

SURVIVING THE STORM

MENTAL WELLNESS AFTER A CRITICAL INCIDENT



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Register today for an account on valorforblue.org and get access to all VALOR resources!

Want access for all your officers?

Send us a message at valorforblue.org/Contact. The process is fast and easy!

An Empty Well Gives No Water

When your well is empty and you are tapped out,
you have nothing left to give.

Tap into your healthy support systems to
help fill your reserves.

Peers • Mentors • Chaplains • Counselors
Psychological help experienced in working with law enforcement

Let us help replenish your well. View the Stress Reduction
Foundational Video Series at [SAFLEO.org](https://www.safleo.org).

3 Things

You Can Do to Reduce Negative Impacts of Stress

Sleep, nutrition, and exercise reduce stress

Consult your physician before starting a new regimen



Sleep

Aim for 6 to 8 hours a night

⊘ Can't be made up



Nutrition

Plan your meals

⊘ Don't depend on fast food



Exercise

Find a fitness program that works for you

⊘ Don't skip it

Stress reduction starts with **YOU!**

Check out the Stress Reduction Foundational Video Series on [SAFLEO.org](https://www.safleo.org)

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/losing_weight/eating_habits.html • https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/physical_activity/getting_started.html

Stress Reduction Foundational Series Agency Guidance

This series will discuss the science related to, and the role of, diet, nutrition, exercise, and stress in a law enforcement-friendly manner. It focuses on things that officers can do for themselves to address and relieve cumulative and chronic stress. In addition, this series will identify resources to help officers manage stress that may be available through law enforcement agencies or within the community, such as mentoring programs, peer-to-peer support groups, and agency-provided or externally available counseling or chaplain services. Knowledge is power. Providing law enforcement officers with the information they need to reduce the stressors in their lives enhances both officer wellness and resiliency and helps inoculate officers from the negative impacts of being emotionally hijacked. Healthy and resilient officers are prepared to perform their jobs to the best of their abilities, enhancing both officer and community safety.

Distribution Ideas

For the best impact on your officers, the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers (SAFLEO) Program recommends rolling out the two *Stress Inoculation* videos—"Healthy Habits" and "Healthy Support"—first. The first video, "Stress Inoculation—Healthy Habits," discusses how sleep, nutrition, and exercise can impact stress. The second video, "Stress Inoculation—Healthy Support," discusses utilizing mentoring, peer support, and internal counseling/chaplain services to reduce stress. These videos can be played during roll call or in-service training or offered to your officers to watch on their own. In addition, two posters were developed to accompany the videos. The posters emphasize the primary messages from the videos. The SAFLEO Program recommends printing these posters in an 8.5- by 11-inch or 11- by 17-inch format and hanging them in high-traffic areas in your station for best visibility. The posters are also available for digital display. In addition, you may distribute them to your department chaplain, department groups, and other agency staff members to share with sworn and nonsworn staff members who may come to them seeking help.

Additional Guidance

Prior to rolling out this infographic, we recommend alerting your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) service, peer support team, or Human Resources Division that their call volumes may increase and providing them with advance copies of the resources. In addition, let your frontline supervisors know that this resource is coming out so they can be prepared to have some conversations if the need arises.

- You may have agency policies or protocols that address behavioral concerns, mental health concerns, or suicide prevention. This could be a good time to have supervisors and the department review or be reminded about the policies, services, or resources available to them (and possibly their families or retirees).

BJA believes that the law enforcement community deserves better access to officer wellness resources and suicide prevention strategies. The SAFLEO Program, funded under the Officer Robert Wilson III Preventing Violence Against Law Enforcement and Ensuring Officer Resilience and Survivability (VALOR) Initiative, addresses law enforcement suicide prevention strategies through training, technical assistance, and resources to law enforcement agencies, staff members, and their families.

These resources are designed for agencies to broadly disseminate throughout the organization. To assist in agency distribution effort(s), the resources are available at www.bja.gov/safleo. Print-related resources can also be downloaded for agency distribution. Optimal print sizes are included on the website. Videos, podcasts, and webinars are not available for download. However, agencies are encouraged to link to the resource(s) for wide distribution.

For print resources, including posters, infographics, checklists, and guides, limited printed copies are available to you at no cost. To request copies (up to 20), please contact the SAFLEO Program at (850) 385-0600 or info@safleo.org. SAFLEO Program staff members will assist you in completing any additional information (such as agency-specific contact information) to include on the resource and will coordinate with you on shipping all requested resources to you and your agency.

About BJA

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), a part of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, helps make American communities safer by strengthening the nation's criminal justice system. Its grants, training and technical assistance, and policy development services provide state, local, and tribal governments with the cutting-edge tools and best practices that they need to reduce violent and drug-related crime, support law enforcement, and combat victimization. To learn more about BJA, visit www.bja.gov.

About the VALOR Initiative

The VALOR Initiative is an effort to improve the immediate and long-term safety, wellness, and resilience of law enforcement officers. Through a multifaceted approach that includes delivering no-cost training and professional education, conducting research, developing and providing resources, and establishing partnerships that benefit law enforcement officers, VALOR seeks to provide our nation's law enforcement officers with innovative, useful, and valuable resources.