

<b>Title:</b> Pat 53 - Employee Mental Health and Wellness	<b>Effective:</b> 08-26-20
<b>C.O.P. Signature:</b>	<b>Revised:</b> 9/20/2022 <b>Next Review:</b> 1 yr

### **Purpose**

Law enforcement duties often expose employees to both routine acute stress and highly stressful situations that cannot be resolved through regular coping mechanisms. Unless adequately addressed, these situations may cause disabling emotional, psychological, and physical problems. Preparing for and providing support for daily stress and stress following a traumatic incident will assist in minimizing the chances that employees will experience negative physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions.

### **Policy**

It is the policy of the Douglas Police Department to provide all personnel with access to mental health services to help them preempt and resolve emotional difficulties and to take those measures necessary in the provision of mental health services to ensure their wellness and safety. It is also the policy of this agency to take immediate action after traumatic incidents to safeguard the continued mental wellness of all involved personnel. Employees may access mental health services at any time through the Employee Assistance Program, or as directed by a supervisor. Specific traumatic events, or a combination of events, can also result in referral to mental health services.

- A. Employee Assistance Program** – The Douglas Police Department participates in the City of Douglas Employee Assistance Program. The department has retained contractual services specific to our law enforcement needs through Dr. Jerry Post’s Office. This program provides access to a network of specially selected professionals with experience working with first responders. These services are accessible via website ([www.wyeap.org/douglaspd](http://www.wyeap.org/douglaspd)) or phone (307-632-7771). Employees do not need a referral and can remain anonymous.
- B. Supervisor Referral** - A member of the department’s command staff (Sergeant, Lieutenant or Chief of Police) may refer an employee to mental health services whenever he/she believes it is in the best interest of the employee or agency.
- C. Traumatic Events/Combination of Events** – Specific traumatic events will trigger a supervisory referral to mental health services. These events include, but are not limited to the following.
  1. Homicide
  2. Officer involved shooting
  3. Child death
  4. Traffic fatalities
  5. Multiple fatalities
  6. Officer fatality
  7. Any other case, which in the opinion of the supervisor, places the employee in a highly stressful situation.
  8. Any combination of events that place the officer in a highly stressful situation.

The supervisor referral should not be confused with a Fit for Duty Assessment.

- D. Yearly Wellness Examination** – The Douglas Police Department mandates annual mental health wellness checks for all officers. The wellness checks are not “fit for duty” assessments, but are simply a confidential check-in process between a licensed clinician and the officer. Nothing in this policy prohibits an officer from seeing a clinician outside of the yearly check.