FIRE SERVICE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RAPID RESPONSE:
RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOWING AN ON-DUTY FATALITY,
INJURY OR SEVERE CLOSE CALL

PRE-PLANNING

GOAL: Preparation, improve coping

> Lead by Example: Promote the importance of behavioral health.
  - Communicate the importance of behavioral health to members.
  - Sponsor behavioral health trainings and encourage attendance.
  - Establish and/or support local peer support teams by encouraging involvement.
  - Provide information on behavioral health and mass violence related mobile apps ([WWW.POCKETPEER.ORG](http://WWW.POCKETPEER.ORG)).
  - Include a behavioral health representative in all trainings and events to show importance of behavioral health.

> Review material’s related to being prepared for a line of duty death. (available on [WWW.FIREHEROLEARNINGNETWORK.COM](http://WWW.FIREHEROLEARNINGNETWORK.COM)).
  - Taking Care of Our Own®
  - Stress First Aid
  - After Action Review

> Ensure your own affairs are in order and those of your crews.
  - Update beneficiary forms on an annual basis.
  - Complete the Safety Officers’ Benefits Designation Form (available on [WWW.FIREHERO.ORG](http://WWW.FIREHERO.ORG)).

> Learn about common reactions to potentially traumatic events and mental health resources.
  - Available on [WWW.POCKETPEER.ORG](http://WWW.POCKETPEER.ORG).
  - Look for training via department’s Employee Assistance Program or community behavioral health resources.

IMMEDIATE (0 – 48 HOURS)

GOAL: Survival, communication

> Establish that basic needs have been met by assessing the members’ safety and security.

> Remain calm and communicate.
  - Hold an operational meeting with members and provide information about details and next steps.
  - Conduct an After Action Review.
  - Assess communication with family, friends, community.
  - Listen to concerns and follow up.

FUNDING GENEROUSLY PROVIDED THROUGH DHS/FEMA’S GRANT PROGRAM DIRECTORATE FOR ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT PROGRAM – FIRE PREVENTION AND SAFETY GRANTS.
Encourage self-care and buddy-care.
- Give the members autonomy to decide when and where to rest (i.e., at home vs station).
- Check in that members are eating healthy, avoiding abusing alcohol and getting plenty sleep.
- Inspire members to talk to peers.

Contact experts to provide supportive mental health services.

**RESCUE (0 – 1 WEEK)**

**GOAL: Adjustment**

- Conduct a needs assessment with a confidential survey or informally talking to department members.
- Review the Seven Cs of Stress First Aid and encourage members to look after each other.
- Coordinate psychological stress resources by facilitating meetings with local peer support teams or other local resources.
- Have resources available for family members.

**RECOVERY (1 – 4 WEEKS)**

**GOAL: Appraisal, planning**

- Monitor the recovery environment.
  - Hold follow-up meeting with members – provide additional information and reduce mental health stigma.
- Foster resilience and recovery.
  - Sponsor relevant support groups and trainings (i.e., family, coworker, and grief support; coping skills).
  - Provide information on behavioral health related mobile apps like [WWW.POCKETPEER.ORG](http://WWW.POCKETPEER.ORG).

**RETURN TO LIFE (4 WEEKS – ONGOING)**

**GOAL: Reintegration**

- Reduce stigma by supporting and encouraging mental health treatment.
  - Continue to provide handouts on resources and services.
- Review the AAR action items and develop an implementation plan if appropriate.

For more information on Stress First Aid, visit [WWW.FIRSTRESPONDERCENTER.ORG/TRAINING-FOR-FIRST-RESPONDERS](http://WWW.FIRSTRESPONDERCENTER.ORG/TRAINING-FOR-FIRST-RESPONDERS)