500 feet to the HURDLE.
2. HURDLE. Jump over four hurdles of various heights (12, 18, 12 and 24 inches) each spaced six feet apart without knocking the hurdle off its stand. If any hurdle is knocked over the applicant must restart from the beginning of this event.
3. SERPENTINE. Run a serpentine route, which consists of 10 cones (poles) in the proper sequence. If a cone is passed incorrectly the applicant will be told to stop and begin this event again from the start.
4. WALL. Climb over four-foot wall.
5. BUCKET CARRY. Pick up kettlebell(s) each weighing 35 pounds and carry 50 feet to and around the cone and 50 feet back (100 feet total) to the STAIRS.
6. STAIRS. Climb flights of stairs to a simulated height of three stories.
7. SLED DRAG. Drag 150-pound weighted sled 50 feet to the cone and 50 feet back by a strap attached to the sled.
8. CRAWL. Crawl (low crawl) under three markers placed 27 inches from the ground at equal distances apart without knocking the markers from their upright position. If marker is knocked over the applicant must restart this event from its beginning.
9. BALANCE BEAM. Cross balance beam. If participant falls off at any point before completing the applicant must restart this event until successful.
10. SCUFFLE. A sled weighing 180 pounds is pushed forward 20 feet and pulled/dragged/walked backward 20 feet to the starting point. Immediately thereafter, move to the ropes. Proceed by grabbing the ropes within the last 12 inches and raising both initially to shoulder height and lowering (both at the same time) in a wavelength fashion for 15 repetitions.
11. WEAPON FIRE. Place handgun held only by one hand through the metal ring (12-inch diameter) without touching the side of the ring. “Dry fire” a training handgun six times

with each hand while holding the weapon with one hand and arm fully extended. Remove from and re-insert through the ring when changing hands. If weapon touches ring this single event must be repeated from start.

12. FINISH**.** The applicant will sit on ground and verbally state the PAT course has been completed.

Passing the PAT at the excellent level - 6 minutes 27 seconds or better - positively contributes to a member's professional development expectations.

Fitness Resources

To support staff wellness opportunities, the Division offers fitness instructors, equipment and workout spaces.

Workout Facilities

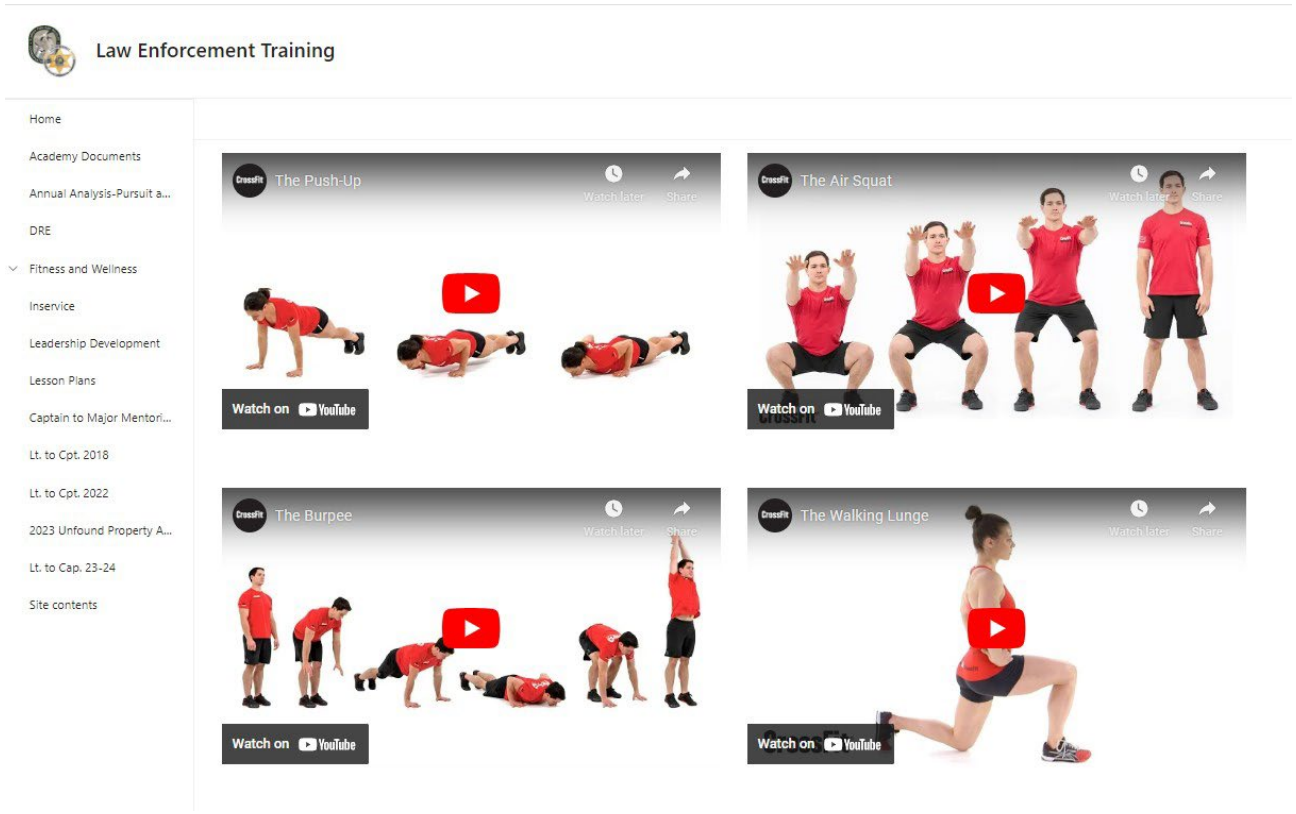
The FWC maintains several stations around the state with designated fitness rooms available to officers and support staff. For officers located in areas where traveling to an FWC workout facility isn't feasible, we have trailers with the necessary equipment for the annual physical assessment test, group workouts and one-on-one training.

Staff are also encouraged to take advantage of discount gym memberships through state of Florida insurance programs.

Fitness Coordinators

The Division has 40 fitness coordinators who are located throughout the state. Coordinators participate in Florida Department of Law Enforcement Fitness Trainer courses to better prepare them to reinforce best practices and enhance consistency throughout the fitness team. The Division's fitness program includes a variety of activities and workout plans that promote strength, stamina, and endurance. Coordinators can customize workout intensity, duration and type so it's challenging and appropriate for each officer's capability and goals. Additionally, the Division holds annual fitness summits and invites renowned subject matter experts to assess the Division's efforts, focus on areas of improvement and present innovative strategies.

The FWC's online training portal is another valuable resource for law enforcement officers. This portal is regularly updated with fitness and wellness resources, tips and a wide selection of scalable workouts.



Staff also can benefit from another state of Florida benefit, HingeHealth.com. This free online clinic for joint and muscle pain combines expert physical therapy care and advanced technology to help participants move beyond pain, avoid unnecessary surgeries, and reduce opioid use.

Group Workouts

Division members regularly meet for traditional and recreational group workouts where teambuilding, self-confidence and healthy habits are fostered.

Memorial Workouts are special group training opportunities designed to honor fallen officers from the FWC and its predecessor agencies. These workouts are scheduled on the anniversary of each officer's passing and promote fitness, teambuilding and recognition of the sacrifice made by our fallen officers.

Fitness Challenges and Incentives

FWC law enforcement officers are encouraged to work out on duty and FWC policy includes three paid 30-minute on-duty physical fitness training sessions per week.

We offer a variety of fitness challenges with rewards throughout the year to incentivize workouts. Fitness challenges such as logging 12 or more workouts during a specified month can earn participating officers rewards or incentives. Eligible officers can select from items such as shirts, cups, kettlebells, and more.

Physical Fitness Awards may be presented to any member who participates in the Division's Physical Abilities Test and achieves a time in the "Superior" category (5 minutes and 50 seconds or better) at the annual Division's Fitness Assessment in accordance with the Division's Awards and Commendations Manual.

Mental Health Services

The duties of the Division's law enforcement officers can include responding to a variety of critical incidents and stressful situations that can result in emotional difficulties requiring mental health services. The Division is committed to a stress management program to help officers cope with stress and support their emotional, psychological and social well-being. It is the policy of the Division through General Order 41 to provide all commission members and their families with access to peer counseling and other mental health services.

Sworn members receive educational training related to mental health awareness, prevention, mitigation, and treatment to include post-traumatic stress disorder. Officers are encouraged to gain coping skills by participating in ongoing, formal training opportunities such as stress management courses, crisis response and management and the Struggle Well course, which focuses on minimizing the impacts of stress and trauma. If a member detects stress-related or unusual behavior that indicates mental health problems in any member, it must be reported to the immediate supervisor so proper steps can be taken.

The Division's regional Critical Incident Stress Management teams are a vital part of the FWC's program to deliver confidential one-on-one or group mental health services to its members throughout the state. Each year, the FWC's 55 to 65 highly trained, volunteer CISM team members provide counseling, support, and resources to hundreds of employees and their families during and after high stress or traumatic incidents. Assistance is provided through a broad range of crisis services that include:

- Pre-deployment education, preparation, planning and policy development.
- Assessment of the situation and the reactions of personnel.

- Strategic crisis response planning.
- Large group interventions (rest, information, and transition services and crisis management briefings).
- Small group interventions (defusing, critical incident stress debriefing).
- Individual (one-on-one peer) support services.
- Family support services.
- Follow-up services.
- Referral, when necessary, to professional assistance programs and/or providers.
- Post-incident education.

CISM has clearly defined notification and initiation procedures, a structured response, and post-incident conclusion process.

Formal Debriefing

Critical Incident Stress Debriefings are typically small group sessions following defusing and other CISM services. The main goals of CISD are to reduce and mitigate traumatic stress reactions, restore personnel to normal healthy functions, and refer personnel needing more formal assistance to other resources. CISDs are standard operating procedure and include mandatory attendance of the involved employees for recognized traumatic incidents or events that agency leadership or the Incident Commander deem appropriate.

- The CISD is a guided discussion of a traumatic event in which the participants freely discuss their cognitive, physical, emotional and behavioral reactions to a traumatic event.
- Team Members provide support, guidance and information on stress management and recovery from distress.
- CISDs are generally conducted two to three days after an incident has occurred and are managed by the Team Leader or the Statewide Team Coordinator with the assistance of CISM Team Members.
- CISDs are coordinated to facilitate attendance by all the personnel involved in the traumatic event.
- Post-CISM Response - Upon completion of any CISM activation, Team Members shall complete a CISM after-action report.

Members requiring long-term counseling or other mental health support such as psychotherapy are encouraged to contact their primary medical care provider or participate in the state of Florida's Employee Assistance Program. EAP offers a range of free benefits and services to all state agency employees and their dependents to manage everyday challenges or significant life events. EAP offers counseling and legal, financial, fitness/wellness and family

caregiving information and resources. Members are made aware of these free services through posters in FWC office common areas and a monthly e-newsletter.

Appendix

Aetna Discount Program

Inside —

- Gym memberships
- Weight-loss programs
- Eyewear and exams
- Massage and more

www.aetna.com

Save money on getting and staying in shape

Fitness Discounts

There are many reasons to get fit

Here are just a few. You'll look and feel better. You can also lower your risks for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes ... even depression.

And with fitness discounts, you can save, too. Just for taking good care of yourself.

Through GlobalFit®, you can:

- Save on gym memberships
- Save on treadmills, ellipticals and more
- Try an at-home weight-loss program
- Get health coaching to stop smoking, lower stress and more

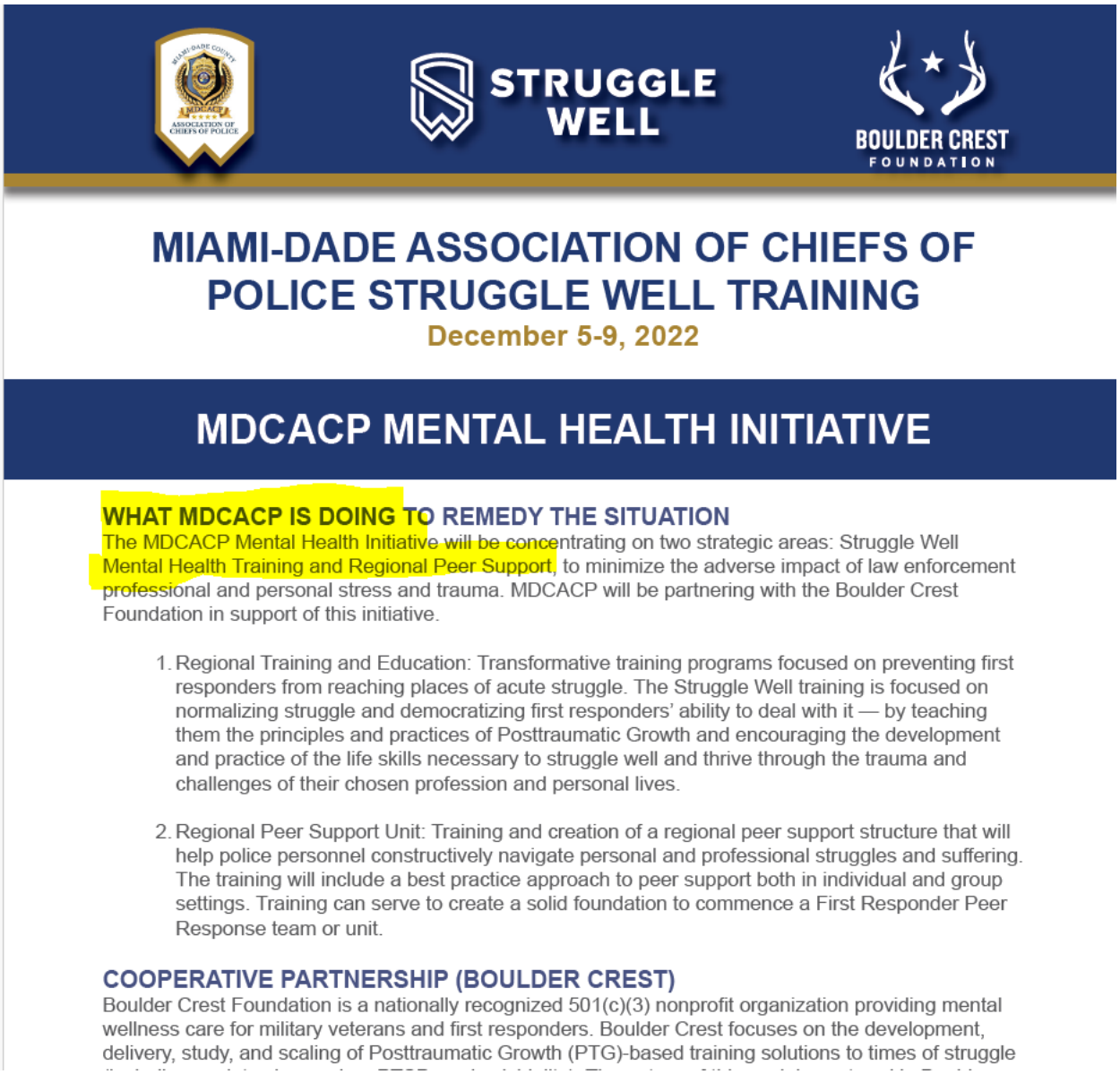
You get these discounts at no extra cost

They are available to you as part of your Aetna health benefits and insurance plan. Family members may be able to take advantage of them, too.

Plus, it's easy to get started. Once you're an Aetna member, just sign up at **www.globalfit.com/fitness**. Or call **1-800-298-7800**.

Try a gym for free

You can get a free guest pass at most gyms. It's a great way to check out the gym culture, services and equipment before you sign up. To get yours, visit **www.globalfit.com/fitness**.



ACTION: Suicide Prevention Month

DP Post, Dennis

To _DLE_Majors; _DLE_Colonels; Schissler, Divida; Jones, Christopher; Schremser, Beth; Clemons, Paul; Ahlers, Jacob; Albert, Michael; Anderson, Casey; Bratton, Robert; Caraker, Joshua; **+21 others**

Cc Parrish, Carollyn; Kihei, Scott

Reply | Reply All | Forward

Fri 9/2/2022 6:33 AM

Suicide-Prevention-Month-2022_22-0901.pdf 391 KB

All,

Please read and **share** this very important information pamphlet on Suicide with all your staff. This was sent to us by Director Steve Outlaw at the Florida Public Safety Institute. As you are aware, September is ***Suicide Awareness month*** and this information may be helpful to all of us knowing and understanding some of warning signs.

One key to mitigating this tragedy is to be humble, willing, and able to have a conversation. Many of us have known someone who died by suicide. In hindsight, we may have wondered what we missed or what behavior we discounted. We should all turn our hindsight into foresight and have a conversation with someone exhibiting concerning signs

Thanks,

Major Dennis Post
Training Center Director, Law Enforcement Academy
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Suicide is a critical public health issue and remains a leading cause of death in the United States. September is National Suicide Prevention Month with Suicide Prevention Awareness week being September 4th – 10th. We acknowledge this month annually across the country for creating suicide awareness and providing resources for the prevention of this far too common tragedy.

Given that some first responders may be more likely to be a part of groups in the U.S. already at greater risk for suicide, compounded with stressors both on and off the job, suicide awareness and prevention among our public safety communities remains a priority.

Peer support is a tremendous strength and protective factor for preventing suicide in the first responder community. In fact, connectedness, belonging, and a sense of purpose are strong deterrents against suicide. September is a time to continue to bring awareness to this issue and an opportunity to continue checking in with your brothers and sisters. Below are some of the warning signs and behaviors associated with someone considering suicide, including signs that may go unnoticed among first responders. This list is not exhaustive.

Kepro | EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Fitness for Life

Each January fitness centers find themselves at their busiest, as people recommit to their fitness goals. As the year goes on, gyms return to their pre-new year's levels due to people abandoning their plans. Given this well-documented phenomenon, how can you avoid being one of the dropouts?

Typically, our biggest barriers to accomplishing our fitness goals tend to be mental. Try the following strategies to help you stay motivated:

- **Choose an activity you enjoy.** Finding something you can look forward to doing increases your chances of sticking with it in the long run.
- **Finding a social support team that encourages you.** These would also be people you could complain to when you don't feel like exercising, as well as keeping you motivated and holding you accountable when you want to quit.

December 13th

MLE Live Monthly Webinar Series

Personal Fitness for Life

Date: 12/13/2023
Time: 1:30PM to 2:30PM EST

This session seeks to help participants appreciate the physical and mental health dividends of consistent exercise and a healthy diet; learn to make them an unfailing part of your daily routine by recognizing the obstacles to success and developing personal strategies to overcome them.

Our information, services and support programs are here for you with 24/7 access to help when you need it.

Kepro

Department of MANAGEMENT SERVICES
State Group Insurance

Help can be a call or click away!

1.833.746.8337

Register for this event at:
MyLifeExpert.com

OR

Scan Here to Download:

When creating a new account, use company code: FLORIDA

ALWAYS CONFIDENTIAL