

Project Abstract

Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Grant/Peer Support

Collin County is the 6th largest county in Texas. Since 2010, population has grown from 782,341 to an estimated 1,120,889 as stated in the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Collin County Sheriff's Office was established in 1846. The Collin County Sheriff's Office is a full service law enforcement agency and its staff are trained and dedicated officers. Collin County Sheriff's Office believe that their fundamental duty is to serve and protect the citizens of Collin County with fairness, compassion, and respect. They demand excellence in the quality of the law enforcement officers, stressing professionalism, integrity, and timeliness, so that those they serve may feel secure.

The Collin County Sheriff's Office recognizes that its employees are subjected to the harmful effects of stress associated with critical incidents. To minimize the adverse effects of critical incident stress, the Collin County Sheriff Office established a Peer Support Program (PSP) comprised of a Peer Support Group (PSG). The PSG will consist of twenty-four employees (sworn, non-sworn, and civilian) and clinicians trained to provide PSG peer support to department employees and family members after a traumatic incident. The PSP is meant to be used in concert with the current Collin County Employee Assistance Program, not to replace it. The purpose of the project will be to fund the much needed training and assistance the officers need in order to continue and improve the delivery of and access to mental health and wellness services the law enforcement officers need through implementation of not only the peer support, training, suicide prevention and other training for officers wellness.

Objectives:

The PSG utilized a multi-dimensional approach through both a proactive and reactive format. The program will be pro-active by educating members of this department about stress and stress management prior to responding to traumatic events and by educating command staff and supervisors about the appropriate use of the PSG. The program will be reactive by activating PSG members during and after critical incidents to provide emotional support and professional referrals for those impacted by these events.

PSP objectives will be the following but not limited to: 1. Preventing and mitigating traumatic stress 2. Intervening to aid in recovery from traumatic stress 3. Accelerating recovery whenever possible 4. Restoring to pre-incident levels of functioning 5. Maintaining worker health and welfare 6. Providing peer support in stressful situations and 7. Encourage professional counseling services