

**Program:**  
**National Copline**  
**1-800-COPLINE**  
**Launched April 2005**  
*An Officers Life Line*



**Summary of Program-** Copline is the first national law enforcement officers hotline in the country that is manned by retired law enforcement officers. Retired law enforcement officers are trained in active listening and bring the knowledge and understanding of the many psychosocial stressors that officers go through both and off the job. Active officers and or their families can call 24 hours and day 7 days a week and be assured that there is a trained retired officer on the other end of the line whether the caller is calling while on the duty or off. The line is strictly confidential and there is no fear of punitive repercussions from making the call.

**The Facts-** Within the police occupation, officers have an 8-fold risk of killing themselves over being killed by a perpetrator. They also have a 3-fold risk of suicide over on-duty accidents. Officers have an increased rate of separation or divorce within the first three years of employment, and increase rates of substance use when compared to the general population. They are exposed to more trauma in a day than civilians are in a life time. It is said that 38-58% of all active officers have PTSD and few are treated. This can lead to depression and suicide. Officers who are exposed to trauma have a 5-fold risk of suicidal thinking.

**Target Audience-** Copline is the first national peer to peer hotline exclusively for law enforcement officers and their families. The highest suicide rates in law enforcement are in rural areas in deep undercover operations. The officers are isolated from the ones they love and take on a persona that is needed to survive in the element they are working in. It is imperative that the officers feel there is a safe place to call and get someone that can understand what they are going through. Many officers do not see the changes in their own personalities over time; it is the one's closest to the officer. The line will also be a safe place for spouses, significant others and children to call as well to talk to someone that can help them understand what their loved one might be going through without the fear of repercussions to the officer.

**Successes-** Copline has been written up in the National FOP newspaper as well as in many papers locally throughout the Country. Stephanie Samuels, the creator and Founder of Copline has spoken at the American Police Beat Conference at Harvard Law School Labor and Work life Program and been featured in the American Police Beat Magazine. In the last 2 months, over 200 calls and emails from volunteers have come into Copline. Florida has created a law enforcement officer's suicide prevention task force which Copline has been recognized by as being part of the solution to the problem.

\*statistics on law enforcement suicide come from Violanti, J.M., Vena, J.E. & Marshall, J.R. (1996). Suicides, homicides, and accidental deaths: A comparative risk assessment of police officers and municipal workers. American Journal of Industrial Medicine, 30, 99-104.

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