

VIRGINIA



FIRST RESPONDER
WELLNESS

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services – Office of First Responder Wellness

2024
FIRST RESPONDER
WELLNESS
CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 4–6, 2024

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NORFOLK, VIRGINIA



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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Criminal Justice Services

The Honorable Jackson H. Miller
Director

Tracy Louise Winn Banks, Esq.
Chief Deputy Director

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September 4, 2024

Dear Colleague:

On behalf of Governor Glenn Youngkin, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Terrance Cole, and the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2024 First Responder Wellness Conference. The goal of this conference is to provide training and resources to law enforcement, fire, EMS, corrections, and 911 dispatchers, thus improving the effectiveness of first responders and safety of the community. We realize that as first responders, you are often exposed to harrowing events and the numerous effects of witnessing human suffering and tragedies. The daily accumulation of stress, anxiety, and trauma in your profession is rarely addressed.

First responders spend much of their careers supporting and assisting others in need. It can be difficult to recognize the impact of the career on the daily lives of first responders. DCJS is pleased to offer this two-and-a-half-day conference to provide information, resources, and training to the first responder community. Our goal is for first responder professionals to learn from experts in the field about resources and best practices while developing comprehensive health and wellness strategies.

It is my hope that the lessons you will hear will help you focus on your health and wellness so that you can continue improving the quality of life for the communities you serve.

Please enjoy the conference and know that all of us at DCJS appreciate your dedication to keeping the Commonwealth safe.

With much gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jackson H. Miller".

Jackson Miller
Director

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- 8:00 AM – 8:15 AM** **Welcome and Opening Ceremony — 4th Floor, Salons D/E**
Presentation of Colors and National Anthem
Opening Remarks
Tracy Louise Winn Banks, *Chief Deputy Director – Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services*
Mark Talbot, *Chief – Norfolk Police Department*
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- 8:15 AM – 9:45 AM** **The 10 Code Mindset — 4th Floor, Salons D/E**
Scott Medlin, *Founder – The 10 Code Mindset Podcast*
First responders and veterans experience more stress, demands, and trauma than the average citizen in America. The men and women in blue are depicted, and will sometimes depict themselves, as legendary, stoic warriors who neither know nor feel fear. Unfortunately, so many first responders and veterans face a threat of suicide, and there is the very real risk of becoming mentally and/or physically injured on the job. Many first responders (current and former) and veterans learn to survive the challenges of their careers, but a survival mindset in life can be a hindrance on thriving in life. The goal of this period of instruction is to inspire those in attendance to take on a thriving mindset through massive action that must be done one step at a time. All attendees will learn about resources and sources cited for information in the course.
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- 9:45 AM – 10:00 AM** **Break**
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- 10:00 AM – 10:30 AM** **Remarks from Terrance Cole, Virginia Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security — 4th Floor, Salons D/E**
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- 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM** **iRest® Meditation and Sleep Disruption Support — 4th Floor, Salons D/E**
Jennifer Boileau, *Founder – Jennifer Boileau Mindfulness Coaching*
Jen Boileau will share a visual presentation overview of why the practices are beneficial in respect to each area, and how it applies to their lives as first responders. She will place special focus on iRest® meditation and sleep disruption support, as that is a universal issue across first responders, and one that almost all can relate to very quickly. Additionally, she will also provide a solid foundation to the “why” behind the modalities.
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- 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM** **Lunch (provided) — 4th Floor, Salons F/G/H**
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- 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM** **BREAKOUT SESSIONS**
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- 1. Spiritual Wellness for First Responders — 4th Floor, Salon A**
Gareth Stephenson, *Police Chaplain – Shield Chaplaincy*
In this workshop, Gareth Stephenson, a police chaplain in western Virginia, will discuss philosophies of wellness and why first responders should focus on spiritual wellness. He recounts his own journey with spiritual wellness and how to achieve it. Available resources for first responders will also be discussed.
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- 2. MELT Method Hand and Foot Treatment and Progressive Muscle Relaxation — 4th Floor, Salons D/E**
Jennifer Boileau, *Founder – Jennifer Boileau Mindfulness Coaching*
This breakout will teach the practice of the MELT Method Hand and Foot treatment and Progressive Muscle Relaxation (to address the fascia and lymphatic hydration systems in the body) to yield physical relief after sitting in a squad car, at a desk, or other repetitive positions, for long periods of time. These modalities can be easily used at home after our sessions and follow-up supports will be given to all participants for ease of integration into their lives.
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- 3. Navigating Transitions and Trauma for First Responders — 4th Floor, Salon B**
Jesalyn Moore, *Licensed Clinical Social Worker – Licensed Substance Abuse Treatment Practitioner*
– *Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor*
Rich Creamer, *Certified Substance Abuse Counselor*
The purpose of this session is to provide public safety personnel with tools and insights necessary to effectively navigate residual trauma, adjusting to new routines, and significant life-changing events including marriage, divorce, childbirth, loss of family member, promotion, transfer, retirement, and more.

4. How Many is Too Many and Who is SAM?!? — 4th Floor, Salon C

Kristina Moore, *Behavioral Health Coordinator – Loudoun County Fire and Rescue*

This session will explore the various facets of addressing and managing substance use disorder among First Responders. Participants will briefly explore the Stages of Change, a model which outlines the process individuals undergo when modifying behavior. The presentation will also provide participants a general understanding of American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) criteria. ASAM is a set of guidelines that providers use when assessing and treating substance use disorders. It is helpful for everyone to have an awareness of ASAM criteria so that you may understand how treatment decisions or service options are made. Additionally, the course will provide a brief overview into the importance of 42 CFR Part 2, a federal regulation that protects the confidentiality of substance use disorder patient records. Finally, we will close with a discussion on resource options for First Responders who may be struggling with substance use.

2:00 PM – 2:30PM **Break**

2:30 PM – 4:00 PM **BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

1. PTSD – The Basics — 4th Floor, Salon A

Sgt. David Corlett, *Cincinnati Police Department (retired), Ohio – Army Veteran*

Sgt. David Corlett will provide real world information on how he, as a service member and first responder, experienced stress and PTSD, and the impact it had on his life. This discussion will help the audience understand the toll of stress and when, why, and how they should seek help.

2. Wellness Overview and the Foundation for First Responder Wellness and Resiliency — 4th Floor, Salon B

Maggie DeBoard, *Police Chief – Herndon Police Department*

This 90-minute presentation will focus on the critical need to address first responder mental health and wellness, from both a self-care and leadership standpoint. Results from the National Wellness Survey for Public Safety Personnel will be briefly discussed to highlight the need, and a preview of an upcoming follow-up survey will be introduced. We will discuss critical components of an effective health and wellness program and how to make resources accessible and trusted by your first responders. Lastly, the Foundation for First Responder Wellness and Resiliency will be introduced, discussing its mission to bring mental health and wellness care to our Virginia first responder community in a holistic and confidential manner.

3. MELT Method Hand and Foot Treatment and Progressive Muscle Relaxation — 4th Floor, Salons D/E

Jennifer Boileau, *Founder – Jennifer Boileau Mindfulness Coaching*

This breakout will teach the practice of the MELT Method Hand and Foot treatment and Progressive Muscle Relaxation (to address the fascia and lymphatic hydration systems in the body) to yield physical relief after sitting in a squad car, at a desk, or other repetitive positions, for long periods of time. These modalities can be easily used at home after our sessions and follow-up supports will be given to all participants for ease of integration into their lives.

4. Leadership Redefined: The EQ Advantage — 4th Floor, Salon C

Dr. Gene Reid, *Founder – Reid Training Solutions, LLC.*

“Leadership Redefined: The EQ Advantage” is a training that focuses on the significance of emotional intelligence in first responder leadership roles. The training provides participants with skills to enhance their interpersonal skills, improve their decision-making abilities, and experience an overall boost in leadership effectiveness. Additionally, the components of emotional intelligence are discussed through real-world scenarios and participants learn how to combat the negative impact of toxic leadership. The dynamic and engaging nature of the program ensures an interactive learning experience for participants, fostering a deeper understanding of emotional intelligence and its applications in first responder settings.

4:00 PM **End of Day 1**

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- 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM** **Post Traumatic Stress & Suicide: A Candid View From The Other Side — 4th Floor, Salons D/E**
Christopher Moore, *Captain – Chesapeake Fire Department*
- This presentation is intended to bring even more awareness about first responder mental health and wellness, as well as suicide, to all in attendance. Most are familiar with this epidemic within our military and veteran communities and, thankfully, they are working to fix this. However, not many are aware of how this same epidemic is plaguing our first responders. Sharing his story and helping other first responders is Christopher Moore's passion and, in this presentation, he candidly discusses PTSD and suicide within the first responder world, the unfortunate stigma associated with getting help and the effects all of this has on not just the first responder, but the family dynamic as well as the organization. He will share his personal story of living with post-traumatic stress and a suicide attempt and how it not only affected him but affected others that he loves as well. By doing so, he hopes to let others know what to look for, know that it's ok to ask for help, how to get help and to help end the stigma surrounding our mental health. This presentation constantly evolves, as does Captain Moore, and he remains completely open, honest, and transparent with his journey, as he prides himself on that and believes that is needed to assist in the healing process for all.
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- 10:00 AM – 10:30 AM** **Break**
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- 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM** **Substance Use and Public Safety Professionals — 4th Floor, Salons D/E**
Jesalyn Moore, *Licensed Clinical Social Worker – Licensed Substance Abuse Treatment Practitioner*
– *Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor*
- This presentation is a discussion on understanding addiction, its impact on public safety and the unique challenges for public safety professionals. Ms. Moore will provide strategies for promoting wellness and support, accessing treatment and recovery resources. She will also speak about building resilience and long-term wellness.
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- 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM** **Lunch (provided) — 4th Floor, Salons F/G/H**
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- 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM** **It's Time We Talk — 4th Floor, Salons D/E**
Dennis Proffitt, *Badge to the Bone Podcast*
Allen Slonaker, *Badge to the Bone Podcast*
- The presenters give an overview on the state of First Responder mental health/wellness, and law enforcement suicides. Additionally, they discuss the importance of sharing personal experiences with other first responders and how *Badge to the Bone Podcast* came to be.
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- 2:00 PM – 2:30 PM** **Break**
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- 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM** **Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) Wellness Unit — 4th Floor, Salons D/E**
Bryan Edelen, *Major – Louisville Metro Police Department, Kentucky*
Rebecca Grignon-Reker, *Executive Director – Louisville Metro Police Foundation, Kentucky*
- On April 10, 2023, the Louisville, Kentucky Metropolitan Police Department (LMPD) responded to a workplace shooting where five people were killed and eight more were injured, including a rookie police officer. This presentation will review the development of the LMPD Wellness Unit following the civil unrest of 2020, and furthermore, describe how the LMPD Wellness Unit responded to this mass violence incident. This presentation will include lessons learned and share how agencies can best prepare for this type of critical incident.
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- 4:00 PM** **End of Day 2**
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8:00 AM – 12:00 PM	<p>Elite Level Confidence — 4th Floor, Salons D/E John Mollura, <i>Founder – John Mollura Consulting, LLC.</i> <i>You're a leader and it is frustrating to feel stuck.</i> NASA test leader John Mollura shares lessons learned operating with elite teams to help you take authentic action. Even though you are a problem solver and a high achiever, there are unseen hazards lurking in places that you might never have considered impeding your progress. It is infuriating, exhausting, and quite frankly depressing to have all the awards, all the degrees, all of the compliments, yet still hesitate, second-guess yourself and wonder, "Is this all there is"? Mr. Mollura wants you to live well, love well, and serve well with confidence, which is why he created the Elite Level Confidence Keynote. Let him be your guide to switch from stuck to soaring.</p>
12:00 PM	<p>Conference concludes</p>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional conference materials are available by accessing this QR code:



www.dcjs.virginia.gov/resources-2024-first-responder-wellness-conference

Virginia First Responder Wellness website:



Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services – Office of First Responder Wellness

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