

HOW YOU CAN BE THE ONE

What: The American Legion's Be the One initiative encourages American Legion Family members, veterans, servicemembers and others to take action when they believe a veteran is at risk of suicide.

Why: To reduce the alarming number of veteran suicides.

How: Our goal is to destigmatize asking for mental health support, provide peer-to-peer support and resources, and educate everyone on how they can Be the One.

Who:

Veterans

- Talk with fellow veterans about how you are feeling.
- Ask for help when you think you need it.
- Know there are millions of people ready to help you.
- Remember your family and friends care.

Non-veterans

- Ask veterans in your life how they are doing.
- Listen when a veteran needs to talk.
- Reach out when a veteran is struggling.

American Legion posts

- Educate members, other veterans and civilians on the campaign.
- Display resources at your post or in your community.
- Share events or success stories at legiontown.org.

RESOURCES

American Legion support: Stories, videos and promotional items related to this initiative are available for posts, members and others. Visit betheone.org

For urgent help: Veterans experiencing a crisis can call **988** and press **1** for mental health assistance. Counselors are available 24/7. They may also text **838255** or visit the VA crisis line website veteranscrisisline.net



AMERICAN LEGION

P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206
1-800-433-3318

legion.org



Connect with The American Legion



American Legion
Star Post 309
StarPost309.com
info@starpost309.com

AMERICAN LEGION | **BE THE ONE**

We can all Be the One

Here's how veterans and civilians can help reduce the rate of veteran suicide.

BE THE ONE

Help is available in many forms. For LASD Department members, whether sworn or civilian, you and your family have access to services provided by the **Psychological Services Bureau (PSB)**.

Personnel can contact PSB at (213) 738-3500 Monday through Friday from 0800-1700 hours.

For urgent matters after hours, you can contact the on-call psychologist at (213) 335-0422

Law Enforcement Suicide

This is real, and unfortunately has been occurring much too often. At some point, law enforcement personnel, sworn or civilian, may experience stress associated with:

- Shift work
- Critical incidents (on or off-duty)
- Relationship problems
- Work Related Pressures & Investigations

LEOs are twice as likely to take their own lives than be killed in the line of duty. In other words, some peace officers are typically better prepared to deal with external crises than handling personal crises.

Suicide affects people from different walks of life. It's not just sworn who are impacted. Within the LASD family it can also affect professional staff:

It is not uncommon for people to feel sad, worthless, helpless, hopeless, and guilty at some point in their lives. Some people experience fleeting thoughts of death that come and go for extended periods of time.

The risk of committing suicide increases when the fleeting thoughts of death are persistent and ongoing to the point that the individual begins to actively plan to commit suicide. Individuals who consider suicide may get tunnel vision and erroneously view suicide as the only way out of their pain.

Most people DO NOT want to die. They just want the pain to go away.

Ask for Help: Many people are able to bounce back from feelings of sadness but that is not always the case. If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, get help. Call Psychological Services for a confidential, free counseling session at 213-738-3500. In case of an emergency, call 911 or find the nearest emergency room.

Suicide Myths

1. Suicidal people keep their plans to themselves. **False.** Most communicate their intent to someone within one week of completing the suicide.
2. Suicide is inevitable. **False.** The majority of people who get help will never be suicidal again. Suicide is viewed as the most preventable form of death and almost any positive action may save the person's life. Suicidal thoughts are impulsive and temporary. The key is to get the person past the impulse and get them the help they need.
3. Only experts can prevent suicide. **False.** The reality is that suicide prevention is everyone's business. Be the One!
4. Confronting a person about suicide will make them angry and increase the risk of suicide. **False.** Asking someone directly about suicidal intent lowers anxiety, opens up the channels of communication, and lowers the risk of an impulsive act.

5. Those who talk about suicide will not do it. **False.** Those who talk about suicide are more likely to attempt or complete the suicide.
6. If you disclose that you are having thoughts of suicide or that your partner is having thoughts of suicide, you/(s)he will lose your/his/her career. **False.** You will have saved your life or your partner's life. And, if the employee voluntarily receives treatment to get healthy again, work is likely to be minimally impacted in the long run.

LASD Resources

The LASD has a veteran peer network called **Vets 4 Vets**. This program provides a way for employees to speak confidentially with a co-worker, in this case, one who is also a veteran. Ask for the Peer Support Program Coordinator at (213) 738-3500. Several members of Star Post 309 are also Vets 4 Vets peer supporters.

Our Department also has a Veteran Mental Evaluation Team. While this team responds to events involving the veteran community, they are also available to you.



Remember – asking for help is NOT a sign of weakness but a sign of strength.