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## **New Research Highlights Importance of Investing in Mental Health Resources for Law Enforcement**

*Research Brief Illustrates the Unique and Significant Mental Health Challenges Facing Law Enforcement Due to the High Demand of the Profession*

**Sacramento, CA** – Today, the [Peace Officers Research Association of California](#) (PORAC) has released its latest [research brief](#) shedding light on the mental health challenges faced by law enforcement officers and offering actionable solutions to support their well-being. This brief is a compilation of the foremost research on officer mental health, which underscores the immense physical and emotional toll that comes with a career in law enforcement. Officers routinely experience high levels of stress, trauma, and long hours, leading to elevated rates of PTSD, depression, anxiety, and suicide.

“Law enforcement professionals stand on the front lines every day, facing immense pressure to protect and serve our communities, often at great personal cost,” **said Brian Marvel, President of PORAC**. “This research shines a spotlight on the mental health challenges that too many officers endure in silence due to longstanding stigmas around asking for help. Supporting officers’ wellness is not just about safeguarding their ability to perform effectively—it’s about recognizing their humanity and ensuring they have the resources they need to lead healthy, balanced lives while continuing to protect public safety with dedication and resilience.”

Key findings from the brief include:

- **Mental Health Struggles:** 83% of officers report experiencing mental health challenges, with 35% reporting symptoms of PTSD—five times the rate of the general population.
- **Suicide Risk:** Suicide claims nearly three times as many officers as line-of-duty deaths. Approximately half of police officers report knowing a colleague who has taken their own life.
- **Burnout Crisis:** Officers experiencing burnout are 117% more likely to have suicidal thoughts. Long hours and emotional exhaustion are driving high turnover rates, worsening [already critical staffing shortages](#).

“The findings in this research brief reinforce what those in law enforcement already know—officers face unique mental health challenges that demand our immediate attention,” **said Manny Alvarez, Executive Director at California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)**. “Addressing these challenges requires a commitment to breaking down stigmas and providing access to effective mental health resources. At POST, we are dedicated to advancing wellness initiatives that equip peace officers with the tools they need to navigate the emotional demands of the job while ensuring they feel supported at every step of their careers.”



The brief highlights ongoing initiatives aimed at helping officers cope with the stressors of the job at the state and local levels – including California POST Wellness Training, NAMI COPE Peer-Support Program, local agency wellness units, and PORAC Institute Courses. While these efforts have been successful in supporting the mental health of law enforcement personnel, there is still work to be done. More than 90% of officers report feeling discouraged from seeking mental health support because of the stigma against getting help. In the brief, PORAC calls for increased resources for expanded mental health training, regular wellness check-ins, peer support networks, and confidential counseling services. These steps are essential to protect the mental health of peace officers and ensure they can continue serving California’s communities safely and effectively.

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#### **About the Peace Officers Research Association of California**

The Peace Officers Research Association of California (PORAC) was incorporated in 1953 as a professional federation of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. PORAC represents over 83,000 public safety members and over 955 associations, making it the largest law enforcement organization in California and the largest statewide association in the nation.