Customized Offerings for Mitigating & Preventing Agency-Specific Stress (COMPASS) Toolkit

A guide to data collection and program implementation for supporting healthy organizations

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COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
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Letter from the Director of the COPS Office

Colleagues:

As a society, we demand a lot from our police officers. In return we are asked to provide them with the tools they need to do their jobs safely and competently. Among these tools are the resources and knowhow to maintain and strengthen their own well-being. An unwell police officer creates risk not only for themselves and their family but also for the community they are sworn to serve. Our communities deserve professional police services, and professional policing requires a healthy workforce. For modern police leaders, the challenge is often identifying how best to provide appropriate physical and mental health services to their officers.

The Customized Offerings for Mitigating and Preventing Agency-Specific Stress (COMPASS) Toolkit, developed by RTI International in cooperation with law enforcement agencies from throughout the country, can help leaders meet this challenge. The toolkit is designed to identify the stressors affecting officers and staff the most, help leaders select and implement a targeted solution, assess the impact of changes made, and create a forward-facing sustainability plan. This is an important resource for law enforcement leaders in their efforts to support their workforces and keep all of our communities safe.

Sincerely,

Hugh T. Clements, Jr.
Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

Acknowledgments

Introduction

AGENCY LEADERS UNDERSTAND that many aspects of police work can be stressful, yet few have the tools needed to identify which stressors are impacting officers the most and how to address them. With this toolkit, you will be able to

- identify the stressors affecting your officers and staff the most;

- select a targeted solution;

- implement that solution;

- assess the impact of the changes you make;

- create a sustainability plan.

Law enforcement officers often experience extreme stress, which is in many ways different from stress experienced in other professions. Police officers are regularly exposed to violence, human suffering, death, and unpredictable and uncontrollable events (Finn 2000; Sapolsky 2004) and maintain nonstandard work schedules (Barnes et al. 2011; Kantermann et al. 2010; Presser 2003; Wight, Raley, and Bianchi 2008).

While efforts to address police officer mental health have often focused on exposure to traumatic incidents, research has shown that organizational stressors—challenges related to agencies' internal culture and practices—are also detrimental. Negative health impacts of work-related stress include fatigue, insomnia, depression and anxiety, and a range of psychosomatic issues such as lower back pain and headaches (Dahlgren, Kecklund, and Åkerstedt 2005; Melchior et al. 2007). Stress also affects health through its relationship to harmful behaviors, such as increased alcohol use and smoking, lack of physical exercise (Melamed et al. 2006), and higher-fat diets (Ng and Jeffery 2003).

Job-related stress has been associated with more on-the-job injuries (Nakata et al. 2006), increased absenteeism (Hardy, Woods, and Wall 2003), and increased personnel turnover (Mathieu and Zajac 1990). Work-related stressors correspond with negative emotions, such as frustration and anger, which increase the likelihood of interpersonal problems with coworkers (Chen and Spector 1992). The effects of stress can also affect police-community interactions; officers who experience more stress-related burnout report more accepting attitudes toward the use of violence (Kop, Euwema, and Schaufeli 1999). Stress-induced emotions and fatigue are linked to disengagement with the community by the police and damage police-community relationships (Basinska, Wiciak, and Dåderman 2014). If left unaddressed, chronic work-related stress can influence officers' well-being, family life, and interactions with community members and ultimately the safety of the neighborhoods they serve.

Most agencies have some offerings to support health and wellness. But a drawback of many available resources is their failure to incorporate important contextual factors. Law enforcement agencies differ greatly in the challenges they face because of factors such as agency size, culture, political environment, and the relationship between police and professional staff. Therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to help agencies support their officers in dealing with their unique stressors. Even within agencies, individual officers' experiences will vary greatly based on their assignments and roles in the department. For a wellness and stress-reduction solution to be applicable to law enforcement, it must recognize these differences among and within agencies.

To address this gap, RTI International and the National Policing Institute, with funding from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) Community Policing Development program, developed a process that law enforcement leaders can use to better understand and respond to the greatest sources of stress in their own departments. The purpose of this publication is to provide agency leadership with step-by-step guidance on how to identify which aspects of work are causing officers and staff (including supervisors) the most stress and implement targeted solutions to make improvements in those specific areas. This guide provides instructions on steps needed to do this effectively, including how to

- listen to the needs and experiences of officers and staff in different roles;

- understand the root causes of the stressors experienced;

- identify actionable areas for improvement;

- implement meaningful changes;

- assess the effectiveness of these efforts.

Before taking any of these steps, it is essential to identify agency champions who will lead the coordination of these efforts.

Efforts to improve organizational policies and practices often fail not because of lack of interest or unimportance but simply because other priorities take precedence or staff do not have the capacity to move initiatives forward. Consider the following when identifying champions:

- **Start with at least two champions.** Having multiple champions ensures that the responsibility for implementation does not fall on one person. Be prepared to bring on more champions after identifying the challenge to be addressed.

- **Select champions who have good rapport with command staff and other agency leaders.** Initiatives to improve policies and practices will require leadership buy-in and support.

- **Engage champions who are well respected among a broad cross-section of staff.** You will collect input from officers and staff at all levels, so you want to have champions who are trusted and respected. Consider including champions from among both sworn and professional staff.

- **Make sure champions have time to lead this effort.** Even the most motivated champions will make little progress if they cannot dedicate enough time to the effort.

- **Consider soliciting help from outside consultants.** A local university or independent consultant may be helpful in implementing this guidance. Their involvement may be useful for soliciting more honest feedback and in evaluating effectiveness.

Baseline Assessment

ONCE CHAMPIONS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED, the next step is to administer the baseline survey (appendix I). The survey is a low-burden yet comprehensive assessment that measures stress across 10 areas, including physical health and safety, staff fatigue and overwork, leadership issues, work and family conflict, and anti-police sentiment. The assessment also includes questions about health behaviors and indicators: what officers and staff are already doing to reduce stress in their lives, and how much stress they experience.

The survey identifies challenges affecting officers and staff, giving you the information you need to find the targeted solutions that are most likely to be effective. Keep in mind the following considerations for the baseline assessment:

- Use the baseline survey to identify the key drivers of health, wellness, and stress within the organization.

- Survey data collection can be challenging; it is important to identify personnel who can conduct the survey and analyze resulting data. In some cases, it may be beneficial to engage outside research or consulting firms to complete this assessment.

- The survey should be supported by executives and other influential staff.

- Survey data can be combined with interviews and focus groups to better understand challenges.

Follow these steps to ensure successful data collection.

1. Communicate to staff why their input is needed (you want to understand how all officers and staff are affected by stress) and how it will be used (to inform organizational changes to reduce stress).

2. Assure staff that responses will be anonymous and confidential.

3. Send the survey invitation and reminders from the chief executive. Ensure supervisors are aware of the survey and its importance, and have them encourage staff to participate.

4. Encourage participation from all levels and groups in the agency. Include all ranks and sworn and professional staff.

5. If possible, allow staff time to complete the survey while on-duty to reinforce its importance and support participation.

6. Describe how you will share a summary of the results with all staff.

Determine how the survey will be conducted

There are pros and cons to each method of administering a survey. Table 1 provides information that can help determine the best survey administration method given agency-specific characteristics.

Table 1. Survey administration methods

METHOD	PROS	CONS
Printed	No fees or subscription costs	Manual data entry required Difficult to summarize results
Web-based survey platform	Easier to collect data Automatically generates summary reports May be included with existing software licensing Can see real-time results as they are submitted	Often requires a paid subscription May be more difficult to anonymize

To encourage participation and honest feedback, the survey should be conducted in a way that is anonymous and reduces the chance of identification of survey participants. Participants should be able to share wellness concerns or information that is critical of the department without fear of being personally identified. Ensuring that participation is anonymous is an important way of encouraging participation. The most reliable approach to survey data collection may be to use an online platform, which can reduce the amount of data entry required later and allow for reviewing data in a more standardized form.

Prepare the survey and support material

Develop an outreach strategy that considers organizational context. In doing so, identify who will send the survey invitation, the language around that invitation, and how many reminders will be issued. We recommend the chief executive send the survey invitation. You should modify the survey instrument only with caution: Although it should be adjusted to fit agency-specific characteristics, certain aspects should not be changed. Things that can be adjusted include the following:

- Customizing the text to match your organization, data collection, and partners. See appendix I for survey content that can be customized based on agency specific characteristics.

- Response options for current job title or organizational role and current rank.

Based on the number of staff, collecting demographic data may increase the chance that a respondent could be identified. Smaller agencies should not ask these questions if it would uniquely identify survey participants.

In general, do not modify the scale items. Scales are composed of sets of questions that have been validated in existing research. Modification of these items could lead to unreliable results. Also refrain from reordering the instrument sections. The instrument has been developed to minimize response bias. The survey is divided into three modules, described in table 2. They are administered together at the same time.

Table 2. Staff survey overview

MODULE	NUMBER OF ITEMS	PURPOSE
Module 1. Work-related stressors	52	Identify the operational, organizational, and current event stressors that are most impacting officer and professional staff health and wellness. Questions in this module will be the primary method of identifying a health and wellness focus area.
Module 2. Current health behaviors and stress management techniques	29	Questions explore what staff are currently doing to manage their health and wellness. This information is used to prioritize those focus areas and strategies that staff are unable (or not currently able) to address on their own.
Module 3. Health and wellness indicators	23	Primarily used for understanding the impact of the implemented strategy. Differences between the baseline and outcome survey will help determine if the strategy was effective at reducing stress or improving health and wellness indicators.
Demographics	13	Demographic data can be used to help contextualize findings in other areas of the survey.

Distribute the survey

If using a paper survey, take care to ensure that everyone has access to the document. Distributing surveys during routine briefings or during the beginning of trainings has been effective in some agencies. A person will also need to be designated to receive completed surveys and enter data into a digital format. In the simplest form, this may be done in commonly available spreadsheet software.

Web-based survey platforms provide multiple ways to distribute the baseline survey. Surveys can either be distributed via email directly from the survey platform or through a generic link sent to all participants. There are some benefits to sending the survey invitation directly from the survey platform; for example, it typically facilitates tracking response rates and contacting nonrespondents to promote participation. Distributing the survey via email can better protect participant anonymity but may make it more difficult to follow up with nonrespondents.

Prepare and analyze the data

The type and scope of analysis can vary based on the agency size and available resources. The survey has been designed to minimize the amount of processing and analysis needed. The most important information can be derived by calculating averages across survey questions within each set of module 1 (work-related stressors; 52 items) questions.

Module 1 includes items to assess operational stressors, organizational stressors, and current issues in policing. Items in module 1 identify the top focus areas that should be considered. Items in module 2 help identify focus areas that can be deprioritized because staff are already addressing the challenge on their own. Module 3 data are primarily used for outcome analysis. (See table 3 on page 8.)

Table 3. Module analysis strategy

MODULE	ANALYTIC STRATEGY
Module 1. Work-related stressors	Calculate means for each question. Rank each mean question score within its respective scale. Identify the five top-ranking items in each scale for further consideration.
Module 2. Current health behaviors and stress management techniques	Calculate means for each question. Use highest scoring items to deprioritize areas where staff are already addressing health and wellness concerns.
Module 3. Health and wellness indicators	Calculate means for each question. Analysis is typically reserved until after the second wave of data collection.
Demographics	Can be used for subset analyses and non-response assessment. Does not typically require separate analysis.

Identify the focus area

To identify a focus area, examine survey responses to three sets of questions: (1) operational stressors (stressors inherent to the nature of police work), (2) organizational stressors (stressors resulting from the policies, practices, and culture of the agency), and (3) current issues in policing. These 52 items are included under module 1 (appendix I). Flag the five items that have the highest average scores in each scale; these items are the aspects of work that sworn and professional staff have reported as causing the most stress.

USING YOUR DATA
STEP 1—IDENTIFY THE TOP STRESSORS IN EACH SCALE

Look at the means (average scores) for each item in the organizational stressors scale. Rank them from highest to lowest. In this example, Inconsistent leadership style, Staff shortages, Leaders overemphasize the negatives, Dealing with supervisors, and Lack of resources are the top five items.

ITEM	MEAN
Inconsistent leadership style	5.2
Staff shortages	5.1
Leaders overemphasize the negatives (e.g., supervisor evaluations, public complaints)	4.7
Dealing with supervisors	4.7
Lack of resources	4.4
Bureaucratic red tape	4.0
Feeling like you always have to prove yourself to the organization	3.9
Inadequate equipment	3.8
Excessive administrative duties	3.7
Dealing with coworkers	3.6
Unequal sharing of work responsibilities	3.6
The feeling that different rules apply to different people (e.g., favoritism)	3.5
Lack of training on new equipment	3.5
Constant change in policy/legislature	3.1
Being held accountable for things beyond your control	3.1
Internal investigations	2.8
Too much computer work	2.6
Dealing with the court system	2.5
Perceived pressure to volunteer free time	2.4
If you are sick or injured your coworkers seem to look down on you	1.9

Repeat this ranking and identification process for the operational stressors and current issues stressors scales.

After identifying the top stressors in each scale, you can compile a list of all top stressors, which will give you a more comprehensive picture of the aspects of work that are causing the most stress for your officers and staff.

USING YOUR DATA
STEP 2—LIST ALL TOP STRESSORS

Compile your list of top organizational, operational, and current issues stressors, which will be used to determine your focus area. Using the example data, here are the top 15 items across all areas:

SCALE	ITEM	MEAN
Organizational	Inconsistent leadership style	5.2
	Staff shortages	5.1
	Leaders overemphasize the negatives	4.7
	Dealing with supervisors	4.7
	Lack of resources	4.4
Operational	Lack of understanding from family and friends about your work	5.3
	Fatigue (e.g., shift work, overtime)	5.1
	Friends/family feel the effects of the stigma associated with your job	4.6
	Overtime demands	4.6
	Shift work	4.3
Current issues	Negative or anti-police content posted on social media	5.2
	Negative or anti-police sentiment in the community	5.2
	Fast pace of change in the profession	5.0
	Understaffing	5.0
	Movement to defund the police	4.6

Each item falls under one of 10 focus areas (table 4). The COMPASS Resource Guide (detailed in the next section) provides information about and access to several resources that can be used to address each area.

Table 4. Areas of work-related stress

FOCUS AREA	DESCRIPTION
1. Perceived favoritism and leadership issues	Organizational leadership can greatly impact occupational and organizational stress. Leaders who show favoritism or inconsistent leadership (even unintentionally) can increase stress and negative feelings experienced by workers. The COMPASS resources for addressing this issue focus on actions leaders can take to mitigate these stressors and tools employees can use to better cope with these challenges when they arise.
2. Internal pressures	Work-related stress can result from a variety of internal pressures, including the need to constantly prove oneself, perceived pressure to continually go above and beyond one's core responsibilities, and pressure to volunteer one's free time to work-related activities and tasks. These resources can help staff manage internal pressures and establish strategies for setting boundaries.
3. Interpersonal issues	Policing has been associated with increased interpersonal conflicts at work and at home. These resources provide support for managing conflicts with coworkers and maintaining healthy relationships outside of work.
4. Limited resources	Limited resources—including staffing shortages and lack of necessary resources, training, or equipment—can create stressful working conditions. Staff may feel unsupported or undervalued. These resources provide tools for managing stress related to limited resources.
5. Negative or anti-police sentiment	Anti-police sentiment can cause staff to feel disliked by or disconnected from the communities they serve. This can also take the form of political or community scrutiny of job roles. These resources provide suggestions for managing the challenges caused by perceived anti-police sentiment.
6. Physical health and safety issues	Policing is associated with a variety of physical health and safety issues, including difficulty maintaining healthy eating and exercise routines, physical danger, and occupational injury or illness. These resources provide support for maintaining good physical health, adapting to the work environment, and recovering from job-related injuries or illness.

FOCUS AREA	DESCRIPTION
7. Administrative challenges	Stress can develop when staff feel overly constrained by administrative aspects of the job, such as feeling held back by bureaucratic red tape or having to frequently adapt to changing policy and legislature. These resources provide guidance to leaders and officers on how to mitigate the impacts of administrative challenges.
8. Staff fatigue or overwork	Law enforcement agencies across the country are facing higher workload and critical staffing shortages. These factors can lead to persistent staff fatigue and a sense of being overworked. Although issues effecting workload and staffing may be beyond agencies' control, these resources can help staff cope with fatigue and other issues related to workload.
9. Traumatic events	Work-related traumatic events—such as shootings, domestic violence, and deaths—and the aftermath of these events can cause significant stress and mental health challenges for officers. These resources support officer resilience, coping, and recovery after experiencing traumatic events.
10. Work/life balance	Careers in policing can make it difficult to balance work and non-work demands, including family, social, and community life outside of work. These resources provide support and strategies for managing and improving the interplay between work and home life.

Appendix II (Mapping Survey Items onto Focus Areas) links top stressors from the survey to corresponding focus areas. Here, most of the highest-scoring items fall under anti-police sentiment, limited resources, fatigue/overwork, and favoritism/leadership.

If more than one focus area has been identified (as in our example data), the next step is to select one for prioritization. It may be tempting to address multiple issues at once, and many of the resources in this guide are applicable for addressing multiple types of stress. However, selecting one primary focus area will help ensure that the scope of the efforts is manageable. Once the initial focus area has been addressed, other areas can be tackled by using the same process. In refining the selection of the top focus areas, consider the following questions:

- **What initiatives are already underway that are designed to address one or more of these focus areas? How well are they working?** Select a focus area that is not yet being addressed, could use additional efforts, or could be improved. In the example data, most of the top stressors are related to **anti-police sentiment, limited resources, fatigue/overwork,** and **favoritism/leadership**. Suppose an agency with those top stressors is already implementing a comprehensive new program for improving community relations. It would be recommended that the agency select one of the other three areas (**limited resources, fatigue/overwork,** or **favoritism/leadership**) for this effort to maximize impact.

- **Which focus area would resonate most strongly with staff?** Consider what officers and staff have been saying recently. If you have heard your officers talk about promotion decisions being unfair or feeling stressed because of their supervisors, you know that leadership issues are a problem you need to address, and that focus area will likely resonate with staff.

- **Are there constraints that would affect your ability to address one or more focus areas (e.g., budget, existing policies or practices)?** Think about the kinds of changes you can make given internal and external constraints. Budgets and staffing are limited, and some changes may require negotiation with unions or local government. These limitations do not mean those changes are not worth making, but it is advantageous to select a focus area where your agency has the authority to make near-term changes. Strategies that require longer-term planning should be paired with short-term changes to ensure staff buy-in. In the example data, if acquiring additional resources is largely dependent on negotiations with the union and city government, it may be more fruitful to focus efforts on the area of **fatigue/overwork** or **favoritism/leadership**. Any issues causing significant stress to officers and staff that are outside the agency's control should be communicated to executive leadership, which will ensure that agency leaders are aware of these stressors' impacts and can prioritize actions to alleviate them (e.g., through negotiations, participation in national efforts) to the extent possible.

USING YOUR DATA
STEP 3—MAP STRESSORS ONTO FOCUS AREAS

Use appendix II to identify the focus area associated with each item.

SCALE	TOP STRESSOR ITEM	FOCUS AREA
Organizational	Inconsistent leadership style	Favoritism/leadership
	Staff shortages	Limited resources
	Leaders overemphasize the negatives	Favoritism/leadership
	Dealing with supervisors	Favoritism/leadership
	Lack of resources	Limited resources
Operational	Lack of understanding from family and friends about your work	Interpersonal issues
	Fatigue (e.g., shift work, overtime)	Fatigue/overwork
	Friends/family feel effects of the stigma associated with your job	Anti-police sentiment
	Overtime demands	Fatigue/overwork
	Shift work	Fatigue/overwork
Current issues	Negative or anti-police content posted on social media	Anti-police sentiment
	Negative or anti-police sentiment in the community	Anti-police sentiment
	Fast pace of change in the profession	Administrative challenges
	Understaffing	Limited resources
	Movement to defund the police	Anti-police sentiment

In our example, the items map onto the following focus areas:

- Anti-police sentiment: 4 stressors
- Favoritism/leadership: 3 stressors
- Limited resources: 3 stressors
- Fatigue/overwork: 3 stressors
- Interpersonal issues: 1 stressor
- Administrative challenges: 1 stressor

- **Are officers and staff already addressing some health and wellness challenges through their own behaviors?**

  – Consider prioritizing focus areas that staff are not already addressing on their own. The goal of the agency's strategy should be to help staff with the issues they have not been able to address on their own or that require a response at the organizational level.

  – Use the health and wellness scale from module 2 to see which behaviors officers and staff are already engaged in. Following the example, at this point we have eliminated **anti-police sentiment** (because there is another agency initiative already underway to address it) and **limited resources** (outside the agency's control). We are deciding between **fatigue/overwork** and **favoritism/leadership** issues as our area of focus. The scores on the health and wellness items can show what officers and staff are already doing on their own to address those two areas.

According to responses to health and wellness questions, it appears that officers and staff are already focusing on getting good quality sleep. There are no health behaviors that directly address leadership issues, but officers and staff are less engaged in behaviors that could help them cope with leadership-related stress at work (e.g., seeking emotional support).

Based on this guidance, the agency would likely choose **favoritism/leadership** issues as its focus area. It was reported as a top source of stress in the survey, is not yet being addressed by other agency initiatives, and is an area that would likely resonate with officers and staff that is within the agency's control. Further, based on the health and wellness survey items, it is not an area officers and staff are addressing on their own.

Now that a focus area has been selected, the next step is to gather more information about the issue to understand where problems arise, how they affect sworn and professional staff, and potential solutions.

Start by looking at responses to the open-ended question on the survey. The number of responses related to your selected focus area will vary. Respondents sometimes skip open-ended question if answers are not required, or they may elaborate on several issues. Yet any insights can be a useful first step to understanding more about the focus area issue. Scan the data and highlight any responses seemingly related to the focus area—in this example, per-ceived favoritism and inconsistent leadership.

This additional context can serve as a good starting point for understanding why and how the stressor is affecting staff and inform the development of interview questions, described in the following sections.

USING YOUR DATA
STEP 4—EXAMINE CURRENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS BEHAVIORS

Look at the means (average responses) on items related to potential areas of focus. Items 2, 3, and 8 are related to sleep (fatigue/overwork). Although no individual behaviors would address leadership issues directly, items 6, 11, and 12 are behaviors that could be used to cope with stress caused by leadership issues.

I FOCUS ON . . .	MEAN
1. Eating healthy (vegetables, fruits, whole grains, high-quality protein)	3.0
2. Getting enough rest/sleep	3.3
3. Getting undisrupted sleep	3.1
4. Getting regular physical exams	2.4
5. Physical training or exercise	2.8
6. Quiet relaxation	2.7
7. Reducing alcohol use	2.7
8. Reducing caffeine intake (coffee, energy drinks, soda)	3.1
9. Reducing or quitting smoking	2.7
10. Maintaining a healthy weight	3.0
11. Seeking emotional support (clergy, friends, family, peers, mental health professionals)	2.4
12. Stress reduction activities	2.7

Responses to these questions are as follows: 1 = not at all, 2 = infrequently, 3 = frequently, 4 = always. A score of 3 or above would indicate that overall, officers and staff are frequently or always focusing on that health behavior.

USING YOUR DATA
STEP 5—LOOK AT OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

Read all responses to the open-ended question, "Please tell us about the greatest source of stress in your job." Highlight any that are related to the selected focus area – in this case, perceived favoritism and inconsistent leadership.

- Lack of support from community members is demoralizing.

- We're all burned out from working so much—understaffing is a major problem.

- I haven't gotten the training opportunities I need to get ahead. I keep getting passed over.

- My schedule and work hours make it hard to spend time with my family and friends.

- My sergeant is really close with other officers in my unit but doesn't seem to care much about me.

- We're asked to deal with so much these days. It's overwhelming.

- I try to share ideas for how to improve things, but no one listens. Other people's ideas go right to the top.

- The process for promotion is really unfair. Leadership basically just picks whoever they like.

- We need better technology and equipment.

- We used to have good relationships with the community. Now there's a lot of conflict.

- I'm always exhausted. When I get home, I don't have energy for anything.

- We need more resources for recruiting and hiring. We can't solve anything until we have more people.

- The same people always get picked for the good assignments. It's just based on who your friends are.

Gather additional data

While examining the open-ended responses to the survey is a good starting point, you should also gather additional information from sworn and professional staff. This process will identify context you need to inform the development of your strategy. Staff interviews are a lower-burden method for understanding nuances associated with a stressor. Whenever possible, interview a diverse group of individuals in a variety of roles across the agency. It is critical to establish trust and ensure anonymity for participants; it should be clear to interviewees that participation is voluntary and won't impact their employment status. This may be difficult for some agencies depending on organizational culture and levels of trust within the organization. If you ask for volunteers and receive none, move on to the next step.

Staff may be more candid with an external interviewer. Alternatively, participants may not feel comfortable sharing feedback on sensitive topics with an individual who may be foreign to the agency and their work environment. Examples of external interviewers include staff from research groups and universities, government staff from other agencies, or third-party consultants.

An interview guide will standardize discussion and reduce bias or leading questions. An example of an interview guide for the focus area of perceived favoritism and inconsistent leadership can be found in appendix IV. Interview questions will vary depending on the type of stressor identified, but three general questions should be asked in all stakeholder interviews: (1) Can the interviewee provide examples of the stressor in the workplace? (2) How does the stressor affect the interviewee? and (3) What can be done to mitigate the stress?

Take notes during the interviews to ensure you capture the interviewees' thoughts. If interviewees are comfortable with it, you can also record the interviews and then take notes from the recordings. Be sure to paraphrase back to the employee to ensure you understand their thoughts correctly. This repetition lets them know you care and are listening, which is a great way to build trust in the process. If you do record the interview, be sure to delete the recordings as soon as you have taken notes from them to protect interviewees' confidentiality. Do not record the participants' names on the notes. However, you may wish to note their rank or role and tenure with the agency for context if this will not reveal their identity.

Once you have notes from all the interviews, the best way to analyze the data is to develop categories or themes in the responses.

USING YOUR DATA
STEP 6—INTERPRET YOUR INTERVIEW DATA

Examine interview responses one question at a time. In this example, the first question would be, "Can you provide examples of stress caused by favoritism or inconsistent leadership in the agency?"

Look for commonalities or themes in the responses and group them accordingly. Some responses may contain multiple themes.

1. We used to have good morale and feel like a team. Everyone cared about each other. Now, our supervisor hardly ever asks how we're doing or what's going on in our lives. We just get straight to work when we arrive and leave when we're done. There's no camaraderie.*

2. Our process for promotions feels unfair. You need certain trainings and assignments to qualify, but not everyone gets access to those opportunities.[†]

3. I've come up with some good ideas for changes we can make to our work processes. I tell my supervisor, but it never goes anywhere. It feels like other people's ideas are implemented, but not mine.[‡]

4. Recently, I had to take a few days off to deal with a family emergency. Instead of checking to see if I was ok, my supervisor kept asking when I'd be back to work.*

5. Executive leadership says they have an open-door policy and that you can come to them with questions or concerns anytime. If you go talk to them, they will listen, but they never follow up on what you say or make any changes.[‡]

6. My supervisor often gets lunch with some of the other guys on my unit, but a few of us are never invited. He gets to know them as people and gives advice when they're having problems – we don't get any of that.* I also have a problem with how promotions are done here. There's no transparency around how the decisions are made.[†]

7. I had another child recently. My supervisor and other leaders assume I must be too focused on my family to care about advancing in my career. That's not the case, but I'm being looked over for training and growth opportunities because of it.[†]

8. I've tried to get more resources for the officers on my unit, but it's like no one cares about my requests. Night shift always gets overlooked.[‡]

In this example, the responses fall under three themes:

* Lack of support from supervisors

† Perceived unfairness of career advancement opportunities

‡ Input not being used or valued

When reporting on these findings, it is useful to include real quotes to contextualize the results. However, take care not to identify any single individual.

Select and Tailor a Strategy

NOW THAT YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED THE FOCUS AREA and collected additional information, it is time to identify a solution. This guide provides information about and access to several options for addressing each focus area through the COMPASS Resource Guide (appendix III). A range of resources have been identified from 15-minute podcasts to all-day trainings. The items in the COMPASS Resource Guide have been systematically developed by scientists and experienced law enforcement practitioners and vetted by RTI and the COPS Office. The programs and strategies identified in the toolkit are free.

The COMPASS Resource Guide is organized by focus area. The first page of the COMPASS Resource Guide provides the list of 10 focus areas each corresponding with a unique icon. For number 1, the icon is Leadership and the focus area is Perceived Favoritism and Leadership Issues. Clicking on the Leadership icon jumps to a table that lists the potential resources and tools that can be implemented to address focus 1: Perceived Favoritism/Leadership Issues (figure 1 on page 22). The table shows the name of each resource, the resource format (e.g., document, training, webinar) and its target(s) (e.g., individuals, supervisors, the agency as a whole), and which of the other 10 focus areas each can address.

Figure 1. Strategies to address perceived favoritism or leadership issues

Focus Area 1: Perceived Favoritism and Leadership Issues

The Problem: Organizational leadership can greatly impact occupational and organizational stress. Leaders who show favoritism or inconsistent leadership (even unintentionally) can increase stress and negative feelings experienced by workers. The resources below address both actions leaders can take to mitigate these stressors, and tools employees can use to better cope with these challenges when they arise.

Leadership

Click on the resource title to learn more

RESOURCES	TYPE	PRESSURE	CONFLICT	RESOURCES	ANTI-POLICE	HEALTH	ADMIN	FATIGUE	TRAUMA	WORK/LIFE
Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 4: First-Line Supervisors)	Document for supervisors	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 5: Early Intervention Systems)	Document for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 6: Internal Affairs)	Document for agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Improving Organizational Fairness to Reduce Stress and Increase Work Satisfaction	PowerPoint for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Toolkit for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
Law Enforcement Agency and Officer Resilience Training Program	Training for individuals and agency-wide changes	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
VALOR Executive Leadership Workshop	Training for supervisors	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○

List continued on next page.

Clicking on the name of a resource in the table jumps to details of the resource including a description of the content, the estimated time required, and the developers or source. For example, clicking on The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit – Tools for Law Enforcement as shown in the table in figure 1 would jump to additional information on this webinar (see figure 2).

Figure 2. The vicarious trauma toolkit – Tools for law enforcement

Focus Area 1: Perceived Favoritism and Leadership Issues

The Problem: Organizational leadership can greatly impact occupational and organizational stress. Leaders who show favoritism or inconsistent leadership (even unintentionally) can increase stress and negative feelings experienced by workers. The resources below address both actions leaders can take to mitigate these ... use to better cope with

The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement

TOOLKIT HOME

Best for Addressing...

- Leadership
- Pressure
- Conflict
- Resources
- Health
- Admin

Estimated Time: Varies   **Type: Multiple resources**   OVC Toolkit

The Tools for Law Enforcement section of the Vicarious Trauma Toolkit provides a suite of resources in the areas of: (1) leadership and mission, (2) management and supervision, (3) employee empowerment and work environment, (4) training and professional development, and (5) staff health and wellness. Agencies can choose which tools and resources to use based on needs, interest, and bandwidth.

Developer/Source: Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)

Year Resource Developed: 2017   **Designed for: Individuals, Supervisors, Agency-wide**

... SO ADDRESSES...

	RESOURCES	ANTI-POLICE	HEALTH	ADMIN	FATIGUE	TRAUMA	WORK/LIFE
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Work Satisfaction — agency-wide changes							
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement — Toolkit for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	● ●	●	○	●	●	●	● ●
Law Enforcement ... and Officer Resilience ... Program — Training for individuals and agency-wide changes	● ●	○	○	○	○	○	○ ●
VALOR Executive Leadership Workshop — Training for supervisors	○ ○	○	○	○	●	○	○ ○

List continued on next page.

Two key dimensions to consider when selecting a strategy are who will primarily be responsible for implementation and who will be affected by the strategy. Strategies can affect different levels of the organization.

- **Individual.** These strategies are primarily focused on changing the actions or behaviors of each person involved. An example of an individual-level strategy would be a self-guided training designed to improve sleep quality.

- **Group.** These strategies may primarily affect a subset of department personnel. For example, a strategy designed to improve agency transparency and fairness may mostly act on first-line supervisors and how they interact with the people that report to them.

- **Agency-wide.** These strategies tend to act on larger issues, policies, or resources that affect everyone in the organization. An agency-wide change may be, for example, the implementation of a policy change related to promotions or accountability.

- **Family.** Some resources are designed for family members of officers and staff in law enforcement. These resources can help them manage their own stress as well as increase their capacity to support their family member in policing.

These categories are not mutually exclusive, and strategies may work across multiple levels of the organization.

To decide which resource to use, solicit input from leaders and sworn and professional staff who know about different policies, programs, and practices related to the focus area. Also include officers and staff who have requested or participated in changes related to the focus area. Bring in staff from different ranks and roles within the department where appropriate. Review the resource options together and make selection(s) based on interest and capacity.

Depending on the focus area, it may be appropriate to select multiple strategies that can be implemented across a variety of levels. For example, an agency may choose to adopt both an agency-wide and supervisor-level strategy to address the need to reduce perceptions of favoritism. In this way, the problem identified by staff can be addressed on multiple levels.

Regardless of the type of strategy selected, it is important to identify who is primarily responsible for implementation and how the focus of the strategy impacts future steps.

Implementation

THIS SECTION PROVIDES GUIDANCE ON BEST PRACTICES for program implementation. Keep these considerations in mind for maximizing the impact of the strategies selected:

- Be thoughtful about whom you include in your implementation activities and when you conduct them. It is important to be inclusive and to make sure staff have the capacity to contribute.

- Communicate efforts to officers and staff. Remind them that these changes are due to their input (on the survey and in interviews) and that their voices have been heard.

- Explain how planning decisions were made and emphasize that all ideas were discussed and considered. If certain feedback or recommendations from staff are not being incorporated, communicate why.

- Focus on completing and following up on your action plan. This is essential to making meaningful change in your agency.

- Even small changes can have a big impact if they directly target the challenge area. Reinforce the changes and create a sustainability plan to ensure a lasting impact.

Implementation overview—strategies and tools

Implementation steps will vary. Regardless of what is implemented, action planning is central to the implementation of any type of intervention. Action planning organizes each phase of implementation and provides structure to what can initially be a daunting process. Technology can help facilitate virtual, decentralized, asynchronous action planning. Software like Menti (https://www.mentimeter.com/) and Stormboard (https://stormboard.com/home), both of which have free versions, can facilitate interactive action planning. Action planning templates are included in appendix V.

Program implementation can take many forms, but a dedicated program champion who will be engaged in the action planning process from start to finish is necessary in all cases. Program champions must be empowered to meaningfully ensure accountability in both the action planning process and any interventions that are selected for implementation. Program champions do not have to be agency executive staff. Informal leaders or champions should be involved in selecting a training or resource, designing an interactive experience for staff, and delivering the

program or training regardless of whether the agency has selected an internal or external facilitator. Informal leaders or champions need to be supported organizationally to ensure accountability and prevent them from being overly burdened or overworked.

Implementation format and structure

The strategies, trainings, and programs described in the COMPASS Resource Guide come in many formats. It would not be feasible to describe all the considerations associated with every program. This section categorizes trainings into high-level groups focused on the type and format of training or strategy selected. Broadly, these are non-training strategies, in-person or facilitated strategies, or online or self-directed strategies. Key considerations for each of these types are provided.

Considerations for non-training strategies

Some of the strategies in the COMPASS Resource Guide are primarily informational (as opposed to interactive trainings) and are designed to increase understanding of various types of work-related stress and provide suggestions for making workplace improvements in these areas. These resources come in the form of recorded webinars, PDF documents, and self-guided workbooks. It is helpful to watch or read these resources as a first step, but they are only likely to foster meaningful change by following additional steps to put that knowledge into action.

Identifying a working group. For informational resources like webinars and documents, first identify a working group whose members will familiarize themselves with the resource and then create an action plan to help create meaningful changes. Engage at least a small group of four or five staff—potentially more depending on the topic and intended use of the resource. The working group should be composed of officers and staff who have knowledge or interest in the topic, have good rapport with agency leadership and staff, and represent different departments within the agency.

Scheduling a working meeting. The working group should convene to discuss the resource and develop an action plan based on knowledge gained. Set clear expectations before the working meeting; for example, if the resource is a PDF document, clarify whether working group members should read it before the meeting or if it will be reviewed together during the meeting. Determine and communicate the goals of the meeting through an agenda provided to

the group well before the meeting. Depending on the resource selected, length of the initial meeting, and other contextual factors, the goals of the initial working meeting could include the following:

- Discuss the information contained in the resource. Consider the elements of the resource that may be particularly useful given specific agency context.

- Identify additional working group members who should be involved in the action planning process.

- Begin filling out the action planning template.

- Develop a schedule for updating agency leadership on progress and secure resources that may be necessary to proceed.

- Set a meeting schedule for completing the action planning template and for checking in about progress on action items.

- Draft a communication plan to ensure all officers and staff are informed of the changes being made to reduce work-related stress.

Considerations for in-person or facilitated training strategies

In-person or facilitated trainings may be the most reliable way for an agency to ensure that all relevant groups participate in the strategy. In-person trainings are especially useful for group- or agency-wide strategies. Agencies frequently conduct in-person trainings and likely need little additional guidance in this area. However, a few issues are worth noting. In particular, the strategies identified to address health and wellness issues may be substantially different from more traditional law enforcement training.

Facilitators or trainers. Broadly, there are two types of facilitators: (1) internal and (2) external. Benefits associated with internal facilitators include no additional costs, easy integration into existing training, familiarity with the organizational context and culture, and a reputation that may make them more legitimate than outsiders. Agencies may be able to implement changes more quickly with internal facilitators than with external ones and can be in a better position to hold others accountable for program implementation. This approach is not without limitations, however. Internal facilitators may lack the expertise to implement the strategy or may not be sufficiently objective. Other potential pitfalls include trainees not feeling comfortable openly communicating on certain subjects; facilitators being ordered to deliver intervention rather than volunteering to do so, which may lead to less buy-in; and facilitators who are biased by agency culture. One of the biggest benefits of using an external facilitator is that agencies can identify, vet, and select facilitators with relevant subject matter expertise. External facil-

itators can often approach the project more objectively than internal ones, but they may not be attuned to agency culture. External facilitators may also lack experience in customizing approaches for the law enforcement setting, may have limited ability to hold intervention subjects (or the agency) accountable, and may be costly. If you use an external facilitator, it would be helpful to allow them to review the survey results to get an understanding of the agency culture and issues.

Logistics. Agencies should use the problem identification process as an opportunity to understand which groups within the agency would most benefit from the training or intervention. In addition to considering the audience, program champions should consider the implications of mandating a training for certain units given the hierarchical structure of law enforcement agencies. Can (should) trainees or intervention subjects be held accountable? If a program champion is not a member of the agency's executive staff, how can (or should) senior leadership be held accountable? There are obvious benefits to trainees volunteering to participate, but those most in need may be reluctant. It is important to consider the benefits and challenges associated with command staff involvement in an intervention. Benefits include increasing the ability of the agency to hold trainees accountable while also demonstrating agency commitment to action planning, the implementation process, and the intervention itself. Consider that command staff involvement may not be optimal for all stressors or interventions; mixed-rank trainings may be beneficial or an impediment depending on the strategy. Consider the role of leadership during the action planning process.

Considerations for online or self-directed training strategies

Agencies should carefully weigh the benefits and limitations of in-person training and interventions. In-person trainings allow for better assessment of participant engagement than online trainings, allow opportunities for spontaneous interactions, and promote discussion. However, in-person trainings can be difficult to schedule, and certain interventions may benefit from smaller groups, further compounding scheduling challenges. Agencies should consider other forms of training and interventions including virtual trainings, self-guided trainings and interventions, and training multiple facilitators for decentralized asynchronous trainings and interventions. Many strategies developed by the Federal Government and others have been developed in a way that allows self-directed learning through video or online interactive platforms. Although presenting fewer logistical challenges than in-person trainings, these self-directed options may be more limited in impact, and their effectiveness may be more difficult to assess.

Deciding which type of resource to implement

The COMPASS Resource Guide identifies the type, estimated time commitment, and key characteristics of each resource listed. Champions and agency leadership should review this information for the resources aligned with their focus area and decide which type of strategy would be best given the considerations above. If still unsure, champions and leaders can solicit input from additional officers, staff, and supervisors—particularly those who would be involved in implementing or participating in the various resource options.

Reinforcing the strategy and facilitating change

Regardless of the strategy format, make efforts to reinforce the strategy and communicate clearly with stakeholders. This is essential to help institutionalize the changes called for by the strategy. Transparency with stakeholders can also help ensure that people are aware of changes that are being made and of how they can take advantage of any resources available.

Messaging

Post-implementation follow-up can be a helpful reminder to agency personnel of key take-aways, an opportunity to prompt feedback, and a behavioral nudge to encourage continued action on strategy goals. You can also send follow-up messages to provide periodic updates on agency progress related to agency goals and initiatives. The content and recipients of the emails may vary considerably based on the scope and type of strategy implemented. Consider tailoring messages based on both expected actions and expected outcomes. For example, if a strategy focuses on improved first-line supervision, direct follow-up messages to supervisors to remind them about aspects of the training. Send additional messaging to all staff with the goal of communicating what the agency has done to address the identified focus area. Examples of these emails are provided in appendix VI.

Behavior tracking

If the strategy involves discrete behavioral changes, behavior tracking can help facilitate longer-term sustained change. Tracking behavior on paper can provide a tangible reminder to act on goals and a reliable method of reinforcing desired change. An example of a paper-based tracking card can be found in figure 3 on page 30.

Figure 3. Example behavior tracking card

Indicate with a tally mark any time you use a strategy	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Week Total
Strategy 1: During each shift, ask my staff about something in their non-work life								
Week 1	III	II	IIII	IIII	–	–	–	14
Week 2	III	IIII	II	III	–	–	–	12
Week 3	II	II	III	IIII	–	–	–	11
Week 4	I	IIII	I	I	–	–	–	7
Strategy 2: During each shift, have coffee or spend downtime with a member of my staff								
Week 1	I		I	I	–	–	–	3
Week 2	I	I		I	–	–	–	3
Week 3	I	I	I		–	–	–	3
Week 4	I	I	I	I	–	–	–	4

Front

Indicate the # of times per day (week) you would like to use each of the strategies • Keep track on the other side of the card • Tally up how well you did at the end of each day and week • Modify your goals if necessary	Goal for each day	Met goal for day?	Goal for the week	Met goal for the week?
Strategy 1: During each shift, ask my staff about something in their non-work life				
Week 1	2	Yes	10	Yes
Week 2	2	Yes	10	Yes
Week 3	2	Yes	10	Yes
Week 4	2	No	10	No
Strategy 2: During each shift, have coffee or spend downtime with a member of my staff				
Week 1	I	No	2	Yes
Week 2	I	No	2	Yes
Week 3	I	No	2	Yes
Week 4	I	Yes	2	Yes

Back

There are many apps that facilitate behavior tracking on mobile devices. A few apps that were popular at the time this document was produced include the following:

Strides
https://www.stridesapp.com/ is a flexible goal setting app that allows tracking habits and SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) goals (https://clickup.com/blog/smart-goals/). A dashboard provides an overview of goals and habits. Templates make establishing effective goals easier, and reminders help to establish daily habits. Goal streaks help provide external motivation. Strides is available only for iOS. Strides has both free and paid plans (see figure 4).

Way of Life
https://wayoflifeapp.com/ is a goal tracking app that helps users build on their goals and break bad habits. The app is known for its simplicity and uses a unique color-coded organization system. Daily reminders and diary entries help improve and understand progress. Way of Life has both free and paid plans. It is available for both iOS and Android.

Done: A Simple Habit Tracker
https://thedoneapp.com/ features daily, monthly, weekly, and yearly goals. Users can view streaks for each goal and use the graph to see goal completions. Done is available only for iOS. Done is free with a one-time upgrade purchase that enables additional features.

Figure 4. Example of the goal-setting app Strides
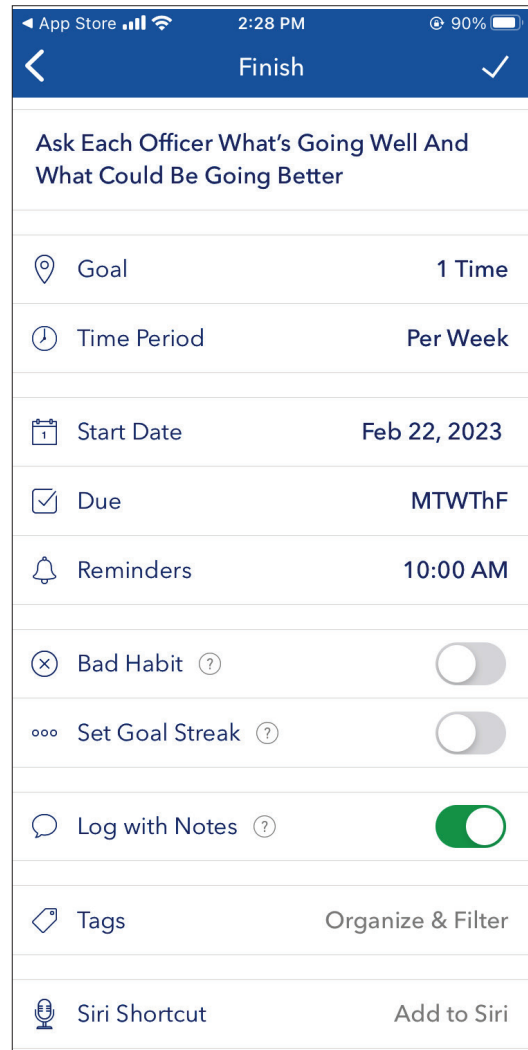
Conduct a Follow-Up Assessment

MAKING MEANINGFUL CHANGE IN ORGANIZATIONAL STRESS and well-being can be challenging. Work characteristics that impact overall health and wellness include both individual and organizational factors, only some of which can be modified. This makes it essential to conduct a follow-up assessment to determine whether changes had their intended effects.

Analysis and interpretation of survey results should be similar to those performed in the baseline assessment. The survey instrument will remain largely unchanged, and all modules should be readministered. Comparing between baseline and follow-up scores on key survey items will help determine if the changes had a positive impact. Information from module 3 will be particularly valuable if the baseline and follow-up assessment are compared. Additional questions specific to the intervention may be added to the survey to understand if the intervention was effective. See table 5 for additional information on the types of analyses that can be done based on the level of evaluation you are conducting.

Table 5. Assessing change

EVALUATION	TYPE	EXAMPLE
Basic evaluation	Descriptive	Compare mean average scores on items from baseline and follow-up assessment Graphically plot the distributions of item score from baseline and follow-up assessments to allow visual inspection
Intermediate evaluation	Bivariate	Conduct t-test to compare differences in the average and distribution of baseline versus follow-up assessment Conduct subset analysis by different types of agency personnel (e.g., compare results for sworn officers only)
Advanced evaluation	Multivariate	Conduct regression analysis to identify factors that impacted the success of the strategy

There is no specific time when the follow-up assessment should be conducted. The timing will vary based on the type of changes and how long those changes take to fully implement. Consider conducting the follow-up survey about six months after all changes have been made. If the baseline survey was administered anonymously, person-level comparisons will not be possible, but assessments of overall change will be. Considering differences between the baseline and follow-up survey, it will be possible to identify successes and remaining challenges.

Keep the following considerations in mind regarding your follow-up assessment:

- Conduct a second survey after implementing one or more strategies. This is essential to understanding its impact.

- Try to conduct the survey six months after the strategy is implemented.

- Compare the results of the follow-up assessment to those of the baseline survey. The follow-up survey should be very similar to the baseline survey, facilitating easy comparison.

Create a Sustainability Plan

THE GOAL OF THIS WORK is to develop long-term sustained changes within the organization. You should not think of the strategies and programs you implement as temporary changes. Develop a sustainability plan that describes several key characteristics:

- **Additional training or resources needed.** The implementation process and follow-up assessment are likely to identify additional issues the department could address. Throughout the process, document the training and resources that may be needed to fully address health and wellness challenges.

- **Changes that must be made over the longer term.** Some changes are outside the agency's immediate control. Solutions may require buy-in from other stakeholders (such as unions or city officials) or may require additional funding. These types of changes may require more extensive negotiations and discussions to implement.

- **Periodic reassessments.** Law enforcement agencies operate in rapidly changing environments. Issues such as staffing shortages, police reform demands, and the public health crisis caused by COVID-19 all evolved rapidly and have left long-term challenges for policing. Agencies should plan to reassess agency dynamics to understand new and developing stressors.

Keep the following considerations in mind regarding your sustainability plan:

- Ensure you have enough champions on board to ensure no one or two people are overburdened. Give staff an opportunity to rotate out of their roles as champions if necessary.

- When bringing in new champions, have a transition plan. Ensure new champions have the information they need to pick up plans and keep them moving.

- Stay focused. Remember that it is better to follow through on a smaller number of items than try to do too much at once.

- Hold yourselves accountable. Set meetings on your calendars to check in about progress and next steps. Discuss your wellness efforts in strategic planning meetings and performance reviews.

- Reassess and adapt. Field the survey periodically to understand how staff needs have changed. Repeat the steps in this toolkit to address emerging challenges.

It is important to continue to have agency champions who can organize efforts around sustainability and continued improvements. It may be helpful to have champions involved for a limited term to ensure shared responsibility and avoid burnout among those leading the charge. It is also important that agency leaders continue supporting this work. Recognize and reward the efforts of staff moving these efforts forward. Acknowledge their work publicly or privately and in performance reviews. Communicate that these stress reduction efforts are a continued priority and are helping to improve the health and functioning of the agency.

Meaningful change to reduce occupational stress takes resources and effort but is well worth the investment. Traditionally, police health and wellness initiatives have been implemented without first understanding the greatest sources of stress and ill health. Further, many trainings, programs, and other resources are not evidence-based, nor have they been vetted by experts in police occupational health. By using the COMPASS toolkit, you are ensuring that you understand which aspects of work cause your agency's officers and staff the most stress, and that you are implementing a vetted program to target those particular challenges.

As you move through this process, remember to celebrate the successes of champions, participating supervisors and staff, and agency initiatives. Highlighting the benefits of the work will help maintain motivation, engagement, and interest in continuing to assess and address officer and staff well-being.

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Appendices

Appendix I. Health & Wellness Survey

TITLE: Introduction

NUMBER OF ITEMS: N/A

SOURCE: N/A

CUSTOMIZABLE: Yes

Thank you for agreeing to complete this survey. The department is interested in better understanding and responding to job-related stressors that you experience. We will use this information to develop strategies that will help build a healthier organization. Your answers will be confidential and used only for developing health and wellness strategies. Participation is voluntary, and the survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

Module 1. Work-related stressors

TITLE: Organizational Police Stress Questionnaire

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 20

SOURCE: McCreary & Thompson 2006

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

Instructions: This section contains a list of items that describe different aspects of police work related to your agency. For each item, please indicate how much stress it has caused you over the past six months, using a scale ranging from 1 "No Stress at All" to 7 "A Lot of Stress."[1]

---

1. Survey instructions have been edited to improve consistency and ease readability.

IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS . . .	NO STRESS AT ALL		MODERATE STRESS			A LOT OF STRESS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dealing with coworkers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The feeling that different rules apply to different people (i.e., favoritism)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feeling like you always have to prove yourself to the organization	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Excessive administrative duties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Constant change in policy/legislature	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff shortages	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bureaucratic red tape	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Too much computer work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of training on new equipment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Perceived pressure to volunteer free time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dealing with supervisors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inconsistent leadership style	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of resources	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Unequal sharing of work responsibilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If you are sick or injured your coworkers seem to look down on you	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leaders overemphasize the negatives (e.g., supervisor evaluations, public complaints)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Internal investigations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dealing with the court system	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being held accountable for things beyond your control	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inadequate equipment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

TITLE: Operational Police Stress Questionnaire

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 20

SOURCE: McCreary & Thompson 2006

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

Instructions: This section contains a list of items that describe different aspects of police work related to the nature of the job. For each item, please indicate how much stress it has caused you over the past six months, using a scale ranging from 1 "No Stress at All" to 7 "A Lot of Stress."[2]

---

2. Survey instructions have been edited to improve consistency and ease readability.

IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS . . .	NO STRESS AT ALL		MODERATE STRESS			A LOT OF STRESS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Shift work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working alone at night	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overtime demands	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Risk of being injured on the job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Work related activities on days off (e.g., court, community events)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Traumatic events (e.g., MVA, domestics, death, injury)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Managing your social life outside of work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Not enough time available to spend with friends and family	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Paperwork	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Eating healthy at work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Finding time to stay in good physical condition	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fatigue (e.g., shift work, overtime)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Occupation-related health issues (e.g., back pain)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of understanding from family and friends about your work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Making friends outside the job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Upholding a "higher image" in public	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Negative comments from the public	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Limitations to your social life (e.g., who your friends are, where you socialize)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feeling like you are always on the job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friends/family feel the effects of the stigma associated with your job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

TITLE: Current Issues Related to Stress in Policing

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 10

SOURCE: Developed by RTI International & National Policing Institute for COMPASS

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

Instructions: This section contains a list of items that describe different aspects of being a police officer. For each item, please indicate how much stress it has caused you over the past six months, using a scale ranging from 1 "No Stress at All" to 7 "A Lot of Stress".

IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS . . .	NO STRESS AT ALL		MODERATE STRESS			A LOT OF STRESS	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fast pace of change in the profession	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of training/preparation you are given for the work you're expected to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dealing with social issues in the community, such as homelessness and mental health issues	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Problems or limitations resulting from job-related injuries	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Life-threatening job situations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interpersonal conflicts at home or outside or work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Negative or anti-police sentiment in the community (e.g., hostile interactions, protests)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Negative or anti-police content posted on social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Understaffing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Movement to defund the police	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

TITLE: Current Issues Related to Stress in Policing—Open-Ended

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 1

SOURCE: Developed by RTI International & National Policing Institute for COMPASS

CUSTOMIZABLE: Yes

Open-ended question: Please tell us about the greatest source of stress in your job.

Module 2. Current health behaviors & stress management techniques

TITLE: Current Health and Wellness Behaviors

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 12

SOURCE: National Policing Institute 2017

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

Instructions: This section contains a list of items that describe your health behaviors. For each item, please indicate how much you focus on each, using a scale ranging from 1 "Not at all" to 4 "Always."

I FOCUS ON . . .	NOT AT ALL 1	INFREQUENTLY 2	FREQUENTLY 3	ALWAYS 4	NOT APPLICABLE 5
Eating healthy (vegetables, fruits, whole grains, high quality protein)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Getting enough rest/sleep	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Getting undisrupted sleep	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Getting regular physical exams	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Physical training or exercise	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quiet relaxation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reducing alcohol use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reducing caffeine intake (coffee, energy drinks, soda)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reducing or quitting smoking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maintaining a healthy weight	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Seeking emotional support (clergy, friends, family, peers, mental health professionals)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stress reduction activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Module 3. Health and wellness indicators

TITLE: Neuro-QoL Short Form v1.0—Sleep Disturbance

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 8

SOURCE: Yu et al. 2012, https://www.healthmeasures.net/index.php?option=com_instruments&view=measure&id=33&Itemid=992

SCORING: https://www.healthmeasures.net/score-and-interpret/calculate-scores/scoring-instructions/254-scoring-instructions

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

TITLE: Sleep Quantity

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 2

SOURCE: NIH 2014, modified by RTI

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

Instructions: For the following questions, if you work a nonstandard shift, consider "night" to be the period of time when you usually get the majority of your sleep.

- In the **past 7 days**, how many **total hours of sleep** did you get **each night**, on average?
- In the **past 7 days**, how many hours of **continuous sleep** (sleep without interruption) did you get **each night**, on average?

TITLE: PROMIS Short Form v1.0—Depression 4a

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 4

SOURCE: Pilkonis et al. 2011, https://www.healthmeasures.net/index.php?option=com_instruments&view=measure&id=154&Itemid=992

SCORING: https://www.healthmeasures.net/score-and-interpret/calculate-scores/scoring-instructions/254-scoring-instructions

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

TITLE: PROMIS Short Form v1.0—Anger 5a

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 5

SOURCE: Pilkonis et al. 2011, https://www.healthmeasures.net/index.php?option=com_instruments&view=measure&id=188&Itemid=992

SCORING: https://www.healthmeasures.net/score-and-interpret/calculate-scores/scoring-instructions/254-scoring-instructions

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

TITLE: PROMIS Short Form v1.0—Anxiety 4a

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 4

SOURCE: Pilkonis et al. 2011, https://www.healthmeasures.net/index.php?option=com_instruments&view=measure&id=144&Itemid=992

SCORING: https://www.healthmeasures.net/score-and-interpret/calculate-scores/scoring-instructions/254-scoring-instructions

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

TITLE: Job Satisfaction from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (MOAQ)

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 3

SOURCE: Nadler et al. 1975

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

Instructions: Please respond to each questions about your experiences **in general**.

HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH EACH STATEMENT?	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	1	2	3	4	5
In general, I don't like my job.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In general, I like working here.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

* Reverse coded

TITLE: Healthy Days Core Module (CDC HRQOL–4)

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 4

SOURCE: CDC 2023, https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/hrqol14_measure.htm#1

SCORING: https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/methods_measures.htm

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

TITLE: Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 11

SOURCE: Brown and Ryan 2003 (as shortened by Chiesi et al. 2017); https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/resources/questionnaires-researchers/ mindful-attention-awareness-scale

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

TITLE: Resilience

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 6

SOURCE: Smith et al. 2008. Copyright © Taylor & Francis Group, LLC. Reproduced with permission from SNCSC.

CUSTOMIZABLE: No

Instructions: Please respond to the following statements about your experiences in the **past month**. Indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement by using a scale from 1 "Strongly disagree" to 5 "Strongly agree."

HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH EACH STATEMENT?	STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	DISAGREE 2	NEUTRAL 3	AGREE 4	STRONGLY AGREE 5
I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have a hard time making it through stressful events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I usually come through difficult times with little trouble	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Demographics

TITLE: Demographic Data

NUMBER OF ITEMS: 12

SOURCE: Developed by RTI International & National Policing Institute for COMPASS Toolkit

CUSTOMIZABLE: Yes

Instructions: We are collecting the following information to better understand how work-related stress affects officers in different types of jobs and situations. It will **not** be used to identify any individual; results will be reported only in aggregate.

- Age
  - 18–25
  - 26–34
  - 35–44
  - 45–54
  - 55–64
  - 65 or older

- Gender
  - Male
  - Female
  - Other
  - Prefer not to say

- Marital status
  - Married
  - Divorced or separated
  - Widowed
  - Living with significant other
  - Never married

- How many years have you worked in policing? (# of years)

- Current job title/organizational role[3]
  - Patrol
  - Investigations
  - Community services
  - Operations support
  - Internal Affairs
  - Other

- Current rank[3]
  - Officer
  - Corporal
  - Sergeant
  - Lieutenant
  - Captain
  - Command staff (Major/ Assistant Chief/Deputy Chief)
  - Other

- How long have you worked in your current position? (# of years)

- Do you work in a patrol function? Yes/No
  - (if yes) How many years have you worked in a patrol function?

---

3. These should be modified to fit your agency's organizational structure.

- Do you take radio calls (calls for service)? Yes/No

  – (if yes) How many years have you taken calls for service?

- Education level

  – High school graduate, diploma, or the equivalent (e.g., GED)

  – Some college

  – Associate's degree

  – Bachelor's degree

  – Graduate degree

- Race/Ethnicity

  – White

  – Black or African American

  – Hispanic or Latino

  – Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native

  – Asian

  – Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander

  – Multiracial or biracial

  – A race or ethnicity not listed here

- Number of dependents under the age of 18 (#)

Appendix II. Mapping Survey Items onto Focus Areas

Use these tables to map items from module 1 to focus areas for your department's attention.

Organizational stress

ORGANIZATIONAL STRESS ITEMS	CHECK IF AVERAGE ITEM SCORE IS >4	FOCUS AREA
1. Dealing with coworkers	☐	Interpersonal issues
2. The feeling that different rules apply to different people (i.e., favoritism)	☐	Favoritism/leadership
3. Feeling like you always have to prove yourself to the organization	☐	Internal pressures
4. Excessive administrative duties	☐	Administrative challenges
5. Constant change in policy/legislature	☐	Administrative challenges
6. Staff shortages	☐	Limited resources
7. Bureaucratic red tape	☐	Administrative challenges
8. Too much computer work	☐	Administrative challenges
9. Lack of training on new equipment	☐	Limited resources
10. Perceived pressure to volunteer free time	☐	Internal pressures
11. Dealing with supervisors	☐	Favoritism/leadership
12. Inconsistent leadership style	☐	Favoritism/leadership
13. Lack of resources	☐	Limited resources
14. Unequal sharing of work responsibilities	☐	Favoritism/leadership
15. If you are sick or injured your coworkers seem to look down on you	☐	Internal pressures
16. Leaders overemphasize the negatives (e.g., supervisor evaluations, public complaints)	☐	Favoritism/leadership
17. Internal investigations	☐	Internal pressures
18. Dealing with the court system	☐	Administrative challenges
19. Being held accountable for things beyond your control	☐	Internal pressures
20. Inadequate equipment	☐	Limited resources

Operational stress

OPERATIONAL STRESS ITEMS	CHECK IF AVERAGE ITEM SCORE IS >4	FOCUS AREA
1. Shift work	☐	Interpersonal issues
2. Working alone at night	☐	Favoritism/leadership
3. Overtime demands	☐	Internal pressures
4. Risk of being injured on the job	☐	Administrative challenges
5. Work related activities on days off (e.g., court, community events)	☐	Administrative challenges
6. Traumatic events (e.g., MVA, domestics, death, injury)	☐	Limited resources
7. Managing your social life outside of work	☐	Administrative challenges
8. Not enough time available to spend with friends and family	☐	Administrative challenges
9. Paperwork	☐	Limited resources
10. Eating healthy at work	☐	Internal pressures
11. Finding time to stay in good physical condition	☐	Favoritism/leadership
12. Fatigue (e.g., shift work, overtime)	☐	Favoritism/leadership
13. Occupation-related health issues (e.g., back pain)	☐	Limited resources
14. Lack of understanding from family and friends about your work	☐	Favoritism/leadership
15. Making friends outside the job	☐	Internal pressures
16. Upholding a "higher image" in public	☐	Favoritism/leadership
17. Negative comments from the public	☐	Internal pressures
18. Limitations to your social life (e.g., who your friends are, where you socialize)	☐	Administrative challenges
19. Feeling like you are always on the job	☐	Internal pressures
20. Friends/family feel the effects of the stigma associated with your job	☐	Limited resources

Current issues

CURRENT ISSUES STRESS ITEMS	CHECK IF AVERAGE ITEM SCORE IS >4	FOCUS AREA
1. Fast pace of change in the profession	☐	Administrative challenges
2. Lack of training/preparation you are given for the work you're expected to do	☐	Limited resources
3. Dealing with social issues in the community, such as homelessness and mental health issues	☐	Limited resources
4. Problems or limitations resulting from job-related injuries	☐	Physical health / safety
5. Life-threatening job situations	☐	Physical health / safety
6. Interpersonal conflicts at home or outside or work	☐	Interpersonal issues
7. Negative or anti-police sentiment in the community (e.g., hostile interactions, protests)	☐	Anti-police sentiment
8. Negative or anti-police content posted on social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)	☐	Anti-police sentiment
9. Understaffing	☐	Limited resources
10. Movement to defund the police	☐	Anti-police sentiment

Appendix III. COMPASS Resource Guide

COMPASS Resource Guide

COMPASS Resource Guide

Focus Areas

NUMBER	ICON	FOCUS AREA NAME
1	Leadership	Perceived Favoritism and Leadership Issues
2	Pressure	Internal Pressures
3	Conflict	Interpersonal Issues
4	Resources	Limited Resources
5	Anti-police	Negative or Anti-Police Sentiment
6	Health	Physical Health / Safety Issues
7	Admin	Administrative Challenges
8	Fatigue	Staff Fatigue/Overwork
9	Trauma	Traumatic Events
10	Work/Life	Work/Life Balance

Focus Area 1: Perceived Favoritism and Leadership Issues

The Problem: Organizational leadership can greatly impact occupational and organizational stress. Leaders who show favoritism or inconsistent leadership (even unintentionally) can increase stress and negative feelings experienced by workers. The resources below address both actions leaders can take to mitigate these stressors and tools employees can use to better cope with these challenges when they arise.

HOME

Leadership

Click on the resource title to learn more.

		ALSO ADDRESSES...								
RESOURCES	**TYPE**	**Pressure**	**Conflict**	**Resources**	**Anti-police**	**Health**	**Admin**	**Fatigue**	**Trauma**	**Work/life**
Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 4: First-Line Supervisors)	Document for supervisors	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 5: Early Intervention Systems)	Document for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 6: Internal Affairs)	Document for agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Improving Organizational Fairness to Reduce Stress and Increase Work Satisfaction	PowerPoint for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Toolkit for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
Law Enforcement Agency and Officer Resilience Training Program	Training for individuals and agency-wide changes	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
VALOR Executive Leadership Workshop	Training for supervisors	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○

List continued on next page.

HOME

Leadership

Click on the resource title to learn more.

RESOURCES	TYPE	ALSO ADDRESSES...								
		Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Trauma	Work/life
VALOR Mid-Level Leadership Workshop	Training for supervisors	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
A Conversation Exploring Leadership in Challenging Times	Webinar for supervisors	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	○	○
Management During Difficult Times	Webinar for supervisors	○	●	○	○	○	●	●	○	●
Surviving Organizational Stress	Webinar for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Fundamentals of Total Worker Health Approaches	Workbook for agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○

Focus Area 2: Internal Pressures

The Problem: Work-related stress can result from a variety of internal pressures, including the need to constantly prove oneself, perceived pressure to continually go above and beyond one's core responsibilities, and pressure to volunteer one's free time to work-related activities and tasks. These resources can help staff manage internal pressures and establish strategies for setting effective boundaries.

Pressure

Click on the resource title to learn more.

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Trauma	Work/life
Officer Safety and Wellness Group Meeting Summary: Promoting Positive Coping Strategies in Law Enforcement	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	●	○	●	●	○	○	●	○
Staying Healthy in the Fray: The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers in the Context of Civil Unrest	Guidebook for individuals, supervisors, agency-wide changes, and family	○	●	○	●	●	○	○	●	○
Stress and Resilience in Law Enforcement	On-Demand Training for individuals	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Toolkit for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
Law Enforcement Agency and Officer Resilience Training Program	Training for individuals	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
Keeping Your Super Heroes Super	Webinar for individuals	○	○	○	○	●	○	●	●	●
Kick Stress to the Curb	Webinar for individuals and family	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
Mindfulness Strategies for Law Enforcement Webinar Part 1	Webinar for individuals	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
Surviving Organizational Stress	Webinar for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Focus Area 3: Interpersonal Issues

The Problem: Policing has been associated with increased interpersonal conflicts at work and at home. These resources provide support for managing conflicts with coworkers and maintaining healthy relationships outside of work.

Conflict

ALSO ADDRESSES...

Click on the resource title to learn more.

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Trauma	Work/life
Enhancing Officer Wellness and Resiliency in Policing	Document for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Officer Wellness and Resiliency During the COVID-19 Pandemic	Document for individuals	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○
Officer Safety and Wellness Group Meeting Summary: Promoting Positive Coping Strategies in Law Enforcement	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	●	○	●	●	○	○	●	○
Comprehensive Framework for Law Enforcement Suicide Prevention	Guidebook for supervisors	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	●	○
Law Enforcement Family Engagement Assessment Tool	Guidebook for supervisors	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
Staying Healthy in the Fray: The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers in the Context of Civil Unrest	Guidebook for individuals, supervisors, agency-wide changes, and family	○	●	○	●	●	○	○	●	○
Shield of Resilience Training Course	On-Demand Training for individuals and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	●
Stress and Resilience in Law Enforcement	On-Demand Training for individuals	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●

Continued...

Conflict

Click on the resource title to learn more.

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Trauma	Work/life
ResponderStrong	Platform/Community for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
Difficult Conversations	Podcast for supervisors	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mentoring	Podcast for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Toolkit for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
Law Enforcement Agency and Officer Resilience Training Program	Training for individuals	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
Penn Resilience Program and PERMA	Training for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	●	○	●	○	○	○	○
Management During Difficult Times	Webinar for supervisors	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	●
Mindfulness Strategies for Law Enforcement Webinar Part 1	Webinar for individuals	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Perspective Series: The Role of Resilience in Officer Safety and Wellness	Webinar for individuals	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○

ALSO ADDRESSES...

Focus Area 4: Limited Resources

The Problem: Limited resources, including staffing shortages and lack of necessary resources, training, or equipment, can create stressful working conditions. Staff may feel unsupported or undervalued. These resources provide tools for managing stress related to limited resources.

Resources

Click on the resource title to learn more.

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Trauma	Work/life
Reimagining Policing	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○
Leadership in Times of Crisis	Podcast for supervisors	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	●	○
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Toolkit for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
Penn Resilience Program and PERMA	Training for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	●	○	●	○	○	○	○
A Conversation Exploring Leadership in Challenging Times	Webinar for supervisors	●	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
Mindfulness Strategies for Law Enforcement Webinar Part 1	Webinar for individuals	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
Justice Clearinghouse	Webinar for individuals, supervisors, agency-wide changes, and family	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

ALSO ADDRESSES...

Focus Area 5: Negative or Anti-Police Sentiment

The Problem: Anti-police sentiment can cause staff to feel disliked by, or disconnected from, the communities they serve. This can also take the form of political or community scrutiny of job roles. These resources provide suggestions for managing the challenges that can be caused by perceived anti-police sentiment.

HOME

Anti-police

Click on the resource title to learn more.

ALSO ADDRESSES...

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Trauma	Work/life
Officer Wellness and Resiliency During the COVID-19 Pandemic	Document for individuals	O	O	O	O	●	O	O	O	O
Reimagining Policing	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	O	O	O	●	O	O	O	O	O
Officer Safety and Wellness Group Meeting Summary: Promoting Positive Coping Strategies in Law Enforcement	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	O	●	●	O	●	O	O	●	O
Less-Lethal Weaponry, Post-Traumatic Stress, and their Impact on Officer Safety and Wellness	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	O	O	O	O	●	O	O	●	O
Improving Law Enforcement Resilience: Lessons and Recommendations	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	O	O	O	O	●	O	O	●	O
Staying Healthy in the Fray: The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers in the Context of Civil Unrest	Guidebook for individuals, supervisors, agency-wide changes, and family	O	●	●	●	●	O	O	●	O
Safer Together: Strengthening the Foundations of Officer Safety and Wellness	Training for individuals	O	O	O	O	●	O	O	O	O
Safer Together: Strengthening the Foundations of Officer Safety and Wellness (webinar)	Webinar for agency-wide changes	O	O	O	O	●	O	O	O	O

Focus Area 6: Physical Health / Safety Issues

The Problem: Policing is associated with a variety of physical health and safety issues, including difficulty maintaining healthy eating and exercise routines, physical danger, and occupational injury or illness. These resources provide support for maintaining good physical health, adapting to the work environment, and recovering from job related injuries or illness.

HOME

Health

ALSO ADDRESSES...

Click on the resource title to learn more.

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Admin	Fatigue	Trauma	Work/life
Officer Wellness and Resiliency During the COVID-19 Pandemic	Document for individuals	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○
Stress First Aid (SFA) for Law Enforcement	Document for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	○
Officer Safety and Wellness Group Meeting Summary: Promoting Positive Coping Strategies in Law Enforcement	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	●	●	○	●	○	○	●	○
Less-Lethal Weaponry, Post-Traumatic Stress, and their Impact on Officer Safety and Wellness	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	●	○
Improving Law Enforcement Resilience: Lessons and Recommendations	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	●	○
Officer Health and Organizational Wellness: Emerging Issues and Recommendations	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
Officers' Physical and Mental Health and Safety: Emerging Issues and Recommendations	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○
Comprehensive Framework for Law Enforcement Suicide Prevention	Guidebook for supervisors	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	○

Continued...

Health

Click on the resource title to learn more.

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Admin	Fatigue	Trauma	Work/life
Staying Healthy in the Fray: The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers in the Context of Civil Unrest	Guidebook for individuals, supervisors, agency-wide changes, and family	○	●	●	○	●	○	○	●	○
Shield of Resilience Training Course	On-Demand Training for individuals and agency-wide changes	○	○	●	○	○	○	●	●	●
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Toolkit for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●
Penn Resilience Program and PERMA	Training for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
Safer Together: Strengthening the Foundations of Officer Safety and Wellness	Training for individuals	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○
Functional Fitness: Stress Reduction and Optimized Performance	Webinar for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Keeping Your Super Heroes Super	Webinar for individuals	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	●
Safer Together: Strengthening the Foundations of Officer Safety and Wellness (Webinar)	Webinar for agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○
Fundamentals of Total Worker Health Approaches	Workbook for agency-wide changes	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

ALSO ADDRESSES...

HOME

Focus Area 7: Administrative Challenges

The Problem: Stress can develop when staff feel overly constrained by administrative aspects of the job, such as feeling held back by bureaucratic red tape or having to frequently adapt to changing policy and legislature. These resources provide guidance to leaders and officers on how to mitigate the impacts of administrative challenges.

Admin

Click on the resource title to learn more.

ALSO ADDRESSES...

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Fatigue	Trauma	Work/life
Officer Health and Organizational Wellness: Emerging Issues and Recommendations	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	O	O	O	O	O	●	O	O	O
Leadership in Times of Crisis	Podcast for supervisors	O	O	O	●	O	O	O	●	O
Leading by Example for Chief Executives	Podcast for supervisors	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Leading by Example for Mid-Level Supervisors	Podcast for supervisors	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Toolkit for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	●	●	●	O	●	●	●	●
Every Officer is a Leader	Training for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
VALOR Executive Leadership Workshop	Training for supervisors	●	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
VALOR Mid-Level Leadership Workshop	Training for supervisors	●	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
A Conversation Exploring Leadership in Challenging Times	Webinar for supervisors	●	O	O	●	O	O	O	O	O
Management During Difficult Times	Webinar for supervisors	●	O	●	O	O	O	●	O	●

Focus Area 8: Staff Fatigue / Overwork

The Problem: Law enforcement agencies across the country are facing higher workload and critical staffing shortages. These factors can lead to persistent staff fatigue and a sense of being overworked. Although many issues effecting workload and staffing are beyond the immediate control of agencies, these resources can help staff cope with fatigue and other issues related to workload.

Fatigue

Click on the resource title to learn more.

ALSO ADDRESSES...

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Trauma	Work/life
How Self-Care can Reduce Police Officer Stress	Blog post for individuals	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●
Stress First Aid (SFA) for Law Enforcement	Document for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	●	○
Shield of Resilience Training Course	On-Demand Training for individuals and agency-wide changes	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	●
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Toolkit for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	●
Keeping Your Super Heroes Super	Webinar for individuals	○	●	○	○	○	●	○	●	●

The Problem: Work-related traumatic events such as shootings, domestic violence, and deaths, and the aftermath of these events, can cause significant stress and mental health challenges for officers. These resources support officer resilience, coping, and recovery after experiencing traumatic events.

HOME

Trauma

ALSO ADDRESSES...

Click on the resource title to learn more.

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Work/life
How Self-Care can Reduce Police Officer Stress	Blog post for individuals	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●
10 Ways to Support an Officer in Crisis: Agency Action Plan for Supporting an Officer in Crisis	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mental Wellness, Resiliency, and Suicide Prevention information for Family and Friends of Law Enforcement	Document for individuals and family	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Stress First Aid (SFA) for Law Enforcement	Document for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	●	○
Traumatic Incident Stress: Information for Emergency Response Workers	Document for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Breaking the Silence on Law Enforcement Suicides: IACP National Symposium on Law Enforcement Officer Suicide and Mental Health	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The Signs Within: Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness	Document for supervisors	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Continued...

Trauma

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Work/life
Officer Safety and Wellness Group Meeting Summary: Promoting Positive Coping Strategies in Law Enforcement	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	●	●	○	●	●	○	○	○
Less-Lethal Weaponry, Post-Traumatic Stress, and their Impact on Officer Safety and Wellness: Emerging Issues and Recommendations	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	○
Improving Law Enforcement Resilience: Lessons and Recommendations	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	○
Officers' Physical and Mental Health and Safety: Emerging Issues and Recommendations	Document for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
Comprehensive Framework for Law Enforcement Suicide Prevention	Guidebook for supervisors	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	○	○
Staying Healthy in the Fray: The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers in the Context of Civil Unrest	Guidebook for individuals, supervisors, agency-wide changes, and family	○	●	●	○	●	●	○	○	○
Preparing for the Unimaginable: How Chiefs Can Safeguard Officer Mental Health Before and After Mass Casualty Events	Guidebook for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Shield of Resilience Training Course	On-Demand Training for individuals and agency-wide changes	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	●

Continued...

Trauma

Click on the resource title to learn more.

ALSO ADDRESSES...

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Work/life
Agency Planning and Support for Employee Crisis	Podcast for supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Leadership in Times of Crisis	Podcast for supervisors	○	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	○
Thriving: One Officer's Story of Resilience Following a Critical Incident	Podcast for individuals, supervisors and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program	Toolkit for individuals and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Toolkit for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●
Exploring Vicarious Trauma as a Community	Webinar for individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Inhale, Exhale, Now Repeat	Webinar for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Keeping Your Super Heroes Super	Webinar for individuals	○	●	○	○	○	●	○	●	●
Surviving the Storm – Mental Wellness After a Critical Incident	Webinar for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Protecting Against Stress and Trauma	Webinar series for individuals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Focus Area 10: Work/Life Balance

The Problem: Careers in policing can make it difficult to balance work and non-work demands, including family, social, and community life outside of work. These resources provide support and strategies for managing and improving the interplay between work and home life.

Work/Life

Click on the resource title to learn more.

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Trauma
How Self-Care can Reduce Police Officer Stress	Blog post for individuals	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●
Law Enforcement Family Engagement Assessment Tool	Guidebook for supervisors	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
Shield of Resilience Training Course	On-Demand Training for individuals and agency-wide changes	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	●
Stress and Resilience in Law Enforcement	On-Demand Training for individuals	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
ResponderStrong	Platform/Community for individuals	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
When Work Follows You Home	Podcast for individuals and family	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program	Toolkit for individuals and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○
The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Toolkit individuals, supervisors, and agency-wide changes	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●

ALSO ADDRESSES...

List continued on next page.

Continued...

Work/Life

Click on the resource title to learn more.

RESOURCES	TYPE	Leadership	Pressure	Conflict	Resources	Anti-police	Health	Admin	Fatigue	Trauma
Blue Courage	Training for individuals and agency-wide changes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Law Enforcement Agency and Officer Resilience Training Program	Training for individuals	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
Keeping Your Super Heroes Super	Webinar for individuals	○	●	○	○	○	●	○	●	●
Kick Stress to the Curb	Webinar for individual and family	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Management During Difficult Times	Webinar for supervisors	●	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	○

ALSO ADDRESSES...

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76	Agency Planning and Support for Employee Crisis	Blue Courage
77	Comprehensive Framework for Law Enforcement Suicide Prevention	Difficult Conversations
78	Enhancing Officer Wellness and Resiliency in Policing	Every Officer is a Leader
79	Exploring Vicarious Trauma as a Community	Functional Fitness: Stress Reduction and Optimized Performance
80	Fundamentals of Total Worker Health Approaches	How Self-Care can Reduce Police Officer Stress
81	Improving Organizational Fairness to Reduce Stress and Increase Work Satisfaction	Inhale, Exhale, Now Repeat
82	Justice Clearinghouse	Keeping Your Super Heroes Super
83	Kick Stress to the Curb	Law Enforcement Agency and Officer Resilience Training Program
84	Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 4: First-Line Supervisors)	Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 5: Early Intervention Systems)
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86	Leadership in Times of Crisis	Leading by Example for Chief Executives
87	Leading by Example for Mid-Level Supervisors	Management During Difficult Times
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91	Perspective Series: The Role of Resilience in Officer Safety and Wellness	Protecting Against Stress and Trauma
92	Reimagining Policing	ResponderStrong
93	Safer Together: Strengthening the Foundations of Officer Safety and Wellness	Safer Together webinar: Strengthening the Foundations of Officer Safety and Wellness
94	Shield of Resilience Training Course	Staying Healthy in the Fray: The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers in the Context of Civil Unrest
95	Stress and Resilience in Law Enforcement	Stress First Aid (SFA) for Law Enforcement
96	Surviving Organizational Stress	Surviving the Storm – Mental Wellness After a Critical Incident
97	The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement	Thriving: One Officer's Story of Resilience Following a Critical Incident
98	Traumatic Incident Stress: Information for Emergency Response Workers	VALOR Executive Leadership Workshop
99	VALOR Mid-Level Leadership Workshop	When Work Follows You Home
100	Preparing for the Unimaginable: How Chiefs Can Safeguard Officer Mental Health Before and After Mass Casualty Events	Breaking the Silence on Law Enforcement Suicides: IACP National Symposium on Law Enforcement Officer Suicide and Mental Health
101	The Signs Within: Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness	Officer Safety and Wellness Group Meeting Summary: Promoting Positive Coping Strategies in Law Enforcement—Emerging Issues and Recommendations
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103	Officer Health and Organizational Wellness: Emerging Issues and Recommendations	Officers' Physical and Mental Health and Safety: Emerging Issues and Recommendations

DOCUMENT

10 Ways to Support an Officer in Crisis: Agency Action Plan for Supporting an Officer in Crisis

Best for Addressing...

🧠 **Trauma**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes | **Type: PDF** | [SAFLEO Agency Action Plan](#)

Action plans should be developed when officers request, or are identified as needing, mental health support. Action plans are customized to individual officers, and the circumstances around the crisis. This resource reviews common elements of action plans and how agencies can support the mental health of their officers.

Developer/Source:
National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program

Year Resource Developed: 2022 | **Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide**

WEBINAR

A Conversation Exploring Leadership in Challenging Times

Best for Addressing...

👤 **Leadership** 📦 **Resources** 📄 **Admin**

Estimated Time: ~1 hour | **Type: Video** | [CDC Webinar](#)

This resource discusses background and implementation of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Total Worker Health® (TWH) Program. This conversation covered topics including: (1) how TWH approaches can help employers transition to a participatory, worker-centered culture, (2) how changes in leadership affect company performance, (3) how corporate culture has changed over time, (4) relevant resources the audience can use to learn more about prioritizing worker safety and health.

Developer/Source:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - NIOSH Total Worker Health® Program

Year Resource Developed: 2020 | **Designed for: Supervisors**

Agency Planning and Support for Employee Crisis

Best for Addressing...

Trauma

Estimated Time: 22 minutes | **Type: Audio** | VALOR Podcast

In this VALOR Voices Podcast, a police chief discusses his department's experiences supporting a family in need and how agency leaders can build emotional resilience among their officers.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program

Year Resource Developed: 2019 | **Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide**

TRAINING

Blue Courage

Best for Addressing...

Work/Life

Estimated Time: Unknown | **Type: Multiple Resources** | Blue Courage Website

Blue Courage enhances the capacity of individuals to maximize their potential and to align their purpose with the mission of their organization — all while charting a path for peak performance, leadership development and improved well-being. Blue Courage offers various workshops, keynotes, and presentations. These resources can be customized to fit specific audiences.

Developer/Source:
Blue Courage

Year Resource Developed: Varies | **Designed for: Individuals, Agency-wide**

Comprehensive Framework for Law Enforcement Suicide Prevention

Best for Addressing...

- ⟳ **Conflict**
- ✚ **Health**
- 🧠 **Trauma**

Estimated Time: <1 hour   **Type: Document**   IACP Publication

The Comprehensive Framework for Law Enforcement Suicide Prevention is intended to support the health and well-being of police officers and is appropriate for use by law enforcement executives, command staff, mental health and wellness professionals, peer support staff, and others responsible for the health and well-being of officers.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Chiefs of Police

Year Resource Developed: 2020   **Designed for: Supervisors**

Difficult Conversations

PODCAST

Best for Addressing...

- ⟳ **Conflict**

Estimated Time: 24 minutes   **Type: Audio**   VALOR Podcast

In this VALOR Voices Podcast, an officer and police chief discuss the importance of talking to fellow officers who seem to be struggling personally or professionally. While starting these conversations can be uncomfortable, it is a courageous act that can make all the difference in that officer's career and life.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program

Year Resource Developed: Unknown   **Designed for: Supervisors**

Enhancing Officer Wellness and Resiliency in Policing

Best for Addressing...

Conflict

Estimated Time: <10 minutes | **Type: PDF** | IACP Publication

The stressors that police officers face can have serious implications for health and wellness. This resource provides recommendations on how you can pay attention to your mental health and be mindful of those around you.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Chiefs of Police

Year Resource Developed: Unknown | **Designed for: Individuals**

Every Officer is a Leader

Best for Addressing...

Admin

Estimated Time: 24 minutes | **Type: Multiple Resources** | COPS Office Training

This program trains police officers in the development and mastery of 60 research-based skills in five areas of competence: self-management, interpersonal communication and conflict management, problem and opportunity management, team and organization development, and versatility skills. Further, the program will enable officers to improve performance by engaging in the 40 Tasks and Responsibilities of Effective Leaders that most police personnel believe are important to perform, regardless of rank.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards

Year Resource Developed: Unknown | **Designed for: Individuals, Supervisors**

Exploring Vicarious Trauma as a Community

Best for Addressing...

Trauma

Estimated Time: ~1.5 hours

Type: Video

[IACP Webinar](#)

This webinar lays the foundation for a common understanding of vicarious trauma, as well as shared language describing the positive and negative reactions to work-related trauma exposure. It explores the individual and organizational impacts of vicarious trauma and provides strategies to mitigate the damaging effects.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Chiefs of Police

Year Resource Developed: Unknown

Designed for: Individuals, Supervisors

WEBINAR

Functional Fitness: Stress Reduction and Optimized Performance

Best for Addressing...

Health

Estimated Time: 51 minutes

Type: Video

[VALOR Webinar](#)

This panel webinar features lessons learned and techniques for making behavior changes based on promising practices and personal stories from law enforcement executives. It will explore how officers can improve their overall health and wellness through straightforward strategies like maintaining a proper diet and getting quality sleep.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program

Year Resource Developed: 2022

Designed for: Individuals

Fundamentals of Total Worker Health Approaches

Best for Addressing...

⭐ **Leadership**　　✚ **Health**

Estimated Time: Unknown	Type: PDF	NIOSH Publications

This workbook prioritizes a hazard-free work environment and applies a modern prevention approach—consistent with traditional occupational safety and health prevention principles—that recognizes that job-related factors can have an important impact on the well-being of workers, their families, and communities. This workbook will help you develop new Total Worker Health initiatives or better align existing workplace interventions with the TWH approach.

Developer/Source:
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

Year Resource Developed: 2016	Designed for: Agency-wide

BLOG POST

How Self-Care can Reduce Police Officer Stress

Best for Addressing...

🔋 **Fatigue**　　🩹 **Trauma**　　✳️ **Pressure**　　⚖️ **Work/Life**

Estimated Time: <30 minutes	Type: Blog Post	Lexipol Blog

This blog post discusses types of stress (including stress, burnout, and compassion fatigue), how stress manifests itself, and three self-care tools that can mitigate the damages of stress.

Developer/Source:
Lexipol

Year Resource Developed: 2018	Designed for: Individuals

Improving Organizational Fairness to Reduce Stress and Increase Work Satisfaction

Best for Addressing...

Leadership

Estimated Time: 1 hour | **Type: PowerPoint** | PowerPoint

These PowerPoint slides describe how department policies and practices affect officers' perceptions of fairness within the agency and how that in turn affects stress, health, and well-being. The presentation walks supervisors through a process to create and achieve individuals and organizational goals to better support officers and staff through fair and transparent practices and consistent leadership.

Developers/Source:
RTI International / National Policing Institute

Year Resource Developed: 2022 | **Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide**

Inhale, Exhale, Now Repeat

WEBINAR

Best for Addressing...

Trauma

Estimated Time: 44 minutes | **Type: Video** | VALOR Webinar

Proper breathing is vital to officer safety—it can determine how well you handle situations and potentially improve your ability to react. This webinar discusses best posture practices, different breathing techniques, and the importance of controlling your breathing.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: 2022 | **Designed for: Individuals**

Justice Clearinghouse

Best for Addressing...

Resources

Estimated Time: <1 hour   **Type: PowerPoint**

Justice Clearinghouse

As a peer-to-peer educational environment, Justice Clearinghouse offers a year-round "virtual conference" for budget-challenged and time-starved justice professionals to learn from thought leaders, innovators, researchers, and experienced professionals in their fields without the cost, travel, or time out of the office. Leaders and supervisors can increase awareness of this resource among staff and help them identify free webinars and other offerings to meet their specific training needs. These resources can help staff develop specific knowledge and skills and alleviate stress related to insufficient training support.

Developer/Source:
Justice Clearinghouse

Year Resource Developed: Varies   **Designed for: Individuals, Supervisors**

Keeping Your Super Heroes Super

WEBINAR

Best for Addressing...

Pressure   **Health**   **Fatigue**

Trauma   **Work/Life**

Estimated Time: Unknown   **Type: Video**

Justice Clearinghouse Webinar

This webinar focuses on wellness and self-care, including warning signs and strategies for coping with stress for law enforcement.

Developer/Source:
Justice Clearinghouse

Year Resource Developed: 2018   **Designed for: Individuals**

Kick Stress to the Curb

WEBINAR

Best for Addressing...

- ✳ Pressure
- ⚖ Work/Life

Estimated Time: 64 minutes | **Type: Video** | [VALOR Webinar](#)

This webinar focuses on practical strategies and solutions for mitigating stress in law enforcement officers and their families. By helping families cope with the stresses that accompany the experience of having a family member in law enforcement, agencies can keep officers healthier, safer, and better able to protect and serve their communities.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: 2020 | **Designed for: Individuals, Family**

TRAINING

Law Enforcement Agency and Officer Resilience Training Program

Best for Addressing...

- ✳ Pressure
- ↻ Conflict
- 👤 Leadership
- ⚖ Work/Life

Estimated Time: Multiple days | **Type: Learning modules** | [IACP Training](#)

The Law Enforcement Agency and Officer Resilience Training Program is designed to equip officers with evidence-based skills that promote stress resiliency. The program is offered as a three-day in-person training and includes a set of empirically validated skills that strengthen one's ability to overcome adversity and challenges, manage stress, maintain peak performance, and thrive in their personal and professional life.

Developers/Sources:
International Association of Chiefs of Police, VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness, and the University of Pennsylvania

Year Resource Developed: Varies | **Designed for: Individuals**

Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 4: First-Line Supervisors)

Best for Addressing...

Leadership

Estimated Time: <1 hour | **Type: PDF** | COPS Office Publication

To help address ongoing challenges in policing, the COPS Office developed this Law Enforcement Best Practices guide for use by policing practitioners. This section was developed by experts and practitioners from across the country to provide practical advice on effective first-line supervision. It provides guidance on issues and challenges faced, best and promising practices from the field, and implementation checklists related to effective supervision.

Developer/Source:

Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)

Year Resource Developed: 2019 | **Designed for: Supervisors**

HOME

DOCUMENT

Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 5: Early Intervention Systems)

Best for Addressing...

Conflict **Work/Life**

Estimated Time: <1 hour | **Type: PDF** | COPS Office Publication

To help address ongoing challenges in policing, the COPS Office developed this Law Enforcement Best Practices guide for use by policing practitioners. This section was developed by experts and practitioners from across the country to provide practical advice around the adoption and implementation of Early Intervention Systems. This section discusses issues and challenges faced, best and promising practices from the field, and implementation checklists related to early intervention systems.

Developer/Source:

Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)

Year Resource Developed: 2019 | **Designed for: Individuals**

Law Enforcement Best Practices (Section 6: Internal Affairs)

Best for Addressing...

Leadership

| **Estimated Time: <1 hour** | **Type: PDF** | COPS Office Publication |

To help address ongoing challenges in policing, the COPS Office developed this Law Enforcement Best Practices guide for use by policing practitioners. This section was developed by experts and practitioners from across the country to provide practical advice around Internal Affairs processes, including how to standardize and increase transparency of procedures, which can reduce officer stress. This section discusses issues and challenges faced, best and promising practices from the field, and implementation checklists related to internal affairs.

Developer/Source:
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)

| **Year Resource Developed: 2019** | **Designed for: Agency-wide** |

Law Enforcement Family Engagement Assessment Tool

Best for Addressing...

Conflict   **Work/Life**

| **Estimated Time: <30 minutes** | **Type: PDF** | IACP Assessment Tool |

This assessment tool is designed for leaders to develop a framework for successful relationships between officers, their support networks, and the department.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Chiefs of Police

| **Year Resource Developed: 2020** | **Designed for: Supervisors** |

Leadership in Times of Crisis

PODCAST

Best for Addressing...

Resources **Admin** **Trauma**

Estimated Time: 14 minutes | **Type: Audio** | VALOR Podcast

In this VALOR Voices Podcast, a retired police chief talks about leadership in times of crisis. The conversation covers concepts and principles that can be utilized to help chief executive officers manage through times of crisis.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: 2020 | **Designed for: Supervisors**

Leading by Example for Chief Executives

PODCAST

Best for Addressing...

Admin

Estimated Time: 9 minutes | **Type: Audio** | VALOR Podcast

In this VALOR Voices Podcast, a retired chief and lead instructor with the VALOR Program discusses how leading by example is the key to success. The podcast covers key aspects of being an effective leader and why leading by example is so important.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: Varies | **Designed for: Supervisors**

Leading by Example for Mid-Level Supervisors

Best for Addressing...

Admin

Estimated Time: 22 minutes | **Type: Audio** | VALOR Podcast

This VALOR Voices Podcast discusses how important it is to be professional, have and show respect, be transparent and trustworthy, and exhibit excellence. It covers how to align the mission of your organization with what you expect and communicate as a leader.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program

Year Resource Developed: Varies | **Designed for: Supervisors**

WEBINAR

Management During Difficult Times

Best for Addressing...

Leadership   Conflict   Admin   Work/Life

Estimated Time: ~1.5 hours | **Type: Video** | CDC Webinar

In this recorded presentation, speakers discuss juggling work and non-work roles, resources for addressing work stress, how organizations can support team members virtually, and recognizing the needs of workers.

Developer/Source:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - NIOSH Total Worker Health® Program

Year Resource Developed: 2020 | **Designed for: Supervisors**

Mental Wellness, Resiliency, and Suicide Prevention information for Family and Friends of Law Enforcement

Best for Addressing...

Trauma

Estimated Time: <10 minutes

Type: PDF

IACP Brochure

This resource covers the importance of mental wellness; how family members, friends, and loved ones can help; and warning signs and immediate risks for officers experiencing severe life stresses or mental health issues. Support resources for officers and their families are provided.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Chiefs of Police

Year Resource Developed: 2020

Designed for: Individuals, Family

Mentoring

PODCAST

Best for Addressing...

Conflict

Estimated Time: 17 minutes

Type: Audio

VALOR Podcast

In this VALOR Voices Podcast, a sergeant and retired lieutenant discuss how formal and informal mentoring can positively affect the safety and careers of law enforcement officers.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program

Year Resource Developed: Varies

Designed for: Individuals, Supervisors

Mindfulness Strategies for Law Enforcement Webinar Part 1

Best for Addressing...

Pressure   **Conflict**   **Resources**

| Estimated Time: <1 hour | Type: Video | IACP Video |

This webinar provides law enforcement officers with information and promising practices on how to utilize the "Window of Tolerance" and other mindfulness practices to help stay mentally and emotionally well. These strategies can be used to manage the stress associated with multiple aspects of policing, including internal pressures, interpersonal issues, and limited resources.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Chiefs of Police

Year Resource Developed: Unknown   **Designed for: Individuals**

TOOLKIT

National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program

Best for Addressing...

Trauma   **Work/Life**

| Estimated Time: Unknown | Type: Multiple resources | SAFLEO Program |

The mission of the National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers (SAFLEO) Program is to prevent suicides among law enforcement officers, raise awareness, and eliminate the stigma of seeking help. The SAFLEO website provides resources for in-person and virtual training, customized assistance, and evidence-based strategies for preventing suicide among law enforcement officers.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program

Year Resource Developed: 2018   **Designed for: Individuals, Agency-wide**

Officer Wellness and Resiliency During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Best for Addressing...

- Conflict
- Anti-police
- Health

Estimated Time: 10 minutes | **Type: PDF** | [IACP Publication](#)

This brief discusses stress during the COVID-19 public health crisis and provides tips on how to mitigate stress and cope with changes and uncertainty.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Chiefs of Police

Year Resource Developed: Unknown | **Designed for: Individuals**

Penn Resilience Program and PERMA

Best for Addressing...

- Conflict
- Resources
- Health

Estimated Time: Multiple days | **Type: Multiple resources** | [PRP and PERMA Workshop](#)

The Penn Resilience Program (PRP) and PERMA™ Workshops are evidence-based training programs that have been demonstrated to build resilience, well-being, and optimism. These programs equip individuals with practical skills that can be applied in everyday life to navigate adversity and thrive in challenging environments. Workshops can be delivered in person or virtually.

Developer/Source:
University of Pennsylvania

Year Resource Developed: Varies | **Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide**

Perspective Series: The Role of Resilience in Officer Safety and Wellness

WEBINAR

Best for Addressing...

Conflict

Estimated Time: Unknown | **Type: Video** | [IACP Webinar](#)

In a series of testimonial videos, participants from the VALOR Law Enforcement Resilience Training Program discuss their perspectives on the value of training, the importance of officer safety and wellness, and specific resilience skills that have made an impact in their lives and careers.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Chiefs of Police

Year Resource Developed: Unknown | **Designed for: Individuals**

Protecting Against Stress and Trauma

WEBINAR

Best for Addressing...

Trauma

Estimated Time: ~2.5 hours | **Type: Video** | [NIJ Webinar](#)

In this pre-recorded presentation, the National Institute of Justice brought together law enforcement practitioners and stress and resiliency researchers to discuss the current research evidence and practical benefits of targeted stress-management interventions and how they can promote officer mental wellness.

Developer/Source:
National Institute of Justice

Year Resource Developed: 2019 | **Designed for: Individuals**

Reimagining Policing

DOCUMENT

Best for Addressing...

- Resources
- Anti-police

Estimated Time: Unknown | **Type: PDF** | VALOR Publication

Agencies across the country are taking a critical look at their practices and policies as their role in society evolves alongside their communities' needs. This publication describes a variety of areas necessary to reimagine policing to meet modern demands. It includes content such as Focus on Officer Wellness: Maximize Readiness and Optimize Performance, Charting a Path Forward: IACP's Tenets for Healing, and other guidance for maintaining well-being and performance during times of high demand and change.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Chiefs of Police

Year Resource Developed: 2021 | **Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide**

ResponderStrong

PLATFORM

Best for Addressing...

- Conflict
- Work/Life

Estimated Time: Unknown | **Type: Community** | ResponderStrong Platform

A collaboration between emergency responders and advocates (clinicians, educators, researchers, health care organizations, and foundations), ResponderStrong's mission is to improve mental health supports for emergency responders and their families through a joint focus on intervention and prevention. ResponderStrong's website serves as a resource map for responder-informed crisis and clinical services as well as easily accessible educational content and tools for responders, families, leaders, and the clinicians who work with them.

Developer/Source:
ResponderStrong

Year Resource Developed: 2016 | **Designed for: Individuals**

TRAINING

Safer Together: Strengthening the Foundations of Officer Safety and Wellness

Best for Addressing...

🛡️ Anti-police   ➕ Health

Estimated Time: 1 day | **Type: Series** | VALOR Training

Safer Together is an interactive course that provides actionable skills and strategies used to build and strengthen safety and wellness through building a healthy community relationship. This eight-hour training for frontline officers stresses the imperative of building trust, one interaction at a time, as a foundational basis to improve community climate, enhance safety and wellness, and reduce crime.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: Unknown | **Designed for: Individuals**

WEBINAR

Safer Together: Strengthening the Foundations of Officer Safety and Wellness (Webinar)

Best for Addressing...

🛡️ Anti-police   ➕ Health

Estimated Time: ~1 hour | **Type: Video** | VALOR Webinar

As part of the 2022 IACP Officer Safety and Wellness event, the VALOR Initiative Safer Together: Strengthening the Foundations of Officer Safety and Wellness presentation introduces the Safer Together Campaign focused on the relationship between officer safety, wellness, and community trust. This webinar is a good primer before reviewing the full Safer Together program.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: 2022 | **Designed for: Agency-wide**

Shield of Resilience Training Course

Best for Addressing...

- Conflict
- Health
- Fatigue
- Trauma
- Work/Life

Estimated Time: ~1 hour | **Type: Learning module**

SAMHSA Training

This one-hour online course provides law enforcement officers with foundational skills to better understand and address the behavioral health stressors that are unique to law enforcement.

Developer/Source:
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Year Resource Developed: Unknown | **Designed for: Individuals, Agency-wide**
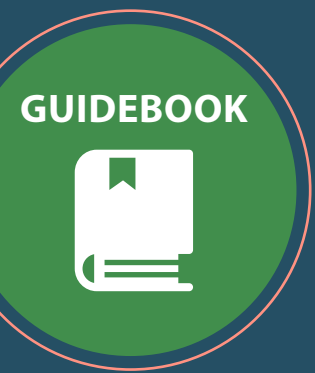
GUIDEBOOK

Staying Healthy in the Fray: The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers in the Context of Civil Unrest

Best for Addressing...

- Pressure
- Conflict
- Anti-police
- Health
- Trauma

Estimated Time: ~1.5 hours | **Type: PDF**

National Policing Institute Guidebook

This guidebook offers educational information and practical considerations for officers, particularly frontline officers and mid-level supervisors, as well as their families, to better protect officers' mental and physical well-being during times of heightened stress. This guidebook can also help law enforcement leaders in promoting healthy organizational cultures that recognize and prioritize officer safety and wellness as they navigate policing protests.

Developer/Source:
National Policing Institute

Year Resource Developed: 2021 | **Designed for: Individuals, Supervisors, Agency-wide, Family**

Stress and Resilience in Law Enforcement

Best for Addressing...

Pressure   **Conflict**   **Work/Life**

Estimated Time: ~1.5 hours | **Type: Learning modules** | NW3C Training

This course provides insight and information on the topic of wellness and mental health, focusing on stress and resilience in everyday policing. At the conclusion of this course, you will understand how stress affects the brain and alters behaviors and feelings, as well as acquire tools to build resilience.

Developer/Source:
National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C)

Year Resource Developed: Unknown   **Designed for: Individuals**

DOCUMENT

Stress First Aid (SFA) for Law Enforcement

Best for Addressing...

Health   **Fatigue**   **Trauma**

Estimated Time: <30 minutes | **Type: PDF** | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Publication

The Stress First Aid (SFA) model is a self-care and peer support strategy developed for those in high-risk occupations like the military, fire and rescue, and law enforcement. It includes seven actions that help identify and address early signs of stress reactions that can develop from everyday experiences and not just after critical incidents.

Developer/Source:
National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Year Resource Developed: 2016   **Designed for: Individuals**

Surviving Organizational Stress

WEBINAR

Best for Addressing...

Leadership   **Pressure**

Estimated Time: 6 minutes   **Type: Video**   VALOR Video

In this VALOR video, a retired assistant chief details the organizational stress he experienced that almost ruined his career, his marriage, and his life. He explains how proactive mental wellness is an essential part of stress mitigation. The video covers the importance of recognizing stress within yourself and your fellow officers who may be experiencing work-related stress, and of seeking help.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: 2020   **Designed for: Individuals, Supervisors, Agency-wide**

Surviving the Storm – Mental Wellness After a Critical Incident

WEBINAR

Best for Addressing...

Trauma

Estimated Time: 53 minutes   **Type: Video**   VALOR Webinar

This recorded presentation explores strategies to promote mental wellness after a critical incident. VALOR brought together a panel of experts to talk about how being in a critical incident impacted them emotionally, physically, professionally, and personally. A psychologist discusses how these emotions are normal, and what strategies can be used to cope with the impact of being involved in a critical incident.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: 2021   **Designed for: Agency-wide**

TOOLKIT

The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit - Tools for Law Enforcement

Best for Addressing...

- Leadership
- Pressure
- Conflict
- Resources
- Health
- Admin

Estimated Time: Varies | **Type: Multiple resources** | [OVC Toolkit](#)

The Tools for Law Enforcement section of the Vicarious Trauma Toolkit provides a suite of resources in the areas of: (1) leadership and mission, (2) management and supervision, (3) employee empowerment and work environment, (4) training and professional development, and (5) staff health and wellness. Agencies can choose which tools and resources to use based on needs, interest, and bandwidth.

Developer/Source:
Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)

Year Resource Developed: 2017 | **Designed for: Individuals, Supervisors, Agency-wide**

PODCAST

Thriving: One Officer's Story of Resilience Following a Critical Incident

Best for Addressing...

- Trauma

Estimated Time: 22 minutes | **Type: Audio** | [VALOR Podcast](#)

A retired police chief and VALOR shares his story of not only surviving but thriving after a critical incident that nearly took his life. An expert on police officer health and wellness and suicide prevention shares steps officers can take immediately to improve their resilience.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: 2016 | **Designed for: Individuals, Supervisors, Agency-wide**

Traumatic Incident Stress: Information for Emergency Response Workers

Best for Addressing...

Trauma

Estimated Time: <10 minutes | **Type: PDF** | [CDC NIOSH Publication](#)

This resource provides an overview of stress symptoms experienced by officers during and after a traumatic incident. It provides practical steps officers can take to better cope with traumatic experiences and the resulting physical and emotional response.

Developer/Source:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - NIOSH

Year Resource Developed: 2002 | **Designed for: Individuals**

Surviving the Storm – Mental Wellness After a Critical Incident

Best for Addressing...

Leadership **Admin**

Estimated Time: 4 hours | **Type: Multiple resources** | [VALOR Training](#)

This four-hour workshop is a law enforcement executive-facilitated event that: (1) addresses leadership strategies, (2) discusses policies, procedures, and best practices, (3) explores new ideas and no-cost resources, and (4) provides an opportunity to develop a customized executive action plan.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: Unknown | **Designed for: Supervisors**

VALOR Mid-Level Leadership Workshop

TRAINING

Best for Addressing...

Leadership **Admin**

Estimated Time: 1 day   **Type: Multiple resources**

VALOR Training

This one-day workshop is a subject expert-facilitated event that (1) addresses leadership strategies, (2) examines causes of officer assaults, injuries, and deaths, (3) explores officer wellness issues, (4) provides protocols and best practices, (5) discusses setting a safety precedent and accountability, and (6) illustrates actionable opportunities to increase safety and wellness.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: 2020   **Designed for: Supervisors**

When Work Follows You Home

PODCAST

Best for Addressing...

Work/Life

Estimated Time: 15 minutes   **Type: Audio**

VALOR Podcasts

In this VALOR Voices Podcast, an officer discusses the experience of navigating the aftermath of critical situations and how home life changes after these events. He discusses a high-profile critical incident in his own career, how the climate in the nation at that time affected him and his family, and the steps he took afterward.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: Varies   **Designed for: Individuals, Family**

HOME

Preparing for the Unimaginable: How Chiefs Can Safeguard Officer Mental Health Before and After Mass Casualty Events

Best for Addressing...

Trauma
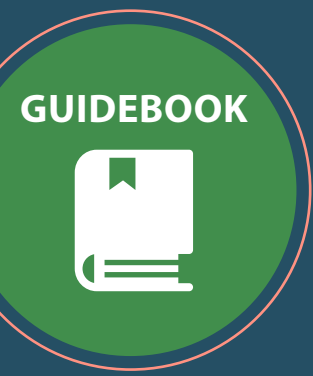
Estimated Time: 3 hours	Type: PDF	COPS Office Publication

Informed by the National Alliance on Mental Illness and police chiefs and officers who have lived through mass casualty events, this guide can help officers to heal emotionally, deal with the media, build relationships with other first responder agencies, and more.

Developer/Source:
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)

Year Resource Developed: 2016	Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide

Breaking the Silence on Law Enforcement Suicides: IACP National Symposium on Law Enforcement Officer Suicide and Mental Health

Best for Addressing...

Trauma

Estimated Time: 3 hours	Type: PDF	COPS Office Publication

IACP and the COPS Office hosted "Breaking the Silence: A National Symposium on Law Enforcement Officer Suicide and Mental Health" to develop national strategies to address officer mental wellness and suicide prevention through the following: (1) culture change, (2) early warning and prevention protocols, (3) training, and (4) event response protocols. This document summarizes those strategies.

Developer/Source:
International Association of Chiefs of Police

Year Resource Revised: 2017	Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide

The Signs Within: Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness

Best for Addressing...

Trauma

Estimated Time: 1.5 hours | **Type: PDF** | COPS Office Publication

The goal of this document is to educate law enforcement leaders, raise suicide awareness, and prevent officer suicides. With information, signs to look for, and resources to reach out to, this document helps law enforcement leaders to provide their officers with effective supports to prevent suicides.

Developer/Source:
VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness

Year Resource Developed: 2018 | **Designed for: Supervisors**

DOCUMENT

Officer Safety and Wellness Group Meeting Summary: Promoting Positive Coping Strategies in Law Enforcement—Emerging Issues & Recommendations

Best for Addressing...

Pressure **Health** **Conflict**

Anti-police **Trauma**

Estimated Time: 1.5 hours | **Type: PDF** | COPS Office Publication

Alcohol and substance abuse can become unhealthy coping mechanisms for dealing with work-related stressors. In this document, the COPS Office / BJA Officer Safety and Wellness Group makes recommendations for programmatic and policy changes to ensure officer wellness and health throughout their careers.

Developers/Sources:
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)
and Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)

Year Resource Developed: 2020 | **Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide**

Less-Lethal Weaponry, Post-Traumatic Stress, and their Impact on Officer Safety and Wellness: Emerging Issues and Recommendations

Best for Addressing...

Anti-police · Health · Trauma

Estimated Time: 1.5 hours | **Type: PDF** | COPS Office Publication

This document addresses the effects of community and media scrutiny of police on officers' stress and well-being. The COPS Office / BJA Officer Safety and Wellness Group explores questions about how law enforcement communicates with the media around issues of less lethal weaponry and how media coverage impacts officers' mental health and sense of self-worth.

Developers/Sources:
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)
and Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)

Year Resource Developed: 2019 | **Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide**

DOCUMENT

Improving Law Enforcement Resilience: Lessons and Recommendations

Best for Addressing...

Anti-police · Health · Trauma

Estimated Time: 1.5 hours | **Type: PDF** | COPS Office Publication

Resilience—the ability to both recover from traumatic events and withstand day-to-day work-related stress—is critical to the health of all law enforcement officers. In this report, the COPS Office / BJA Officer Safety and Wellness Group provides recommendations for preparing officers for traumatic events and strategies for supporting overall resilience through physical and emotional health.

Developers/Sources:
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)
and Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)

Year Resource Developed: 2017 | **Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide**

Officer Health and Organizational Wellness: Emerging Issues and Recommendations

Best for Addressing...

Health Admin

Estimated Time: 1.5 hours | **Type: PDF** | COPS Office Publication

In this document, the COPS Office / BJA Officer Safety and Wellness Group covers a wide variety of topics related to officer wellness, including physical and emotional health, officer suicide, felonious assaults on officers, and the need for improved data collection around officer health issues. It ends with policy and practice recommendations for improving officer well-being.

Developers/Sources:
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)
and Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)

Year Resource Developed: 2018 | **Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide**

Officers' Physical and Mental Health and Safety: Emerging Issues and Recommendations

Best for Addressing...

Health Trauma

Estimated Time: 1.5 hours | **Type: PDF** | COPS Office Publication

This document by the COPS Office / BJA Officer Safety and Wellness Group covers three main topics: line-of-duty deaths, mental health and suicide, and innovative approaches to officer safety and wellness. It highlights the importance of support from family, community members, and resources such as crisis hotlines and provides recommended agencies practices.

Developers/Sources:
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)
and Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)

Year Resource Developed: 2018 | **Designed for: Supervisors, Agency-wide**

Appendix IV. Sample Interview Guide

This sample interview guide was developed to explore issues related to the perceived favoritism and inconsistent leadership focus area.

Questions for agency leadership

What formal policies and practices does the agency have that contribute to perceptions of favoritism / inconsistent leadership?

What informal policies and practices does the agency have that contribute to perceptions of favoritism / inconsistent leadership?

What have you heard from staff recently regarding perceived favoritism / inconsistent leadership?

Questions for staff

Script: *Perceived favoritism and inconsistent leadership emerged as two of the top stressors in our agency based on the health and wellness survey. We are working to develop a program to reduce stress related to these issues. The purpose of this conversation is to help us better understand these issues so we can develop a better-informed program. As a reminder, we will not provide any individual level data or identify who participated in these interviews.*

What are some examples of events or situations of perceived favoritism? This may include staff assignments, promotions, shift schedules, equipment, vehicles/take-home cars, etc. Please do not use names.

What about inconsistent leadership? Are there situations where groups of employees are treated differently or more favorably?

How does perceived favoritism affect you? (Examples of outcomes include frustration, resentment, looking for other employment opportunities, decreased motivation, difficulty sleeping because of work-related stress.)

How about inconsistent leadership style?

What do you think needs to change to reduce perceptions of favoritism and make leadership more consistent across the organization?

Appendix V. Action Planning Templates

Individual action plan

What area do I want to address?
Example: Officers and staff think supervisors don't want to hear their suggestions/concerns.

Why is this an issue?
Example: Officers feel frustrated and it negatively affects morale and motivation.

What is my desired outcome?
Example: I want my staff to know that I care about them and take their input seriously.

What is my motivation for wanting to make this change?
Example: I want to reduce my officers' frustration, keep them motivated, and use their input to make positive changes.

What do I need to do to achieve the desired outcome?
Example: Proactively ask for input on what's going well and what could be done better. Actively listen when issues are raised. Explain how feedback will be used; if no action can be taken, explain why.

What is my action plan?
Example: I will ask each of my officers what's going well and what could be going better each week, either in person or via text.

How will I assess change?
Example: I will tell my officers that their feedback is heard and valued. I will track my interactions with my officers on the behavior tracking card to document my goal progress.

Organizational action plan

Plan champions

Area for improvement

Why is this an issue?

What are the desired outcomes?

What are the barriers and solutions to those barriers?

Messaging strategy

What do you want to communicate with staff about these plans?

What are the best ways to reach staff (e.g., in meetings, via email)?

What is the right frequency of messaging?

Who is responsible for each component?

Action plan and communication strategy

Within 30 days post-implementation

What _____

Who _____

When _____

Completed? _____

Notes _____

Within 60 days post-implementation

What _____

Who _____

When _____

Completed? _____

Notes _____

Within 90 days post-implementation

What _____

Who _____

When _____

Completed? _____

Notes _____

Ongoing

What _____

Who _____

When _____

Completed? _____

Notes _____

Appendix VI.
Post-Training Follow-Up Email Examples

These example messages were developed to follow an in-person training provided to supervisors. The training focused on developing group and individual strategies for improving fairness and consistency of management. Supervisors were asked to set individual level goals around how they could better engage and promote perceptions of fairness for the people that report to them. By sending these messages we were both collecting feedback about the training and providing reminders for supervisors to consider and document their goals.

Week 1 follow-up

In March, you participated in the supervisor training *Improving Organizational Fairness to Reduce Stress and Increase Work Satisfaction*. In that training, you were provided a worksheet for developing your individual goals for improving support and improving perceptions of fairness among your officers and staff. You were also encouraged to track your progress toward your goals.

Have you changed your interactions with the officers/staff who report to you because of goals you set in the training? If so, **we are hoping you will be willing to share what you are doing differently and any impacts you have observed**. We may use your quote to encourage others to continue to work towards their goals. If you prefer to not write something out, we are happy to hop on a quick Zoom call to discuss and can pull quotes from that conversation. Quotes can be shared anonymously or with attribution based on your preference.

Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns!

Week 2 follow-up

You recently participated in the supervisor training *Improving Organizational Fairness to Reduce Stress and Increase* Work *Satisfaction*. In that training, you learned about behaviors and actions that can facilitate supportive supervision. We wanted to share a few experiences with you that we have heard from other participants. Specifically, one sergeant mentioned that his goal was to be more transparent with the reason decisions are made and what is expected/graded during the sergeant's roundtable. He has implemented this during his briefings and is trying to articulate the decision-making process within the department and how it impacts each employee's career path.

We hope this example encourage you to continue implementing the personal and group goals you created during the training.

Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns!

Week 3 follow-up

We hope you are well. A few weeks ago, you participated in the supervisor training *Improving Organizational Fairness to Reduce Stress and Increase Work Satisfaction*. We hope you found the information in the training to be useful. We are following up to provide some additional resources that you might find useful in implementing behaviors and strategies that reduce officer stress and encourage supportive supervision. As you continue to prioritize efforts to reduce stress through fair and supportive supervision, consider these tips:

- **Tip 1.** Increase job satisfaction by providing formal and informal recognition for excellent performance. [A1]

  – Informally recognize positive behaviors and actions.

  – Consider pulling officers aside and speaking with them privately when providing constructive criticism rather than discussing in front of others.

  – Consider transparent communication during promotional discussions.

  – Speak with staff regularly to develop and assess annual development goals.

- **Tip 2.** Routinely communicate departmental and command staff goals.[A2]

  – Consider how information is disseminated to officers / line staff. Ensure that information from leadership is effectively communicated so all employees are aware of expectations and departmental policies.

We hope you will continue to implement the personal and group goals you created during the training to ensure positive interactions with your colleagues.

Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns!

A1. *When Stress Builds Up: Strategies to Overcome Cumulative Stress and Burnout—Guidance for Agency Leaders* (Alexandria, VA: International Association of Chiefs of Police, n.d.), https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/259348_IACP_Stress_and_Loss_Leaders_p1%5B1%5D.pdf; Dwayne Orrick, *Recruitment, Retention, and Turnover in Law Enforcement: Smaller Police Departments Technical Assistance Program Best Practices Guide* (Alexandria, VA: International Association of Chiefs of Police, n.d.), https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/BP-Recruitment.pdf.

A2. Jeremy M. Wilson et al., *Police Recruitment and Retention for the New Millennium: The State of Knowledge* (Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2010), https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P199.

Week 4 follow-up

We hope you are well. A few weeks ago, we sent tips related to the training you participated in, *Improving Organizational Fairness to Reduce Stress and Increase Work Satisfaction*. In that training, you learned about simple behaviors and actions you can take that reduce stress and encourage supportive supervision. We hope you will consider these additional tips as you continue to prioritize focus in this area.

- **Tip 1.** Research shows that 25 percent of officers leave their department within the first 18–36 months on the job. Many officers do not have a realistic understanding of what the job entails.[A3]

  - If an employee is unhappy, consider placement in another department or position to encourage retention and long-term job satisfaction.

  - If transfer is not possible (as is often the case in smaller agencies), assess whether there are opportunities for change within the current role. The employee may be able to take on more of certain kinds of tasks or take a different approach to some aspects of work.

  - Consider opportunities for job-shadowing.

- **Tip 2.** Frequent feedback encourages improvement and growth. Supervisors who do not provide constructive feedback often face larger problems down the line or an unhappy employee who doesn't understand why they aren't being promoted.[A4]

  - Consider feedback that is timely, specific, and job-related. Reinforce good behavior in real time and address poor performance before it becomes a problem. This encourages positive morale and self-confidence.

- **Tip 3.** Recognition and feeling valued are the key to happy employees. Officers who are recognized for good behavior are more likely to repeat good behavior.

  - Seek out opportunities to recognize good behavior rather than just correcting bad behavior. You can recognize your employees in a variety of ways, including passing on information to senior leadership, and providing praise in informal gatherings/communications.

We hope these tips inspire you to continue implementing the personal and group goals you created during the training to ensure positive interactions throughout the department.

Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns!

A3. Orrick, *Recruitment, Retention, and Turnover* (see note A1); Wilson et al., *Police Recruitment and Retention* (see note A2).

A4. Orrick, *Recruitment, Retention, and Turnover* (see note A1).

About the COPS Office

The **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)** is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Community policing begins with a commitment to building trust and mutual respect between police and communities. It supports public safety by encouraging all stakeholders to work together to address our nation's crime challenges. When police and communities collaborate, they more effectively address underlying issues, change negative behavioral patterns, and allocate resources.

Rather than simply responding to crime, community policing focuses on preventing it through strategic problem-solving approaches based on collaboration. The COPS Office awards grants to hire community policing officers and support the development and testing of innovative policing strategies. COPS Office funding also provides training and technical assistance to community members and local government leaders, as well as all levels of law enforcement.

Since 1994, the COPS Office has been appropriated more than $20 billion to add community policing officers to the nation's streets, enhance crime fighting technology, support crime prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance to help advance community policing. Other achievements include the following:

- To date, the COPS Office has funded the hiring of approximately 136,000 additional officers by more than 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies in both small and large jurisdictions.

- More than 800,000 law enforcement personnel, community members, and government leaders have been trained through COPS Office–funded training organizations and the COPS Training Portal.

- Almost 800 agencies have received customized advice and peer-led technical assistance through the COPS Office Collaborative Reform Initiative Technical Assistance Center.

- To date, the COPS Office has distributed more than eight million topic-specific publications, training curricula, white papers, and resource CDs and flash drives.

The COPS Office also sponsors conferences, roundtables, and other forums focused on issues critical to law enforcement. COPS Office information resources, covering a wide range of community policing topics such as school and campus safety, violent crime, and officer safety and wellness, can be downloaded via the COPS Office's home page, https://cops.usdoj.gov.

Law enforcement professionals are subject to extreme stressors such as violence, suffering, and death. These experiences are made more challenging by the realities of policing—which requires long and nonstandard work hours—and are often compounded by routine organizational stressors such as internal bureaucracy and lack of resources. Police officers who experience high levels of stress and fatigue are less equipped to facilitate the strong connections with communities that are needed to establish trust and legitimacy. Law enforcement agencies often struggle to identify which stressors are impacting officers the most so they can prioritize their wellness efforts. With funding from the COPS Office, RTI International worked with the Green Bay (Wisconsin) and Redlands (California) Police Departments to develop the Customized Offerings for Mitigating and Preventing Agency-Specific Stress (COMPASS) Toolkit, a six-step process that defines staff needs and causes of stress, identifies actionable areas for improvements, guides program implementation, and assesses the effectiveness of the efforts.

COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice