

## You Can Help

- ❖ Take all threats and gestures seriously.
- ❖ Assess if your safety is in jeopardy.
- ❖ Ask permission to secure weapon(s), including backup(s).
- ❖ Immediately request assistance from ESSB.
- ❖ DO NOT leave the person alone.
- ❖ Help delegate necessary duties such as child care or other daily responsibilities, until the crisis has resolved.
- ❖ When the crisis is over, get debriefed for your own peace of mind.



## AID LIFE

This acronym may help you remember what to do when assisting a person who is suicidal:

- A Ask.** Do not be afraid to ask, “Are you thinking about hurting yourself?” or “Are you thinking about suicide?”
- I Intervene immediately.** Take action. Listen and let the person know he or she is not alone.
- D Don’t keep it a secret.**
- L Locate help.** Seek out a professional at ESSB, Peer Support Person, Chaplain, friend or family member.
- I Involve Command.** If the person is imminently suicidal, be prepared to involve a supervisor to save his or her life.
- F Find someone to stay with the person now.** Don’t leave the person alone.
- E Expedite.** Get help now. An at-risk person needs immediate attention from professionals.



During business hours call Employee Support Services Bureau at 213-738-3500.

After business hours, the on-call psychologist can be reached at 213-206-5528 or paged through Sheriff’s Headquarter’s Bureau at 323-526-5541.

# SUICIDE PREVENTION



## A Guide For Supervisory Staff

**Employee Support Services Bureau (ESSB)**  
**(213) 738-3500**

## Why Should I Learn About Suicide?

- ✓ It is one of the top ten causes of death.
- ✓ More peace officers die because of suicide than are killed in the line of duty.
- ✓ One half million people are admitted to emergency rooms each year due to suicide attempts.
- ✓ All deputies have firearms, and firearms are the most frequently used means of suicide.
- ✓ Law enforcement suicide significantly impacts partners, colleagues, supervisors, first responders, family, friends and the community at large.
- ✓ 80% of people who attempt suicide tell somebody first via their actions or actual statements.



## Why Do People Attempt Suicide?

- ◆ Frequently, it is to let other people know that they are in psychological pain.
- ◆ Depression, anxiety, alcohol, drugs, a relationship loss, and being under investigation increase the likelihood that a person will attempt suicide.

### Suicide Risk Factors

- (1) Threat to harm oneself
- (2) Prior suicide attempt(s)
- (3) Disturbance in sleep/appetite/weight
- (4) Thinking is constricted, all or nothing, black or white
- (5) Risk-taking behavior has increased
- (6) There is a plan and means to carry it out
- (7) Is emotionless/numb
- (8) Is angry/agitated
- (9) Is sad/depressed
- (10) Is hopeless, with no orientation toward the future or is giving away valued possessions
- (11) Problems at work/home
- (12) Recent loss (status, loved one)
- (13) Under investigation
- (14) Socially isolated/withdrawn
- (15) Increased consumption of alcohol/drugs

## Supervisor Responsibilities

- ☎ Call ESSB to request suicide prevention training.
- ☎ Make sure that information about suicide prevention is available to line staff.
- ☎ Be aware of resources within the Department, such as Chaplains, PSP, POA, counseling and consultations through ESSB.
- ☎ Ensure that your subordinates feel that they will be given assistance and support when they bring a problem forward.

## What You Can Tell Your Line Staff

- ☞ When you suspect someone is having suicidal thoughts, reach out to them as soon as possible.
- ☞ Asking the person if they are thinking about suicide will NOT make them go out and do it.
- ☞ It is courageous and appropriate to take steps necessary to help a co-worker who is at risk for suicide.

