

REMEMBERING HEROES // P. 32

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FEATURES



32

32 // Remembering Our Fallen Heroes

36 // Tragedy-Free Policing or Else: The Need for Critical Thinking



36

EXECUTIVE BOARD

14 // President's Message

Fighting to Preserve Our Legacy and
Protect Our Future

16 // Vice President's Message

Time to Stop the "Doom Cycle"

18 // Secretary's Message

The Latest Conference Updates You
Need to Know

20 // Treasurer's Message

Taking Financial Care of Your Lodge:
Fiduciary Responsibilities of Lodge Officers

22 // Sergeant at Arms' Message

It's Time to Get Back to Work

24 // National Trustees Chairman's Message

Turning 65 in 2021? What to Do If You're
New to Medicare

DEPARTMENTS

28 // Member Spotlight

Jamy Steinberg

40 // Wellness

Connecting Officers With the Help They Need

42 // NFOPU Spotlight

American Military University

44 // Washington Report

The Right to Bargain Collectively

50 // Labor News

The Importance of Having Legal Defense:
A True Story

52 // Legal Counsel

Law Enforcement Officer Wellness Legislation

56 // FOP Legal Defense Plan

New Retired Law Enforcement Concealed Carry
Legal Defense Coverage

58 // FOP Auxiliary

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IS YOUR DEPARTMENT READY TO RESPOND TO AND PROVIDE AT A MENTAL ILLNESS SITUATION?

By Lon Bartel, retired officer, Nationally Certified Instructor and Director of Training & Curriculum at VirTra

Mental illness situations are becoming more common, especially within the US. But did you realize just how common? According to the National Institute of Mental Health, nearly 1 in 5 American adults live with a mental illness. Putting this in perspective, in 2019, this equated to roughly 51.5 million adults.

Due to how common they are, officers are essentially guaranteed to encounter individuals who have one or more mental illnesses. However, officers should note that the severity of one's condition can range from little/no impairment to severe, meaning it may not always be easy to recognize.

MENTAL ILLNESS TRAINING

To better prepare officers for most encounters, VirTra created the V-VICTA™ curriculum “Mental Illness Training: A Practical Approach”. V-VICTA—Virtual Interactive Coursework Training Academy—is VirTra’s nationally-certified simulation curriculum that teaches, trains, tests and sustains officers in critical topics and is accepted by 37 State POST agencies.

The progressive Mental Illness Training: A Practical Approach curriculum contains 15 hours of nationally-certified training material designed to increase an officer’s knowledge and skills. As such, it covers multiple common mental illnesses and disorders officers must be conscious of, including: anxiety, dementia, PTSD, schizophrenia, suicide and more.



HOW OFFICERS BENEFIT

This curriculum does not train officers how to diagnose a mental illness. Instead, it provides officers the tools to recognize symptoms and nuances so they can deploy the correct communication techniques for the situation. Recognizing that a subject may be suffering from schizophrenia allows the officer to understand how to better communicate with the subject, thus decreasing the chance of injury to the subject or the officer.

WHAT IS INCLUDED

In addition to symptom awareness and recognition, implementing this curriculum helps officers to break stigmas and show empathy. As with all V-VICTA curriculum, Mental Illness Training: A Practical Approach consists of presentations, lesson plans and corresponding scenarios. These straight-from-the-box training materials allows instructors to teach officers about each mental illness before having them engage with a person demonstrating those symptoms in the real-life simulator.

Furthermore, this training also includes interviews with individuals who have experienced mental illness and what they feel officers should know, from their perspective. This helps officers learn to correctly identify mental illnesses, develop empathy and create connections—building critical, transferrable skills.

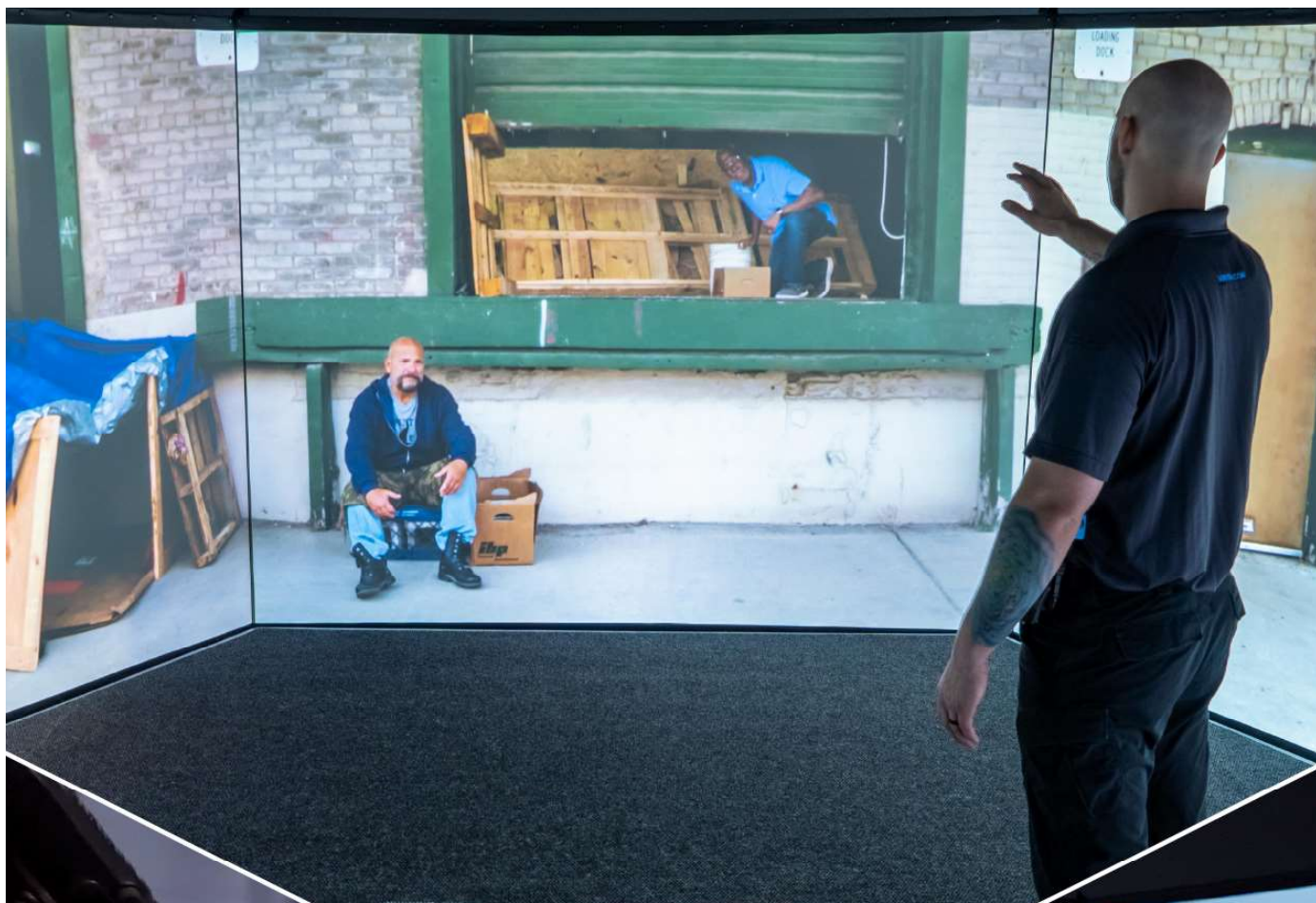
THE IMPORTANCE OF SIMULATORS

Practicing skill recognition and communication techniques with simulated subjects also allows each officer to have the same training experience—no need to rely on role-players who may falter or accidentally demonstrate incorrect mental illness symptoms during training.

Training in a simulator also guarantees officers train in a real-life environment. Each of VirTra’s mental illness scenarios are filmed using professional-grade equipment and hired actors in relevant locations, making the simulated environment feel. Research shows that practicing in a high-fidelity environment such as this increases immersion, leading to an increase in skill building, which translates to skills that transfer to the field.

MORE INFORMATION

Guided by this nationally-certified curriculum, officers increase the probability of having mental illness encounters end on a positive note, thus saving lives while reducing lawsuits. Start implementing this curriculum into your training regime by contacting a VirTra specialist at www.virtra.com



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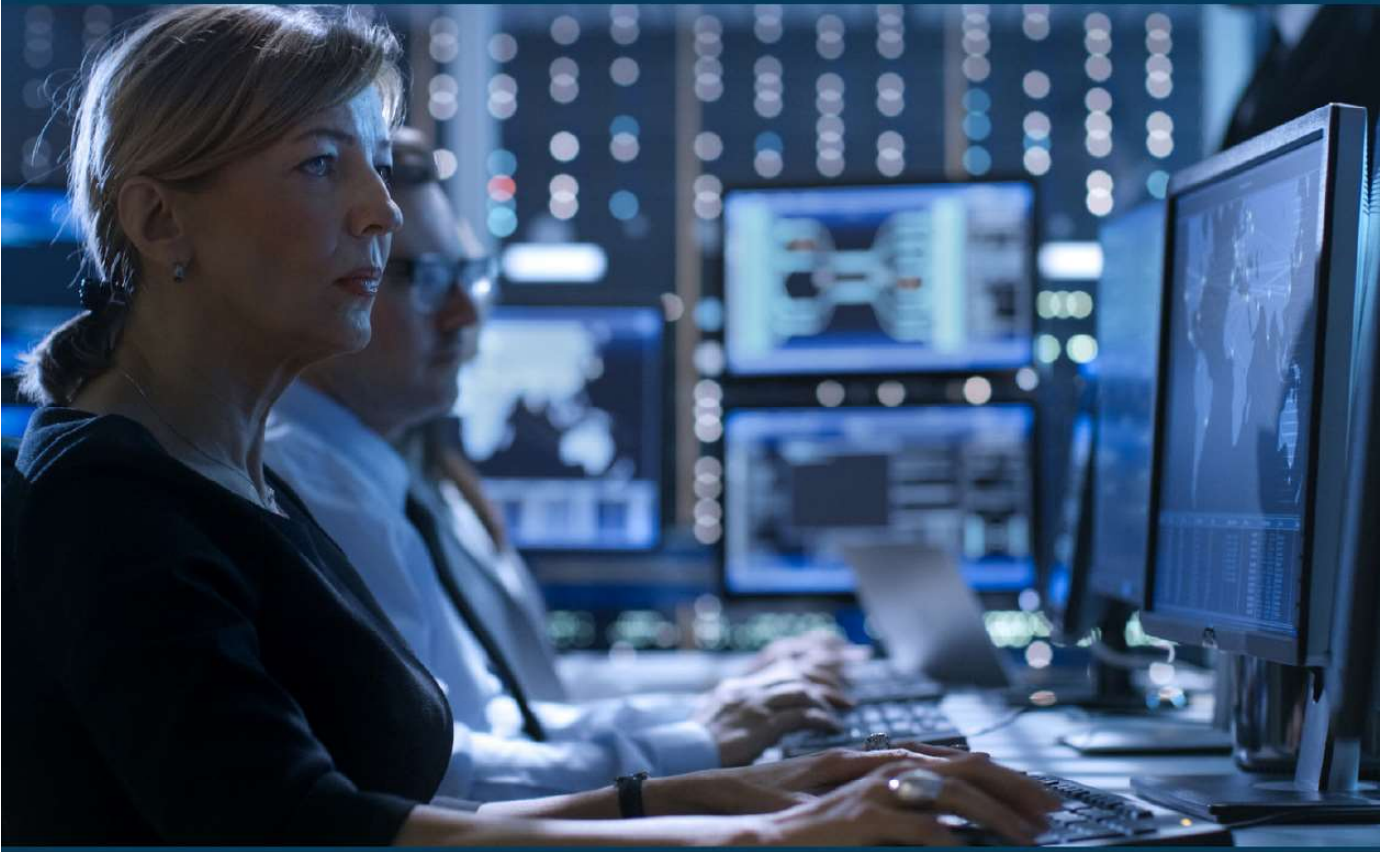


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// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Patrick Yoes at (504) 234-4300, or pyoes@fop.net

As the oldest and largest law enforcement labor organization in the country, the Fraternal Order of Police continues to be fully engaged in national discussions on the topic of police reform and is in virtually daily contact with congressional negotiators, the White House, the Department of Justice and other major law enforcement groups. We have made clear time and time again our willingness to engage with anyone interested in having fact-based discussions about how to improve policing in our country.

While conversations on police reform continue to happen on Capitol Hill, the FOP remains committed to ensuring that the rights of our fellow brothers and sisters in uniform are protected.

We reject any extreme provisions that would end qualified immunity. Qualified immunity is critical to our profession because it protects our ability to make split-second decisions when responding to incidents. There is very little dispute that the current doctrine is working.

It is important to remember that policing is essentially locally controlled.

Across this country, there are over 18,000 local and state law enforcement agencies that answer to local and state governments. The FOP does not support

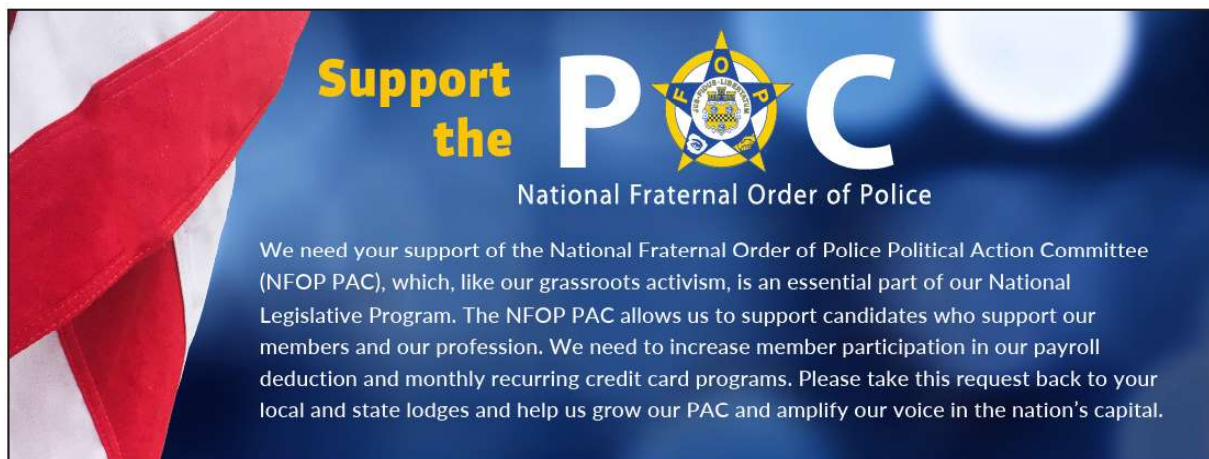
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our country.**

unfunded mandates and the use of federal grants to make policy changes at the local or state level. The federal government cannot impose such mandates without

violating the Constitution, so federal efforts to make changes at the local level are limited to using federal grants as incentives or penalties to achieve desired outcomes. When federal grants meant to provide vital law enforcement assistance are withheld, public safety in the impacted locales inevitably suffers. The federal government must not give up its responsibility to provide for the safety and security of our citizens.

We believe that there are broad areas of agreement and have built consensus on issues like data collection, agency accreditation, expanded use of body-worn cameras and improved training.

The FOP will continue to work in a collaborative way with the administration, Congress, affected Cabinet agencies and others to craft criminal justice reform legislation that will make this country a safer and fairer place for all its citizens — and for the law enforcement officers sworn to protect them. While what the final policing reform legislation will look like in Congress remains to be seen, the fact that conversations are still happening means that there is still hope. **FOP**



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We need your support of the National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee (NFOP PAC), which, like our grassroots activism, is an essential part of our National Legislative Program. The NFOP PAC allows us to support candidates who support our members and our profession. We need to increase member participation in our payroll deduction and monthly recurring credit card programs. Please take this request back to your local and state lodges and help us grow our PAC and amplify our voice in the nation's capital.



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Time to Stop the “Doom Cycle”

// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Joe Gamaldi at jgamaldi@hpou.org.

How many times do we have to see it? An officer is giving verbal commands, doing everything to de-escalate a situation, and the individual doesn't listen. When the officer attempts to take the person into custody, the individual resists and fights the officer, and the officer uses force. After the use of force, the inevitable five-second, one-sided viral video is posted, and the media/political pundits go to work denigrating the hardworking men and women of law enforcement. The FOP comes out and defends the officers when they are following policy, training and the law, and ultimately, most times, months later on page 15 of the newspaper the officer is cleared of any wrongdoing. Of course, by then the damage has already been done to the officer, and our reputation has taken another hit ... wash, rinse, repeat. How many times do we as a society need to see this doom cycle repeated over and over again to know we are not making progress? In the past several national interviews I have done and in the National FOP's messaging on social media, we have been discussing the need

to end the doom cycle. A key component in ending that cycle is acknowledging the actions of the individual the officer is interacting with, instead of solely focusing on the actions of the person in uniform.

You see, a dangerous trend has been developing in this country over the last 20 years or so, one of a lack of personal responsibility. No one is responsible for

always be times where people simply do not listen and will resist/fight with law enforcement. Make no mistake, we will always look to improve, develop new tactics and use new technology, but there will always be individuals who resist. And the more the media and politicians paint us as the enemy, the more people will make the conscious choice to resist ... wash, rinse, repeat. The doom cycle will feed itself, but how do we stop it?

In order to put an end to the doom cycle, we need to continue to point out to opportunistic politicians and the media that there are two parties involved in every use-of-force scene and that the actions of the other individual have a monumental impact on whether an officer uses force and the outcome of that situation. That important messaging must be present in every discussion about police use of force, not just coming from the FOP but from all leaders within law enforcement. FOP lodges across the country must be willing to partner with local schools in our communities, and I am not just talking about high schools, I am talking about middle schools as well, to educate young people on how to interact with police officers in a safe manner. Finally, we need to vote. We need to vote for elected officials, regardless of party, who believe in a return to personal responsibility and holding people accountable for their actions. Until progress is made on this very issue of holding people responsible for **their** actions and not just blindly blaming the police, the doom cycle will continue with no end in sight ... wash, rinse, repeat.

Be safe out there, and if you need anything, I am only a phone call, text, email, or Facebook or Twitter direct message (@JoeGamaldi) away — or contact me on our **free** National FOP mobile app. **FOP**

The more the media and politicians paint us as the enemy, the more people will make the conscious choice to resist law enforcement.

their own actions anymore. We see it in criminal justice policies, where they tell criminals it is not their fault; it is the fault of the “system” that they continue to offend. This has led to revolving doors for criminals. We teach children that it is not their fault that they misbehave, and the world must bend and change around them to make sure they are happy. I could go on and on with examples, but I think you get the point. So we have taught everyone that nothing is their fault, so naturally when someone doesn't listen to the police, it couldn't possibly be their fault. All of the fault must lie with the officer. Well, I am going to let everyone in on a secret (anyone who hasn't worn a uniform, that is), we can be the best de-escalators the world has ever seen and we can conduct 10,000 hours of training on de-escalation, but there will

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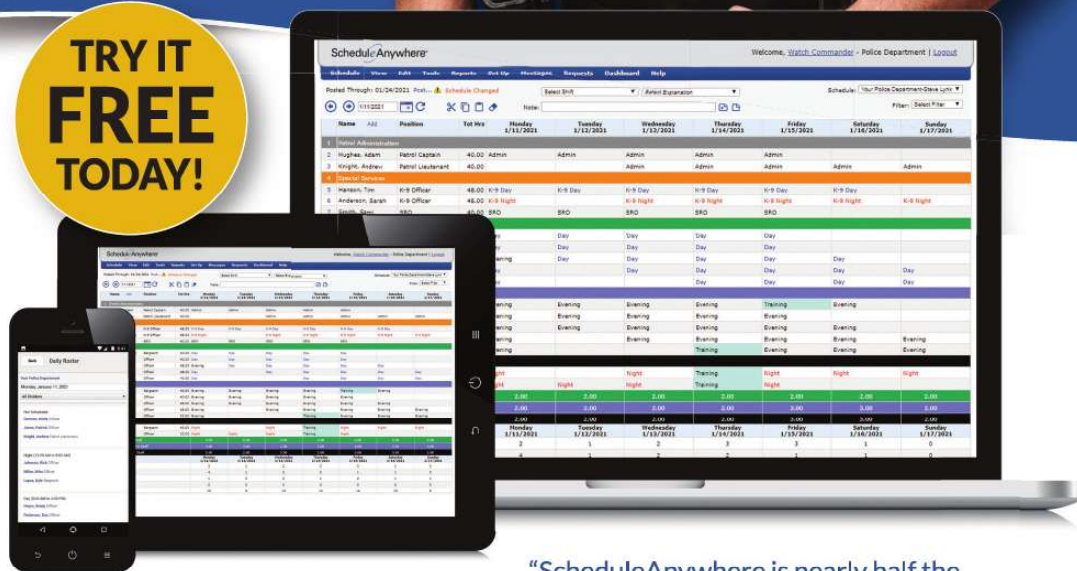
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The Latest Conference Updates You Need to Know



// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Jimmy Holderfield at (904) 813-0067, or jholderfield@fop.net.

Sisters and brothers, I pray that you and your family are safe and well. It appears that most of the country is getting back to some form of normalcy with the CDC revising its COVID recommendations. This is great news for the small businesses, especially restaurants, but also for us as people of our great nation. Let us all continue to do our part and still practice the safety precautions to help prevent the spread of this deadly virus.

We are getting ready for the upcoming 65th Biennial National Conference in Indianapolis. Indiana State Lodge President Bill Owensby and his staff have put together a fantastic Conference, and we anticipate attendance to exceed the last Conference. Everyone is ready to get back to business and fellowship. Look for exciting information in the next two *Journal* editions, and if you have not already done so, please download the National FOP app and the Indianapolis Conference app. Both will have information on the Conference and events and will be the main source of updated information during the Conference. We are also collecting email addresses this year for all Conference delegates and alternates. Any announcements that are made during the Conference will be mass emailed so that everyone is informed of any changes.

We recently had a meeting with the Indianapolis Convention staff, and they are excited about hosting us. One of our topics was COVID restrictions during the Conference. We were informed that it is anticipated that most restrictions will be relaxed by August, and we should not be under the mandatory mask requirements. This is good news, and I recommend that even if the restrictions are lifted, you should be guided by what you feel most comfortable doing.

Credentials were mailed from my office during the first week of May to each

State and local lodge. If your lodge has not yet received your credential forms, please notify the National Secretary's Office immediately at (800) 451-2711 or email Christina Karn at credentials@fop.net. New credential forms will be issued, and the lost ones must be voided. Every local lodge is entitled to one delegate for every 50 members or greater portion thereof. However, every local lodge shall be entitled to at least one delegate, while every State lodge shall be entitled to three delegates. The number of delegates

All lodges are required to pay any indebtedness to the Grand Lodge, including all per capita payments, by July 1 to be seated at the Conference.

to which a local lodge is entitled was determined based on membership count as of April 1.

All lodges are required to pay any indebtedness to the Grand Lodge, including all per capita payments, by July 1 to be seated at the Conference. The National Secretary's Office cannot accept payments for indebtedness at the Conference. We encourage local presidents or secretaries to pick up the delegate credentials for all of their respective delegates, but we need to know

in advance — email credentials@fop.net to enroll in this service. We also offer this service to State presidents and secretaries who desire to pick up credentials for their entire state. This process will reduce wait times, long lines and help with social distancing. Once picked up en masse, it is the responsibility of the State or local lodge to distribute delegate credentials in an area other than the registration zone.

There are 24 amendments to the National FOP Constitution and By-Laws that will be offered to you for consideration at the Conference. Most are from your National Secretary's Office and deal with allowing for more electronic communications, including future credentialing and membership cards. Please call upon me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Last month, we honored our fallen brothers and sisters with a virtual ceremony filmed at the Library of Congress and at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C. A big thanks goes to President Yoes, Sergeant at Arms Turney, Chairman Pride, Auxiliary President Hennie and the Auxiliary for putting this memorial event together. National Memorial Committee Co-Chair Andy Maybo (U.S. Capitol Police) arranged for us to film at both locations, and it was the perfect setting, with the Capitol in the background, to honor our fallen. We will honor our fallen brothers and sisters in person on October 16, 2021, in Washington, D.C. Details are forthcoming.

Recently, I traveled to West Virginia to lay my mother's ashes to rest in the family cemetery. It was an emotional trip since she passed away over a year ago, and due to COVID restrictions, we were just now able to honor her. One

Continued on page 26 >

65th Biennial National Conference and Exposition

Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis

August 15-19



The FOP is headed to Indiana for the 65th Biennial National Conference and Exposition. During the Conference, seminars will take place, the Constitution and By-Laws will be reviewed and changed, the Executive Board will be elected, exhibitors around the country will showcase their products and services at the Expo and much more. Here are the latest updates from this year's event:

SPECIAL VENDOR OPPORTUNITIES STILL AVAILABLE!

Are you interested in having your product or service reach 6,000 law enforcement officials across the country? Space is still available for vendors looking to network and showcase their products during this year's Expo (August 15-17).

Space is limited, so take advantage of this can't-miss opportunity **today!** Visit **fop.net** for the latest information and contact National Secretary Jimmy Holderfield or National Lodge Office Manager Leigh Ann Pemberton for more details.

DONATIONS NEEDED FOR FOP FOUNDATION RAFFLE

The FOP is asking State and local lodges to donate items for the Second Annual National FOP Foundation Raffle.

The raffle will take place on August 19, and all proceeds will go to the NFOP Foundation, a 501(c)(3). Contact National Secretary Jimmy Holderfield or National Ways and Means Chair Mike Essig for details.

Taking Financial Care of Your Lodge: Fiduciary Responsibilities of Lodge Officers



// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Tom Penozza at tomfop@aol.com.

In a continuing effort to provide our lodges with the information they need to help them run properly, I am writing a series of articles on "Taking Financial Care of Your Lodge." The articles are a collection of information provided by our accounting firm, along with my experiences as Delaware's State Lodge treasurer and as your National treasurer. I also draw from the many things I have learned while assisting other FOP lodges that have experienced misuse or theft of lodge funds. This article will cover the fiduciary responsibilities of lodge officers.

The Responsibilities of Individual Board Members:

- Attend all board and committee meetings and functions, such as special events
- Be informed about the organization's mission, services, policies and programs
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to board and committee meetings
- Serve on committees or task forces and offer to take on special assignments
- Inform others about the organization
- Suggest possible nominees to the boards (of subordinate lodges) who can make significant contributions to the work of the board and the organization
- Keep up to date on developments in the organization's field
- Follow conflict-of-interest and confidentiality policies
- Refrain from making special requests of the staff

What Are the Legal Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards?

A board member must meet certain standards of conduct and attention in

carrying out his or her responsibilities to the organization. These standards are usually described as the duty of care, the duty of loyalty and the duty of obedience.

- **Duty of care** describes the level of competence that is expected of a board member, and is commonly expressed as the duty of "care that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise in a like position and under similar circumstances." This means that a board member owes the duty to exercise reasonable care when he or she makes a decision as a steward of the organization.
- **Duty of loyalty** is a standard of faithfulness; a board member must give undivided allegiance when making decisions affecting the organization. This means that a board member can never use information obtained as a member for personal gain, but must act in the best interests of the organization.
- **Duty of obedience** requires board members to be faithful to the organization's mission. They are not permitted to act in a way that is inconsistent with the central goals of the organization.

How Do We Safeguard Against Conflict of Interest?

When the personal or professional concerns of a board member or a staff member affect his or her ability to put the welfare of the organization before personal benefit, conflict of interest exists.

Why Must We Be Concerned About Conflict of Interest?

Board service carries with it important ethical obligations. In addition, board members have a legal responsibility to assure the prudent management of an organization's resources. In fact, they

may be held liable for the organization's actions. A 1974 court decision known as the "Sibley Hospital case" set a precedent by confirming that board members can be held legally liable for conflict of interest because it constitutes a breach of their fiduciary responsibility.

What Should Be Included in a Conflict-of-Interest Policy?

A policy on conflict of interest has three essential elements:

1. **Full disclosure:** Board members and staff members in decision-making roles should make known their connections with groups doing business with the organization. This information should be provided annually.
2. **Board member abstention from discussion and voting:** Board members who have an actual or potential conflict of interest should not participate in discussions or vote on matters affecting transactions between the organization and the other group.
3. **Staff member abstention from decision-making:** Staff members who have an actual or potential conflict should not be substantively involved in decision-making affecting such transactions.

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It's Time to Get Back to Work

// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Keith Turney at kturney@fop.org.

I am writing this article on the one-year anniversary of the death of George Floyd. You are likely reading this a week or so later, and I am sure by now you are probably on "George Floyd overload." There is probably nothing you could hear, read or say that has not already been heard, read or said. So right now you are probably thinking, "Why, why, why, must you dredge up this issue here?" Honestly, I don't know. It's just that it's been weighing heavily on my mind. Perhaps it is because I feel that policing will be defined as before and after Floyd. Maybe it's because I, like many of you, are reminiscing on all the good that we have done in our communities over

We are all hurt in one way or another, but it's time to get back to work — our communities need us.

the years. And to now be judged as racists, bigots and jack-booted thugs over actions that we had no control of is simply breaking our hearts. Perhaps I simply want you all to know that I know we are all hurting.

I have always said no one gets up in the morning (afternoon or night, depending on your shift) and says to themselves, "Today I'm going to make a mess of my life. Yes, today I'm going to go out there and really screw up." Yet we all know that on any given day, with the right set of circumstances and just the right (or wrong) set of facts and observations, any one of us can make a fatal

Continued on page 26 >

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Turning 65 in 2021? What to Do If You're New to Medicare



// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Rob Pride at lodge52pride@gmail.com.

It's hard to believe we are already more than halfway through 2021, when 2020 took so long! Soon, our open enrollment period will begin for the FOP Aetna Medicare Advantage program. Medicare itself brings about many questions, especially for those who are becoming eligible.

The FOP understands that access to affordable, quality health insurance in retirement is important to you. It is valuable to have information on your plan options. This way, you can make an informed decision when you turn 65 or become eligible for Medicare.

Our friends at Aetna have put together a summary of helpful resources to answer questions about Medicare and our Medicare Advantage plan for all FOP members and their spouses.

Your First Step: Enroll in Medicare

You must sign up for Medicare during a seven-month window: the three months before your 65th birthday, the month you turn 65 and the three months after your 65th birthday. We recommend signing up early to avoid any gap in health-care coverage.

To sign up for Medicare, you can apply online at [SSA.gov](https://ssa.gov). Your local Social Security office may be closed for in-person services, but you can call (800) MEDICARE (TTY: 1-877-486-2048), 24 hours a day, seven days a week, if you have questions.

FOP Offers Four Plan Options

The FOP is offering retired FOP police officers and spouses the option to enroll in a choice of four Aetna Medicare Advantage plans with prescription drug coverage. The FOP plans, which are Medicare Advantage or Part C plans, combine everything covered under Part A (hospital care), Part B (doctor services) and Part D (prescription drugs) into one plan.

To be eligible for a Medicare Advantage plan, you have to enroll in Part A and Part B and pay your Part B monthly premiums. Go to FOP.AetnaMedicare.com/turning-65 for more information. We have helpful videos about enrolling in Medicare and the plan options available to you.

Who Can Join the FOP Aetna Medicare Advantage Plans?

These FOP Aetna plans are for people who purchase their own health-care coverage and don't have a bargained benefit through their former employer or union. These plans also include extra benefits not offered by Original Medicare, such as vision and hearing aid reimbursements, the SilverSneakers fitness benefit, a behavioral health coaching program, and other care and wellness programs to help keep you healthy.

How to Sign Up

Throughout 2021, as you become eligible for Medicare, you can sign up for an FOP Aetna Medicare Advantage plan. Just be sure you've already enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B. Then, to enroll in an FOP plan, go to FOP.AetnaMedicare.com or call Aetna at (866) 246-8039 (TTY: 711), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can be of assistance to you. As always, stay safe, be well and remain **FOP strong! FOP**

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Sean Fay

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SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 18 >

delight on my trip was stopping by the Beckley, West Virginia, Lodge #81, Carl Jones Recreational Facility. As I was driving down a winding road, I saw the FOP sign, and I stopped. There, I found two brothers, one on a backhoe and the other with a shovel, digging a huge hole to fix a broken water pipe for the facility pool. After exchanging greetings, they told me that they were fixing the broken pipe to get the pool ready for the children this summer. As I drove away, I thought how wonderful it is to have such great brothers and sisters who care for each other and our families. Fraternalism is alive and well, and I am proud to be a part of it.

In closing, please let me or my



staff know if your Grand Lodge can be of assistance to you. Our staff is the most dedicated and hardworking folks

anywhere. They genuinely care about the Order and our members. Be safe, and I will see you soon. **FOP**



SERGEANT AT ARMS' MESSAGE

Continued from page 22 >

error that changes life's trajectory. We all know it because we see it day in and day out. For example, if only that kid on the bike had crossed the street 30 seconds earlier, he would be alive today. If only that mom with the four kids had turned right instead of left, she would never have encountered that drunk driver. If only, if only, if only. Please understand that I am not laying judgment on the incident of May 25, 2020, because I know all too well a shift in time and space one millisecond in either direction would probably have resulted in a whole different scenario. But it didn't, and today we deal with the results. We had no control then. We have no control now.

LEOs are the ultimate observers of life. We live in hyper-drive. We experience in a week what others would normally experience in a lifetime. Many of us predicted that it was only a matter of time where some incident, somewhere, would light the powder keg that all the world was sitting on as a result of a pandemic. It was predictable, but I don't believe



preventable. There were just too many factors all converging at once. Mistrust of the government, conflicting information on COVID, a need to rally on an issue that was more controllable than an uncontrolled pandemic. Social media's competition with traditional media. Extreme political ideologies on both ends of the spectrum. The list is long.

I believe policing will be forever changed because of what we are dealing with in the here and now. But remember this, as one door closes, another certainly opens. This is a time in our profession where we need to delve deep inside and see what no longer works or makes sense and what new

opportunities await. We are already seeing where overzealous cuts in law enforcement are resulting in terrible consequences for our citizens. But we are also seeing our citizenry re-evaluating what crime really looks like and what they feel our role in it is. Perhaps they are finally seeing that we are not the solution to all of life's problems. Wherever this new path leads us, we need to keep an open mind and an open heart. We are only a part of the fabric that makes us all whole.

There is a scene in the movie *Black Hawk Down* where the crusty old veteran sergeant is approached by a young soldier. In the fog of war, the young and noticeably upset rookie is conveying his personal concerns that he's been shot and wounded. And in the heat of the battle, the response back from the sergeant is something like, "Yeah, we're all shot, now let's get back to work." Not that I'm a crusty old sergeant, but rather a wounded law enforcement veteran of some 40 years, I guess I would say to you, "Yes, we are all hurt in one way or another, but it's time to get back to work — our communities need us."

God bless you all, and God bless the FOP. **FOP**

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Jamy Steinberg

JIMMY HOLDERFIELD / NATIONAL SECRETARY

This month's member spotlight is on President Jamy Steinberg, who hails from Georgia, the Peach State. Brother Steinberg began his law enforcement career in 1997 and has been with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) for the past 23 years. He currently serves as the special agent in charge in the Region 9, Thomasville, Georgia, Investigative Office.

Years ago, Steinberg, along with several fellow GBI agents, noticed a trend that had developed. GBI agents were leaving the GBI to join the federal government and other law enforcement departments in the state. The main reason? Low wages. The group of agents

talked and decided to form their own FOP lodge to combat the drain on their agency, and more importantly, retain the good agents who did not want to leave. Brother Steinberg became a charter member of GBI Lodge #103 and was elected to serve as its second vice president.

Soon after, Brother Steinberg was elected president of Lodge #103, a position he still holds today. He was drafted by the Georgia State Lodge Executive Board to run for second vice president, which he served for two terms, and he served one term as first vice president. He was elected Georgia State Lodge president in 2018 and currently serves in that position.



Recently, President Steinberg led the charge in the Georgia Legislature by getting legislation passed to increase the Peace Officers' Annuity and Benefit Fund. Also passed was the inclusion of county jailers in the fund. The fund is an elective retirement account. He has also worked tirelessly on achieving parity pay among state law enforcement officers and has made great strides, with more work still ongoing. Through the Georgia FOP, he has given out over 1,000 ballistic vests to his brothers and sisters at no cost to the officer or their agency.

Brother Steinberg's focus is on continuing the close working relationship with the Georgia Legislature, which supports law enforcement and has been attentive to the Georgia FOP's needs. Georgia implemented annual training for de-escalation and use of force by law enforcement officers over five years ago. As with other states, the Georgia State Lodge combats the daily false narrative attacks on qualified immunity. "We strive for professionalism and accountability in Georgia law enforcement," Steinberg says. "Qualified immunity is not guaranteed — it's based on each case individually and the actions of the officer."

Asked why the FOP is so important, President Steinberg says: "The FOP is

"The Uniform"

GWEN ORFIELD / DEPUTY SHERIFF, RET.

Each day I don the uniform I am so proud to wear.
I don't wear a mask or cape and can't fly through the air.
I'm not a superhero, although I wish I could be,
For then, I would know for certain I'd make it home to my family.
It has become a pastime to hurt those of us in blue,
But we continue to protect and serve, even those who do.
The media will put their spin on what is to be seen
With little or no mention of the truth that lies between.
Many will disrespect us, some may even fear,
But in the time of desperate need, one thing is very clear,
Our society would be in chaos if we were no longer there
Or decide to never again don the uniform we were so proud to wear.

Continued on page 30 >

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 28 >

well respected, professional and a national force for our profession. The FOP gets involved when our profession is attacked and advocates for improvements in benefits, protections and our profession in general. I know that at any time, I can pick up the phone and send a text or email to any FOP member in this country and request help for myself or one of my members ... no questions asked. There are not too many organizations with over 356,000 members where this happens. We do the same here, but with a dash of Georgia hospitality added."

Steinberg's secret to success is his reliance on the past presidents for their advice and counsel. He recognizes that they have invaluable experience in recognizing new potential leaders, and most have worked through many of the obstacles we face each day. He is proud of the many talented and smart members throughout the state and



gives them credit for the membership increase of 25% in the past year and a half. He believes communication and open discussion of facts on a topic or

issue are paramount in avoiding or resolving conflicts. He detests "sugarcoating" and subscribes to "just say it."

President Steinberg focuses on creating new local lodges and advises the new leaders to focus on the issues in their area. "We do not believe in a cookie-cutter approach, but rather an individual approach locally," he says. To back this ideology up, he and the entire Georgia State Lodge Board stay connected with the newly formed lodges, providing support and advice until they are up and running.

Steinberg offers this advice to members about making an impact: "Get involved — find your talent and contribute. If you are not a member of the FOP Legal Defense Plan, **do not** let another day go by without joining! This is the best legal plan anywhere, and in today's world, you **cannot** afford to be without it. I am humbled to be in this position and hope to leave it better than I found it. Stay safe." **FOP**

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PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY VIRTUAL SERVICE

Visit youtu.be/hqtm9PcEHbQ to watch the National FOP's virtual tribute to the law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the safety and protection of our communities.



National President Pat Yoes with the National FOP Auxiliary

Remembering Our Fallen Heroes

The Grand Lodge and State and local lodges across the country honored the memory of our fallen brothers and sisters in blue with virtual and small in-person services on May 15, National Peace Officers Memorial Day. Additionally, on May 16, the National FOP Auxiliary laid a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. Here are a few photos from various memorial services. **FOP**

Continued on page 34 >



Bob Martinez (NM) pays tribute to the fallen



National FOP Chaplain Phil Wiggins, Brother Bob Martinez and National Secretary Jimmy Holderfield at the virtual Memorial Service



National President Pat Yoes and National FOP Auxiliary President Linda Hennie



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– **Crime Analyst**, Placentia PD

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National FOP and National Auxiliary officers at the Library of Congress for the taping of the virtual Memorial Service



Andrew Jackson Lodge #5 (TN) President James Smallwood delivers a memorial address in Nashville

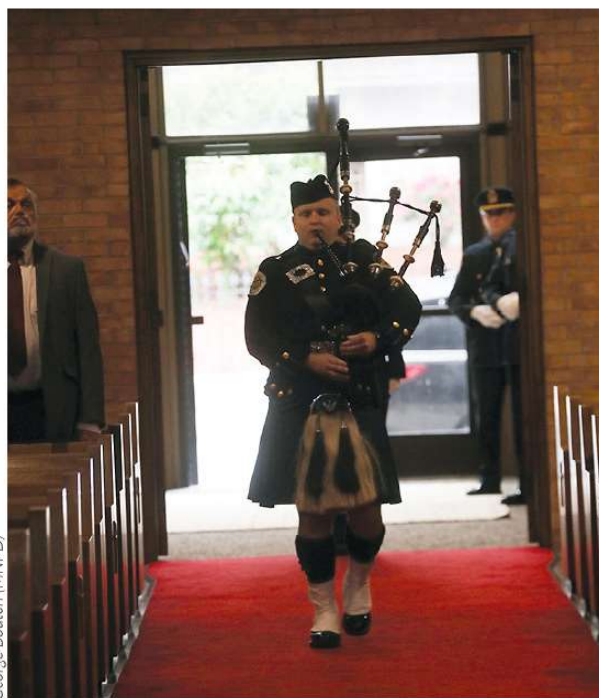


Andrew Jackson Lodge #5 (TN) Past President Bob Nash performs a musical tribute

George Bouton (MNPd)



National Secretary Jimmy Holderfield, National Trustees Chairman Rob Pride and National Sergeant at Arms Keith Turney prepare for the Memorial Service



George Bouton (MNPD)

Bagpiper

WWW.FOP.NET



Honor Guard presenting the wreath



TRAGEDY-FREE POLICING OR ELSE

The Need for Critical Thinking

THOMAS J. LEMMER / CHICAGO FOP LODGE #7 MEMBER



Research has shown a connection between the deaths of more than 251,454 people **each year** in the United States due to professional errors in judgment, skill, coordination and analysis as well as system failures and preventable adverse events. Clearly, the concern is completely understandable and no wonder there are demands for immediate and sweeping change. Actually, there has been very little public debate associated with these deaths, as they were **not** the result of actions connected to the police profession. According to Dr. Martin Makary of Johns Hopkins University, these deaths were connected to doctors, hospitals and other medical personnel. Dr. Makary, a medical reform expert, calculated that deaths associated with the medical profession composed 9.7% of all 2,596,993 deaths recorded in the U.S. during 2013.¹ If deaths associated with the medical profession were their own official category, within the leading causes of death ranked by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), they would rank as the nation's third-highest cause of death behind only heart disease and cancer.²

No, this article is **not** an attack on the medical profession. Like the police, medical professionals work within a complex environment with many shifting variables. The overwhelming vast majority of those working in both professions seek to do good, and every day they demonstrate their commitment to reducing suffering and saving lives. The intent here is to provide a reminder that there is an urgent need for critical thinking as the nation works through

how best to proceed with police reform. The American people have been misled about the linkage between policing and tragedy. Far too many have been far too confused for far too long. In fact, tragic incidents involving the police are rare within the many tens of millions of police-citizen encounters that occur each year. In 2018 alone, there were an estimated 61.5 million police-citizen contacts.³ At great harm to our communities, events with tragic outcomes have too often been deliberately utilized to generate highly charged emotional responses, which clouds critical thinking and the ability to make well-reasoned decisions.

The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics released study findings in 2015 estimating that, on average, there are approximately 928 police-related deaths each year in the U.S.⁴ By comparison, the CDC has reported that in the U.S. from 2005 to 2014, on average, 3,868 people died each year as a result of drowning.⁵ Based upon the data, relative to the annual number of police-related deaths, four times as many people drown, and 270 times as many people die as a result of an error or other issue related to the quality of care by the medical profession. **Every death** that comes before the end of a long and happy life, no matter what statistical category the death is placed, brings with it an associated tragic story.

The "Tragedy-Free Policing or Else" Standard

In the February issue of the *FOP Journal*, we spoke about the importance of "us" and the failure of being cast in the role of "them."⁶ In the May issue, we continued the discussion by

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WHAT IS TRAGEDY-FREE POLICING?

It is a worldview that the police must proceed without taking any actions that could cause harm, without using force and without ever making a mistake.

examining two recent news items in New York state, and the phrase “tragedy-free policing” was coined.⁷ It is a concept that requires deep analysis and contemplation — particularly now.

What is “tragedy-free policing”? It is a worldview that the police must proceed without taking any actions that could cause harm, without using force and without ever making a mistake. Using a baseball analogy, the standard seeks “no runs, no hits, no errors.” From this view, no one ever runs from the police, and if they do run, the police should not pursue after them, as even in foot pursuits some “harm” may occur. Second, no one should be forced to comply with any police order; seeking voluntary compliance is the only acceptable approach for the police. Third, all police actions must be error-free, without exception.

The use of force, a key component of the “hits” part of the baseball analogy, is the most challenging element for individual police officers. Tragedy-free policing holds that the police are only minimally allowed to engage in actions that defend them from a direct physical attack — and police disengagement is the preferred approach. Even when seeking to intervene in a situation where one person is in the midst of causing harm to another person, again the police actions must be absolutely error-free. Most importantly, all police activities are evaluated from an outcome assessment. Did a tragedy occur? If so, there are two default assumptions that the police hold the burden of proof to address. First, the police should have prevented the tragedy. Second, any police action or inaction that failed to prevent the tragedy is assumed to have connections to an evil intent.

Tragedy-free policing or else? All police actions are subject to immediate and unending evaluation by any involved persons, their friends and family, police supervisors, internal investigators, external review boards, university professors, political commentators, the media, social activists, social media devotees, the community at large, any group of two or more persons, civil attorneys, criminal prosecutors, juries and judges. The summer of 2020 is the most visible expression of “or else.”⁸

The Dangers of the “or Else” Road to Utopia

First, tragedy and evil are not synonymous. Inherently all of us, particularly parents of small children, know that life is fragile and we

are all vulnerable to tragedy from a vast array of potential calamities and human actions. Clinical psychologist Jordan Peterson has observed that evil is differentiated from tragedy by evil’s “lack of necessity and its volunteerism.”⁹ The very nature of policing regularly necessitates propelling police officers into circumstances that are not of their own making, and into situations that are already tragic or at grave risk of quickly turning tragic. People generally do not call for the police because they are in the midst of a joyful life moment, and they call most urgently when they fear tragedy is imminent or has already begun to unfold, often at the hands of another person with evil intent. On a fundamental level, the duties we as a community assign to our police officers require them to: (1) be on watch to help prevent tragedies from occurring, (2) try to intervene when tragedies

The American people have been misled about the linkage between policing and tragedy. Far too many have been far too confused for far too long.

begin to unfold and (3) respond in their aftermath. Policing is inherently wrapped in the perpetual vulnerability of tragedy. The laws of nature, human behavior and averages portend that every police officer across the country will **not** be able to pitch a “no runs, no hits, no errors” inning endlessly into the future.

Concerns about how the police exercise their authority and utilize force are not new. Such was the case in October 1999 when the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), under then-Attorney General Janet Reno, issued its comprehensive report entitled “Use of Force by Police: Overview of National and Local Data.” After examining the data relative to police–citizen encounters generally, arrest situations specifically and the overall use of force by police, the DOJ concluded that the “data do not support the notion that we have a national epidemic of police violence.”¹⁰ Such remains

Continued on page 38 >

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TRAGEDY-FREE POLICING OR ELSE

Continued from page 37 >

the case two decades later.¹¹ Even the data collected and reported by *The Washington Post* shows a relatively stable level of police-involved fatal shooting incidents since 2015.¹² What has changed is the politicized epidemic-of-tragedy narrative around policing.¹³

Striving for the ideal is always a valid, even laudable, approach, but human history has shown us that policies that demand strict adherence to a utopian standard “now, or else” tend to come with significant dangers. In the article, “It’s High Noon for American Policing,”¹⁴ a warning was provided that if the most strident and contentious critics of the police were allowed to sever the bond between the police and community, we were all at risk of living in a “Hadleyville,” the setting for the classic 1952 film *High Noon*. The year 2020, provided a glimpse of a nation with many Hadleyvilles. As reported by journalist Andy Ngo, during 2020, a more visible Antifa movement aggressively pushed a narrative of division, and there was a surge in the drive to utilize tragic police incidents to maximize community tensions.¹⁵ Without question, the continued weakening of the police–community bond that occurred in 2020 contributed to severe increases in violence, particularly in our major urban areas. Fomenting the larger community to unwittingly demand what we now can describe as tragedy-free policing provides a useful platform from which to perpetually fan the flames of outrage against the police. As a consequence, the sharp rise in violence that emerged in 2020 has continued.¹⁶

What Guidance Can Critical Thinking Provide?

In this moment in history, efforts that further clarity are essential. We often hear about using a medical model to consider and respond to the issues related to crime, violence and policing. Is it not the medical profession that holds as its first tenet “do no harm”? Well, actually, it is a common misconception that the Hippocratic Oath contains the “first, do no harm” admonition. As noted by Dr. Robert Shmerling of Harvard Medical School, the words (in Greek) “do no harm” are actually in another writing by Hippocrates entitled *Of the Epidemics*, and the mention there was **not** cited as a priority for physicians over their goal of providing help. While Dr. Shmerling echoed the stated ancient desire not to cause harm, he provided hypothetical cases to highlight that such an absolute standard is not practical. He instructed, “[W]hen difficult, real-time decisions must be made, it’s hard to apply the

Police accountability efforts must distinguish between unintended or unavoidable tragedy and true misconduct.

‘first, do no harm’ dictum because estimates of risk and benefit are so uncertain and prone to error.”¹⁷ So, it seems the wisdom of the medical profession is that even in the cause of medicine to alleviate suffering, there are unintended consequences — errors — and tragedy can follow.

We have all heard the old quip, “The operation was a success, but the patient died.” Why are there no urgent demands for the immediate implementation of a utopian tragedy-free standard for the medical profession? Why are there no calls to have cameras record every medical procedure and surgery? Why have we not seen demands for civilian oversight boards, composed only of people without any medical training, to make rulings on the appropriateness of treatment in deaths related to the medical profession? In discussing Dr. Makary’s research, Johns Hopkins University noted: “The researchers caution that most medical errors aren’t due to inherently bad doctors, and that reporting these errors shouldn’t be addressed by punishment or legal action.”¹⁸ Only in the most extreme cases where doctors have knowingly engaged in fraud, acted as drug suppliers, taken advantage of patients or engaged in other deliberate wrongdoing is their medical conduct viewed as a crime. Intuitively, we understand why.

Criminally charging every doctor involved with a patient whose case ended in an untimely and tragic death would cripple the profession and interfere with its lifesaving mission.

So why then the rise of the tragedy-free policing (or else) standard? Tapping into long-established investigative practices provides us with the next step in the critical-thinking process. Asking ourselves, “Who benefits?” Certainly not the most vulnerable communities and not the community overall. *The Wall Street Journal* has reported that the spike in violence during 2020 occurred disproportionately in the poorest Black and Hispanic neighborhoods of America’s urban areas that had a long history of violence.¹⁹ Such was the case in Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Philadelphia, Minneapolis and many other cities across America.

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We have all heard the old quip, “The operation was a success, but the patient died.” Why are there no urgent demands for the immediate implementation of a utopian tragedy-free standard for the medical profession?

We also know that violence levels in these communities are at their lowest when: (a) the police–community relationship is the strongest, and (b) the police are proactively focused on addressing the unlawful activities of the criminal gangs, and other drivers of violence, in the areas where violence is most pronounced.²⁰

During the initial explosion of civil unrest and rioting in May 2020, following the George Floyd incident, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz pointed to agitators from outside of the state as a key issue. While PolitiFact quickly disputed the governor’s 80% statistic,²¹ what is commonly understood is that throughout the summer, protests provided cover for opportunists to engage in looting and acts of violence across the country, and for Antifa, anarchists and others to create chaos — leaving local communities to deal with the aftermath. Then-U.S. Attorney General William Barr also concluded that the protests had been “hijacked by violent radical elements.”²² In an analysis of the Antifa movement and its Marxist ideology, Soeren Kern identified law enforcement as a specific target of the group’s activities. He reported on a common Antifa tactic: “employ extreme violence and destruction of public and private property to goad the police into a reaction, which then ‘proves’ Antifa’s claim that the government is ‘fascist.’”²³ He further noted: “Antifa radicals increasingly are using incendiary events such as the death of George Floyd in Minnesota as springboards to achieve their broader aims.”²⁴ With each inflamed police-related tragic incident, the needs and desires for the community to reach consensus with its police on the way forward are further subverted to the detriment of the community.

Strengthening the Importance of Us

Tragedy-free medicine, tragedy-free policing, tragedy-free life in this world is unattainable. There will be tragedies — and we must learn from them. We must transcend the tragedies that occur, and

we must strive to lessen suffering where we can. Many professions do work intended to alleviate suffering in some way — medical and mental health professionals, social workers, firefighters, the clergy, among others. However, surely the combined scale, breadth, depth and intensity of the efforts displayed by the members of the policing profession, in the mission to alleviate suffering, is not less than that of any of these other professions. Police officers are continually engaged — every hour of every day — in this mission, directly in the streets of every community across the nation, and they are often doing so at great personal risk, while also serving as a key gateway access point to the services of so many other professions providing suffering relief. The police are **not** evil.

The way forward must be a proactive one. In this effort, it is essential for us not to be deceived by those who are seeking perpetual division for their own ideological and political purposes. When the police are one with the community, the community is safer, freer, more stable and better positioned to help foster the improved health and well-being of all the community’s members. Those seeking and participating in police reform efforts must not lose sight of this reality, and they must see the detriment to the community that comes with a “tragedy-free policing or else” standard and reject it. Police accountability efforts must distinguish between unintended or unavoidable tragedy and true misconduct. The way forward cannot cast the policing profession into the pile of “them,” as we have felt the painful lesson of weakened police–community relationships. The way forward must be one with broad outreach across community partners. As a community, we need our elected and civic leaders to foster unifying approaches that advance constitutional policing, reduce violence, address chronic crime conditions, improve public safety, protect victims, foster wellness and enhance community support for the police. In life, when you love something — you fight to protect it. **FOP**

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| WELLNESS |

CONNECTING OFFICERS WITH THE HELP THEY NEED

FOP WORKS TO IDENTIFY COMPETENT WELLNESS SERVICES FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

SHERRI MARTIN / DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS

The National Officer Wellness Committee is committed to identifying quality wellness resources for law enforcement members and their families. With all of the challenges currently facing our profession, we have recently seen an uptick in requests for assistance with locating and identifying wellness providers who are experienced in working with first responders and, more specifically, with police officers and their families. The Fraternal Order of Police recognizes that law enforcement is a unique profession with unique needs, and we understand the importance our members place on having the ability to locate quality resources when they need it. We are here to help.

The FOP Division of Wellness Services is actively engaged in creating the FOP Approved Provider Bulletin (APB), a nationwide directory of competent wellness services, providers, programs and products for law enforcement. The APB will be a source for locating FOP vetted and approved counselors, trauma therapists, police psychologists, in-patient treatment programs for mental health and substance abuse issues, wellness tools and products, wellness training programs for law enforcement and crisis hotlines

for law enforcement. We will also include a library of published books and online resources geared toward wellness for members of law enforcement and their families.

In vetting resources to be included in the APB, we began with recommendations from **you**, our members, to help us initially identify providers that are already known and trusted by members to be qualified and competent to assist members of law enforcement. From there, we have begun to build a well-rounded network of resources that should continue to expand into the future. Realizing that trust in recommended resources is paramount, our Officer Wellness Committee vets each resource for several key factors.

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence consists of four main components: awareness, knowledge, skills and attitude. Practitioners and providers should have awareness and knowledge of the lifestyle and work of a first responder. Ideally, they come from a first responder background, have worked as a first responder or have extensively studied and experienced or witnessed first-hand the work of a law enforcement officer. They should have an understanding of shift work and law enforcement training and practice, and should be well-versed in the law enforcement culture. Competent law enforcement wellness resources should have an understanding of compassion fatigue and

burnout, and should have training in proven practices for the treatment of trauma. They should have an understanding of the stresses that a career in law enforcement may put on the officers' families as well. Simply put, our providers should like working with law enforcement, and we look for a deeper interest and affinity for our unique population. Working with members of law enforcement and their families should be the provider's "heart's work," and their attitude should be one of helping the officer and their family to not only maintain wellness, but also to thrive.

Confidentiality

There is perhaps no more important concern for officers seeking services than confidentiality. Dr. Thomas Coghlan, a retired police officer and now a practicing police psychologist, recently shared with our Officer Wellness Committee that he had one client who confirmed that his top concern was that no one find out that he was in therapy. **This was more important than actually getting better and gaining relief from his struggles.** From our own research within the FOP, we know that the top concern for law enforcement officers who might seek mental health treatment is the fear of being seen as weak or unfit for duty by their agencies, supervisors or peers. For that reason, the FOP Division of Wellness Services thoroughly examines the processes each provider puts in place to ensure the confidentiality of their clients.

Accessibility

Police officers respond 24/7/365 all over the country. We expect to be able to provide the same level of services to our members. While our committee works to identify competent providers in every corner of the country, we want to ensure that each provider understands that law enforcement is a fast-moving lifestyle, and that officers may sometimes need assistance on short notice or outside normal business hours. Commitment to working with law enforcement officers and their families demands both consideration of these characteristics and flexibility. Our committee works to ensure that providers offer options for payment, including maintenance of working relationships with major health insurance carriers. We examine the typical timelines for providing services to clients, as well as a range of other criteria that speak to how the provider ensures that receipt of services is seamless and comfortable.

Directed Programming

While law enforcement officers are disproportionately impacted by trauma when compared to other professions, we know that exposure to trauma is not the only challenge facing law enforcement. We often cope with shifting schedules, including the toll they take on our bodies. We deal with financial strain, and sometimes substance use and abuse issues. We deal with high levels of organizational stress. Many of the challenges we face as law enforcement officers are unique to our culture, and we rely on each other more often than those outside the profession. The Officer Wellness Committee

**Police officers respond 24/7/365
all over the country. We expect to
be able to provide the same level
of services to our members.**

examines resources for the ability to provide services that keep those things in mind and that recognize the unique facets of our profession. We know from our research that peer support is the most preferred mode of assistance sought by our members, and we have heard countless stories from members about of how interacting with other members of law enforcement, or those who "speak their language," has been a key piece in their healing and growth. For that reason, we look for programming and providers trained to provide services that cater to the unique personality and needs of the law enforcement profession.

Quality of Program

Much goes into building a quality wellness resource for law enforcement and law enforcement families. The Officer Wellness Committee seeks providers, products and programs that have done their homework and have put the effort and resources into a product or level of treatment that our officers deserve. Clinicians and practitioners should be well-rounded and flexible. They should have developed a range of skills and treatment options to accommodate a range of client challenges. They should have put some time and effort into consideration of confidentiality issues and client comfort with therapy, at all times being cognizant of the stigma around seeking services. Treatment programs, wellness training and wellness products should offer a range of resources for clients and consumers, ensuring that the officer not only has choices, but quality choices in their efforts to improve their wellness and that of their family.

As the FOP Division of Wellness Services works to develop the APB, due to be made fully available later this year, we welcome input from our members and their families. We encourage those with knowledge of competent wellness service providers and programs to contact us to ensure that they are included and that we share that information with our entire blue family. In addition, the Division of Wellness Services has developed the FOP Vetted and Approved Provider Vetting Guide, which provides a framework for vetting of resources. We are happy to share this information with lodges and agencies that are working to vet resources in their area. For lodges, agencies, officers or family members seeking tips for connecting with competent services, we are only an email or a phone call away, and we are always happy to assist. Contact us at officerwellness@fop.net or by phone at (615) 878-2620. **FOP**

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American Military University



Accreditation, Costs and Other Factors to Consider When Choosing a College

When a law enforcement officer is deciding where to pursue his or her education, the number of choices can be overwhelming. In appreciation of the service all first responders do for our communities, American Military University (AMU) offers guidance for your decision-making — to help you make the choice that is right for you, whether you pursue studies with AMU or another school.

When you first start researching schools that might fit your personal, professional and educational goals — moving beyond personal recommendations from friends, colleagues and family members — you may find it difficult to compare schools and programs. Some schools spend millions on advertising campaigns, presenting opportunities and promises that may seem too good to be true.

Two areas to initially consider involve **accreditation** and **cost**.

Accreditation

There are a few things you should

understand about accreditation. First, accreditation is voluntary for schools. It is awarded and overseen by various nonprofit and non-government-affiliated organizations or accrediting bodies. Second, there are two types of accreditation: **institutional** and **programmatic**.

Institutional accreditation involves an accrediting body examining the entire school to see if it meets certain published criteria. Each accrediting body has its own set of criteria, but all generally focus on institutional practices to ensure the school has policies that meet and fulfill these criteria.

When people talk about accreditation, they usually mean institutional accreditation. But that is not the term they use — they actually are referring to regional or national accreditation. It is important to understand the difference.

Regional accreditation is issued to colleges and universities by accrediting bodies based on a geographic region. It applies to most “big name” public and private schools. The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (chea.org) recognizes seven regional accrediting bodies.

National accreditation is not necessarily geographically based. The U.S. Department of Education does not differentiate between regional and national accrediting agencies.

So, which is better — regional or national accreditation? That really depends on who you ask. But the most important thing to consider is this: You must understand how the credits or a degree from any school will be viewed by other schools. Some regionally accredited schools will not accept credits from a nationally accredited school, but many do. If you wish to attend a specific regionally accredited school in the future, it would be wise to learn if they would recognize a degree or credits from a nationally accredited school before enrolling at any nationally accredited school. (Note: AMU does recognize and accept credits and degrees from nationally accredited schools.)

Institutional accreditation focuses on overall quality and resources at a school, while programmatic accreditation looks at the curriculum of a specific program or discipline. Many business or engineering programs carry programmatic,

or “specialized,” accreditation. Many MBA programs, for example, require that applicants have a bachelor’s degree from a program with specialized accreditation.

Tuition, Fees and Total Costs

It’s important to understand the actual cost of any course. A school’s tuition and fees should be readily available on its website and easy to understand. You may find there are different tuition rates for different programs at the same school.

If a school references a huge discount, be wary. Ask for the total cost per course (tuition and fees) both before and after any discount. The amount you “save” with the discount may end up being an illusion once you compare actual costs at different schools with similar programs.

Sometimes tuition will be listed “per credit.” Find out the number of credits in a course and the entire program so you understand the total overall cost. Also, look at the school’s fee schedule. Are there per-course, per-credit or per-semester fees? If so, how will that impact your total cost? Ask about average book/course material costs and add that to your total.

Also consider how the school handles transfer credits and previous learning. This could be other college work, basic law enforcement training, in-service training or military transcripts. You may be eligible for academic transfer credits, which should reduce the number of credits you must take to earn your degree.

Some questions to ask about transfer credits:

- Is there any cost to evaluate your transcripts and previous courses for possible transfer credit?
- Is there any cost to apply those credits to your degree?
- If credits are applied, do they reduce the number of courses you need to complete your program?

Comparison Guide

To help you make an apples-to-apples comparison, AMU offers a complimentary comparison guide specifically for working adults who are exploring online programs, although it can be useful when looking at traditional programs too. The guide can be downloaded at tinyurl.com/kcenum4m.

To learn more about AMU and benefits available to FOP members and their family members, please visit AMUPartners.com/FOP. **FOP**

The National Fraternal Order of Police University (NFOPU) has successfully paved the way for hundreds of FOP members to pursue higher or continued education. For more information on the NFOPU Consortium, go to fopconnect.com/education-connect/about-the-consortium.



Los Angeles, CA



La Jolla, CA



Cincinnati, OH



Charles Town, WV



Olivet, MI



Adelphi, MD



Ashland, OH



Thomasville, GA



San Diego, CA



Santa Ana, CA



Tiffin, OH



Williamsburg, KY



Albany, NY



Nashville, TN



Fayette, IA



Washington, DC



Cypress, CA



Minneapolis, MN



ONLINE

Saint Charles, MO



Cincinnati, OH



Forest City, IA

The Right to Bargain Collectively



Despite the partisan climate on Capitol Hill, a bipartisan group of lawmakers — nine Republicans and 12 Democrats — united to fight for law enforcement officers' right to bargain collectively. Leading the charge are Representatives Peter A. Stauber (R-Minn.) and Abigail A. Spanberger (D-Va.), who introduced one of the FOP's top legislative priorities, H.R. 3225, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act.

The ability to talk to your employer about workplace issues is a fundamental right of all American workers. Unfortunately, public safety employees — law enforcement and firefighters — are virtually the only class of workers left in the nation today who are denied the fundamental right to bargain

Just the Facts:

» During National Police Week, a bipartisan group of lawmakers introduced one of the FOP's top priorities, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, which would recognize the right of public safety employees to form and join unions and to bargain collectively with their employers. In addition to monitoring that and a number of other recently introduced FOP-supported bills, the FOP continues to work with the administration and Congress on criminal justice reform legislation, improvements to the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program and a number of other issues impacting law enforcement.

collectively with their employers over wages, hours and working conditions. The men and women in public safety, who put themselves in harm's way as part of their job, should undoubtedly have their rights recognized as well.

That's why we are extremely proud to partner with Representatives Stauber, Spanberger and 20 original co-sponsors — three of whom are former law enforcement officers — on this important issue. The FOP is ready to do our part to ensure that this legislation gets across the finish line.

This bill recognizes the right of public safety employees to form and join unions and to bargain collectively with their employers. It is similar to legislation passed by the House of Representatives in July 2007 and a bill that nearly passed the Senate in 2010. In the 116th Congress, the bill had 264 co-sponsors.

We are working with our Senate partners to introduce the Senate companion bill.

Policing Reform Discussions

Recent media reports regarding an internal AFL-CIO document have been misconstrued as claims or insinuations that the FOP is excluded or not involved

in national discussions on police reform. In light of these reports, we want to reassure our members that nothing could be further from the truth.

With a long history of working with leaders on both sides of the aisle, the FOP is fully engaged in this critical effort and is in virtually daily contact with congressional negotiators, the White House, the Department of Justice and other major law enforcement groups.

The FOP is the largest law enforcement labor organization in the country, with more than 356,000 members, and we have made clear time and time again our willingness to engage with anyone interested in having fact-based discussions about how to improve policing in our country.

The AFL-CIO, which again, produced an internal document for the use of its own members, would not have any way of knowing the extent to which the FOP is involved in this national discussion because they have not been and are not privy to these conversations.

The FOP will continue to work in a collaborative way with the administration, Congress, affected Cabinet agencies and others to craft criminal justice reform legislation that will make this country a

Continued on page 46 >

Top Priorities in Brief

H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act

House: 148 co-sponsors (108 D, 40 R)

H.R. 962, the Law Enforcement Officers' Equity Act

House: 46 co-sponsors (35 D, 11 R)

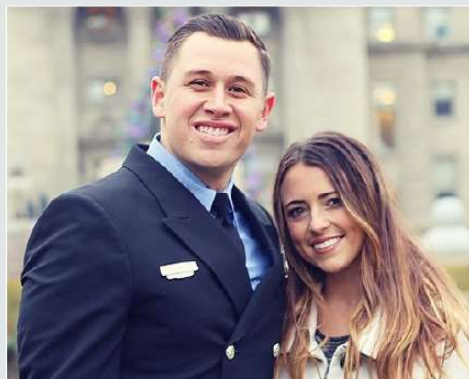
H.R. 1210, the LEOSA Reform Act

House: 38 co-sponsors (1 D, 37 R)

To see a full list of legislation supported by the FOP, please visit tinyurl.com/ynep59y6. Members should continue to monitor the FOP's social media platforms and our website for the latest legislative news! To send a message to your members of Congress asking them to support FOP priority legislation, visit tinyurl.com/4tpnddkr.

Relocate to Idaho

- ✓ **#4 Best City For Early Retirees**
| *Smartasset, Dec 2020*
- ✓ **Cities With The Best Work-Life Balance** | *Smartasset, Jan 2021*
- ✓ **#6 Happiest State** | *Wallet Hub, Sept 2019*
- ✓ **Best Place to Retire**
| *Forbes, August 2020*
- ✓ **#1 & #3 Top Run Cities**
| *Wallet Hub, July 2020*
- ✓ **#5 Best City For Starting A Business** | *Inc., Dec 2019*
- ✓ **#1 Best City For Coronavirus Recovery** | *Forbes, May 2020*
- ✓ **Mild Four Seasons**
- ✓ **Endless Recreational Activities Within Minutes Of Your Home**



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Having relocated to Idaho as a Law Enforcement family ourselves, we specialize in helping out of state First Responders make the move to the Treasure Valley. Idaho has so much to offer and it is our pleasure to be able to introduce families, young or retired, to this great state. We have helped so many First Responders and their families relocate to Idaho, let us help YOU and YOURS next!



WASHINGTON REPORT

Continued from page 44 >

safer and fairer place for all its citizens, and for the law enforcement officers sworn to protect them.

If you haven't already seen the FOP's recently released video explaining the facts regarding qualified immunity, please do. You can watch the video at tinyurl.com/ermy9a4j.

Update: H.R. 3079, the Protect and Serve Act

This legislation, developed in direct response to the surge of violence directed at law enforcement officers in the form of calculated or ambush attacks, would make it a federal crime to deliberately target a law enforcement officer with violence.

Representatives Stauber and Joshua S. Gottheimer (D-N.J.) reintroduced this legislation in the House as H.R. 3079. The bill currently has 33 co-sponsors.

Honoring Our Nation's Officers

During National Police Week, the Senate unanimously passed S. Res. 215, a bipartisan resolution introduced by Senator Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa) and Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.), the respective ranking member and chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, commemorating National Police Week 2021. The resolution, which had 78 co-sponsors, honors the selfless dedication and sacrifice made by law enforcement officers across the country to protect and serve American communities. The FOP is grateful to Senator Grassley and Chairman Durbin for their leadership on this resolution honoring our nation's law enforcement.

In addition to S. Res. 215, the following bills were introduced during National Police Week:

- H.R. 3079 (Rutherford, R-Fla.), the Protect and Serve Act, which would make it a federal crime to target a law enforcement officer with an assault that results in serious bodily harm or death
- H.R. 3080 (Bacon, R-Neb.), the Back the Blue Act, which would provide enhanced penalties for convicted murderers who kill or target America's public safety officers
- H.R. 3096 (Demings, D-Fla.), the Federal Law Enforcement Officer Service Weapon Purchase Act, which would allow federal law enforcement



- officers to purchase retired service weapons
- H.R. 3127 (Wild, D-Pa.), the Safe Interactions Act, which would provide grants to enable nonprofit disability organizations to develop training programs that support safe interactions between law enforcement officers and individuals with disabilities and older individuals
- H.R. 3151 (Keller, R-Pa.), Eric's Law, which would require the impaneling of a new jury if a jury fails to recommend by unanimous vote a sentence for conviction of a crime punishable by death
- H.R. 3172 (Rutherford, R-Fla.), the Homes for Every Local Protector, Educator, and Responder (HELPER) Act, which would establish a mortgage insurance program for public safety officers and teachers
- H.R. 3225 (Stauber, R-Minn.), the Public Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, which would finally recognize the right of these employees to bargain collectively for improved working conditions while fostering a better relationship with their employers
- S. 1595 (Toomey, R-Pa.), the Thin Blue Line Act, which would expand the list of aggravating factors in death penalty determinations for those who target, kill or attempt to kill a law enforcement or other public safety officer
- S. 1597 (Toomey, R-Pa.), the Lifesaving Gear for Police Act, which would ensure America's law enforcement officers have access to lifesaving equipment by preserving the 1033 program
- S. 1599 (Cornyn, R-Texas), the Back the Blue Act, which would provide enhanced penalties for convicted murderers who kill or target America's public safety officers
- S. 1721 (Toomey, R-Pa.), Eric's Law, which would require the impaneling of a new jury if a jury fails to recommend by unanimous vote a sentence for conviction of a crime punishable by death

2020 Report: Officers Shot and Killed in the Line of Duty

In October of 2019, the FOP partnered with the National Blue Alert Network to collect and analyze data on reported shootings of law enforcement officers nationwide.

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), in partnership with the National FOP Legislative Office, published its 2020 year-end summary report "Law Enforcement Officers Shot in the Line of Duty." It contains data on law enforcement officers shot in the line of duty, both fatally and non-fatally. (The report can be viewed at tinyurl.com/d3j6r53c.)

This year, we are on track to surpass 2020's historic numbers of officers shot in the line of duty. As of this writing, 114 officers have been shot so far this year, 23 of whom were killed. Since January 1, 29 officers have been shot in 23 separate ambush-style attacks, nine of whom were killed.

Given that we continue to see violence targeted against our law enforcement officers, it is our hope that this report will be used by law enforcement executives and

rank-and-file officers to help them get a better understanding of the nature and frequency of incidents where officers are shot in the line of duty.

Making Significant Improvements to the PSOB Program

The Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program is currently burdened with unreasonable definitions of the terms "catastrophic injury" and "gainful work" that prevent officers who are disabled in the line of duty from receiving the benefits to which they are entitled. This, combined with the absence of any guidelines for the adjudication of disability claims, has resulted in the denial of PSOB benefits to officers whose service-connected injuries would be viewed as eligible by almost every other component of the federal government. Under current law, officers capable of performing any commonly compensated activity are not considered permanently disabled, therefore making them ineligible to receive benefits.

To address these issues, the FOP worked with Representatives William J. Pascrell Jr. (D-N.J.) and Brian K. Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.) in the House and

Senators Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa) and Kirsten E. Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) in the Senate to introduce H.R. 2936/S. 1511, the Protecting America's First Responders Act. Their legislation would define the term "disability" to ensure that officers, who can perform sedentary work that involves simple tasks with minimal duties or work performed for therapeutic purposes or with special accommodations, still receive the disability compensation benefits. We believe the changes proposed in their bill will greatly improve the ability of our injured and disabled officers to have their claims processed more fairly and more quickly.

The Senate bill was favorably reported by the Judiciary Committee and is expected to pass before the end of May.

Senate Judiciary Committee Holds Police Week Mark-Up

The Senate Committee on the Judiciary held a mark-up on three FOP-supported bills and favorably reported them to the Senate floor:

- S. 921, the Jaime Zapata and Victor Avila Federal Law Enforcement Protection Act, which would undo



a dangerous precedent set by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals and clarify that federal law clearly and unambiguously protects federal law enforcement officers operating outside our national borders

- S. 1502, the Confidentiality Opportunities for Peer Support (COPS) Counseling Act, which would reduce the barriers for law enforcement officers trying to access mental health resources and increase the level of confidentiality for individuals seeking peer support counseling
- S. 1511, the Protecting America's First Responders Act, which would update the PSOB disability determinations and the definitions making it more consistent with existing federal law and greatly improve the ability of our injured and disabled officers to have their claims processed more fairly and more quickly

All three bills are now pending on the Senate floor, with S. 1511 expected to pass the Senate by unanimous consent before the end of May.

Continued on page 48 >

The Power of the FOP Voice



We want your input on the design of the FOP's new biennial survey!

Based upon the success of our 2018 Survey of Officer Mental and Behavioral Health, the National FOP recognizes the impact that our more than 356,000 members have had in shaping solutions for our profession. With significant lessons learned from your responses, the FOP has developed a robust program of wellness services and is leading the way in providing the best for our brothers and sisters.

With that in mind, we would like to announce the development of the FOP Biennial Issues in Policing Survey. To be rolled out at the 2021 National Biennial Conference in Indianapolis, the survey will once again provide our members with the opportunity to be heard regarding the issues that matter most to our profession.

We are calling on FOP members and leaders **NOW** to provide input as we design the survey. What do you want the FOP, the profession and world to know about your experience? Contact us at officerwellness@fop.net to contribute your ideas!

WASHINGTON REPORT

Continued from page 47 >

COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act

The House and Senate considered and passed S. 937, the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, which also incorporated the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer National Opposition to Hate, Assault, and Threats to Equality (NO HATE) Act, on a 364–62 vote and 94–1 vote, respectively. The legislation, which was signed into law by the president, directs the U.S. attorney general to designate “an officer or employee of the Department of Justice” to facilitate the expedited review of hate crimes and reports of any such crime to federal, state, local or tribal law enforcement agencies. The Justice Department must also issue guidance to state and local law enforcement agencies on how to establish online reporting of hate crimes, collect data on such crimes and expand public education campaigns to raise awareness about such crimes. In addition, the bill would establish a grant program to assist states and local units of government to train employees on the use of the National Incident-Based Reporting

System (NIBRS) and how to identify and classify hate crimes. The bill would also establish grant programs to develop state-run hate crime hotlines and to assist local and state activities or programs to prevent, address or respond to hate crimes.

Speak Up and Be Loud

The National FOP knows that social media is a powerful tool. We have been using it to spread our message and to take back the narrative from those who seek to demonize our noble profession. We have been able to have direct, personal conversations with thousands of members, potential members, supporters and opponents. The FOP is undisputedly the largest presence on social media compared to other national law enforcement organizations.

Visit our social media pages and you'll see that we are posting on a daily basis to inform the public on the current issues facing law enforcement, calling on elected officials to take action on various issues and more. We encourage every lodge, every member and every citizen who supports the brave men and women of

law enforcement to do the same.

Follow the National FOP:

- Facebook (@GLFOP)
- Twitter (@GLFOP)
- Instagram (@FOPnational)

Having a **collective voice** is critical to shaping the narrative around our brothers and sisters who wear the badge. We ask that you join us by sharing articles, stories and pictures that highlight the tremendous work our members are doing in their communities. When sharing, please make sure to tag the National FOP and use the following hashtags: **#FOP #FOPstrong #BackTheBlue #iAM**

The bottom line: We need your help to spread the truth and defend the police. We ask that everyone **share, comment and like** the content that we are posting.

Lastly, the **FOP Weekly Update** is a key resource to keeping you informed on the legislation that is pertinent to law enforcement and a great way to stay up to date on what the FOP is doing for you in Washington. If you have not done so, please be sure to sign up for the FOP's *Washington Watch: Legislative Update*. This one-of-a-kind weekly update is sent out every Friday via email, posted in the NFOP mobile app and shared on our social media platforms. To sign up to receive the update via email, please visit tinyurl.com/57yvd2as.

Support the PAC!

The National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee (NFOP PAC) is an essential part of our National Legislative Program. The NFOP PAC is an effective way to represent our members on Capitol Hill by supporting candidates who support our members and our profession. The FOP is the oldest and largest law enforcement labor organization, so it is crucial we keep our PAC strong.

To donate online, please visit tinyurl.com/55e2dxfs. If you'd like to donate via checks, please make it out to the National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee and mail it to 328 Massachusetts Avenue, NE Washington, D.C., 20002. For inquiries about our effortless payroll deduction program or to sign up for our recurring monthly credit card donations, please contact the National Legislative Office at (202) 547-8189. We thank you for your support! **FOP**

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The Importance of Having Legal Defense: A True Story



It seems as if any time we turn on the television or listen to a news report, a law enforcement officer is headlining a story in either a pending civil or criminal suit. However, aside from the highly publicized trials and proceedings, it is not often that we get to know the details of how those cases played out. As a result of this, we at the Grand Lodge feel it is of great importance to alert the membership of any real-life situations that illustrate just how important it is to have legal defense coverage.

The FOP has hundreds of experienced legal defense attorneys available across the country for any criminal or civil needs. Lance LoRusso is a retired law enforcement officer, serves as the current general counsel for the State of Georgia and has represented officers in more than 80 on-duty shootings. As a firearms instructor for over 25 years and a use-of-force expert, LoRusso focuses his practice on critical incident and media response, catastrophic personal injury and wrongful death cases.

In June of 2020, LoRusso took on the civil termination case concerning a seven-year veteran of the Atlanta Police Department. The termination-causing event started with the officer responding to a suspicious vehicle parked in a fast-food drive-thru lane and quickly escalated with the perpetrator seizing another officer's Taser whereby he then fled the scene. Beginning a foot chase, LoRusso's client then discharged his own Taser and the perpetrator responded by discharging the stolen Taser in his possession. With the Taser not having any effect on the perpetrator, the officer then fired three rounds of his handgun, striking the perpetrator twice. One day after the incident, the officer was notified that termination had been recommended, and two days after the incident, the officer

Just the Facts:

» The story recounted here about an officer who was deprived of his due process rights in a civil termination case illustrates how critical it is for every law enforcement officer to have access to high-quality legal defense coverage. The FOP's Legal Defense Plan provides members protection from any criminal or civil matters arising from the performance of their duties. The FOP offers the plan to all its members, and it can be acquired at any point in your career.

was terminated, citing unnecessary force standards.

Upon receiving notice of the termination, the officer's union representative and LoRusso began intensive investigation into the termination. As a result of LoRusso's

of May 5, 2021, the officer's termination has been revoked as a violation of due process.

Because of LoRusso's hard work and dedication to his client, he was able to get the officer the exact thing the officer had brought to the citizens of Atlanta for seven years: justice. Without diligent legal defense, that officer may have never been aware of the discipline protocol required by the city, and as a result, he would never have known he was deprived of his due process rights. It is now, more than ever, critical that every law enforcement officer have legal defense coverage in order to ensure that any case against him or her is handled with care and that no stone be left unturned. The FOP offers the Legal Defense Plan to all its members, and it can be acquired at any point in your career. If you are interested in learning more, please contact labor@fop.net. **FOP**

The FOP has hundreds of experienced legal defense attorneys available across the country for any criminal or civil needs.

due diligence, he became aware of the department's code, which stated the employee must be given written notice of the proposed adverse action at least 10 working days prior to the effective date. LoRusso's client was given notice one day after the incident and the effective date was a mere two days after the incident. LoRusso fought for almost 10 months to reinstate his client's employment, and as

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Law Enforcement Officer Wellness Legislation



Law enforcement officers are exposed to traumatic calls for service on a daily basis, including child abuse, domestic violence, traffic accidents and homicides. Repeated exposure to these stressors and events may have an adverse impact on officers' mental health, such as development of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. States are recognizing the need to address mental wellness barriers for police officers. Because policing is an essential occupation to preserve and protect both the law and the public, those who serve in law enforcement deserve proper protection from the mental strain associated with this task. Such protection is being proposed in legislation across the country that focus on implementing education and training programs regarding mental wellness as well as creating access to effective treatment and counseling opportunities.

The majority of states have proposed legislation in some capacity regarding police officer wellness and mental health. In 2020 and 2021 combined, approximately 300 bills have been proposed across 42 states for "officer safety and well-being." This legislation attempts to mitigate the impact of stress on officers and their families, prevent harm and suicide among law enforcement officers and establish programs that provide outlets for the officers.

Workers' Compensation

States are proposing changes to their workers' compensation systems to include post-traumatic stress that has developed as a result of service in the department or unit as a recognizable injury. For example, in Kansas, post-traumatic stress disorder is added under "personal injury" for first responders. First responders include firefighters, law enforcement or medical service providers. Other states,

Just the Facts:

» Lawmakers across the country are taking action to protect the mental health and well-being of law enforcement officers and first responders. In 2020 and 2021 combined, approximately 300 bills have been proposed across 42 states to help mitigate the impact of stress on officers and their families, prevent harm and suicide among officers and establish counseling and peer support programs for officers. The National FOP is tracking these enactments and is committed to assisting members with all facets of healthy living throughout a career in law enforcement.

like New York, have pending legislation that establishes a presumption that when a police officer or emergency personnel is diagnosed with post-traumatic stress

These measures are preventative efforts offered to protect law enforcement from the intense mental and emotional strain associated with the profession.

disorder, it is the result from service in the line of duty and therefore is compensable.

Mental Health Programs and Initiatives

Many states are proposing legislation to establish mental health programs. These programs are meant to provide opportunities for counseling and establish

peer support groups. For example, in Oklahoma, proposed legislation requires the state's Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services to contract for certain support for crisis intervention, such as counseling, for those who are impacted by trauma, cumulative stress, anxiety, addictions, death and suicide. New York's bill includes establishing a peer support group that involves peer counseling techniques for mental illness that also incorporates family support services, domestic abuse and childcare. And in Massachusetts, lawmakers introduced a measure to create a commission to review causes of post-traumatic stress disorder, identify its estimated prevalence among police officers and make recommendations on the specific programs that are most effective to prevent and treat post-traumatic stress disorder.

Other mental health programs include receiving appropriate training in identifying the symptoms of mental illness and creating a list of recommended agencies or organizations where an officer can access help. For example, new legislation in Illinois would amend the state's Police Training Act to establish a mental health coordinator who would assist in creating training procedures, selecting medical

Continued on page 54 >

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LEGAL COUNSEL

Continued from page 52 >

professionals for a reference list and organizing a peer support program. As another example, New Mexico's proposed legislation suggests hiring a licensed psychologist for every law enforcement agency in the state.

This subset of proposed legislation often encompasses mental health training and education. Pending legislation provides for increased and uniform training requirements and include "continuing" and "ongoing" education.

Mental Health Assessments

A few states are proposing legislation that would require officers to undergo mental health assessments. This legislation is seeking to establish a psychological fitness standard for law enforcement officers. For example, Indiana's pending legislation requires the state's Law Enforcement Training Board to establish psychological fitness for duty policies, procedures and standards. This subset of proposed legislation requires a mental health evaluation to become certified and then subsequently required

on a periodical basis.

In short, lawmakers are taking action to protect the mental health and well-being of law enforcement officers. These measures are preventative efforts offered to protect law enforcement from the intense mental and emotional strain associated with the profession. The National FOP, in connection with its Division of Wellness Services, is tracking these enactments and is committed to assisting members with all facets of healthy living throughout a career in law enforcement. **FOP**



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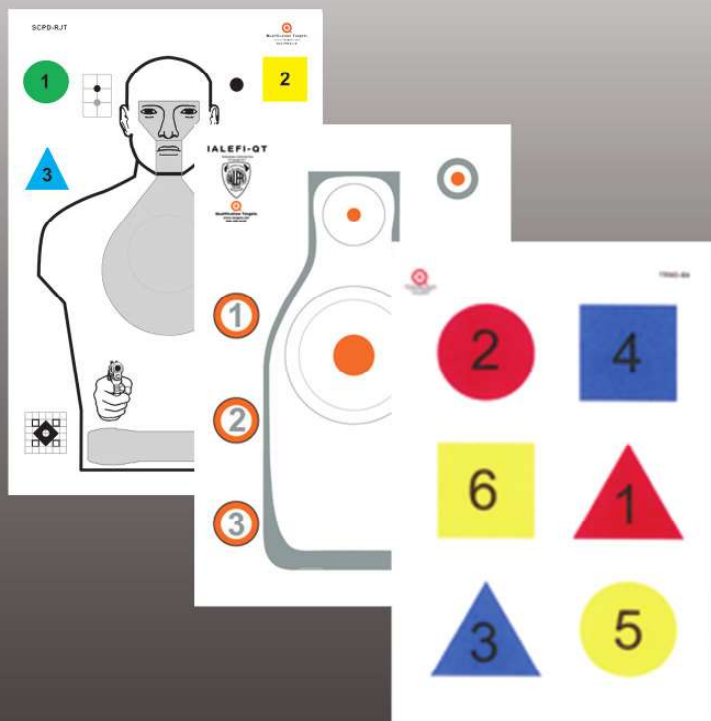
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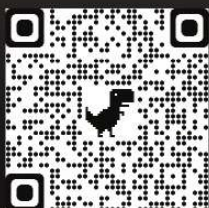
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New Retired Law Enforcement Concealed Carry Legal Defense Coverage



The FOP Legal Defense Plan's Board of Trustees has had numerous requests from current and prospective participants to review broadening coverage under the current HR-218 LEOSA Plan. After diligent review and analysis, the Board voted to make the following changes.

The HR-218 Plan coverage was replaced with the **FOP Retired Law Enforcement Concealed Carry Legal Defense Coverage (CCC)**. The expanded coverage will offer **unlimited** legal defense for civil and criminal claims associated with the legal carrying and/or use of a concealed weapon: All reasonable and necessary legal defense costs are now covered in full when using a plan attorney. This new expanded plan will provide coverage for not only those retirees who were qualified under LEOSA,

but also those retirees who are qualified under their own state laws to carry a concealed weapon. **Coverage does not include claims related specifically to the open carrying of firearms.**

The CCC went into effect on **January 1, 2021**. If you are a current HR-218 retired member, unlimited coverage and the enhanced benefits automatically took effect on January 1, 2021, with no additional cost. Upon renewal of your coverage in 2021, the new annual fee of \$75 will take effect. For all new retired members joining the plan after January 1, 2021, the annual fee is \$75.

If you are an active law enforcement officer covered by the FOP Legal Defense Plan, LEOSA coverage is already included. CCC is for **retired law enforcement officers only** and separate from the FOP Legal Defense Plan.

The Board is excited to provide yet another excellent benefit for our FOP law enforcement brothers and sisters. In today's unstable times, it is crucial to make sure you are protected.

The Legal Plan values your business and thanks you for your continued support. To enroll, please visit our website at **foplegal.com** and select Join Now > Retired Law Enforcement Concealed Carry Coverage. Full coverage, eligibility and other exclusions can be found in the Plan Description at **foplegal.com**, under the About > Library section. If you have questions pertaining to these changes, enrollment or the plan in general, please contact Hylant at (800) 341-6038 or via email at **info@foplegal.com**. **FOP**



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Serving Members and Their Families for 80 Years



In just a few weeks, the officers, trustees and delegates will meet in Indianapolis to attend the 40th Biennial National Conference of the Fraternal Order of Police Auxiliary. The conference marks 80 years of the Auxiliary exchanging ideas, putting into action new projects and finding new avenues of support for the members of the Fraternal Order of Police and their families. The Auxiliary has grown in its ability to recognize the issues affecting law enforcement families and has taken steps forward to develop programs to address these issues.

Over the years, the Auxiliary has adopted and initiated programs to encourage officer safety, such as the Vested Interest program, which not only urged officers to wear their bulletproof vests but also assisted in providing vests for those departments that could not afford them. The Auxiliary also initiated a Handgun Safety program, which included a "Lock It Up" program that encouraged officers to lock up their weapons when off duty to assure the safety of their families. We also initiated a Safety and Education program that encouraged officers to use seat belts and not to text while driving. This program was entitled "Buckle Up, Phone

Down" and encouraged both officers and their family members to drive safely.

And, of course, the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service, which was initiated by Auxiliary officers and funded by the National Fraternal Order of Police. The

The 40th Biennial Conference of the FOP Auxiliary marks 80 years of the Auxiliary exchanging ideas, putting into action new projects and finding new avenues of support for FOP members and their families.

service has grown and is now attended by approximately 30,000 to 35,000 each year. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold the 2020 and 2021 services in person in May but are planning an in-person service in the fall to honor all of the 2020 and 2021 fallen

officers — a total of 491 officers — and their families. A huge undertaking, but with the FOP Memorial Committee and the Auxiliary Memorial Committee working together, as they always do for each and every memorial service, I know that the service will be a very meaningful one that will allow family members to honor their loved one.

These are just a few of the projects and programs the Auxiliary has sponsored that affects law enforcement officers and their families. There are many more programs that assist family members. The Auxiliary's Kathryn M. Milton Scholarship program grants scholarships each year to Auxiliary members or family members who are interested in furthering their education. We have initiated a project entitled REACH to assist the families of officers who have been injured in the line of duty by providing them with items they may need while their officer is hospitalized and after their officer has been released home.

The Auxiliary also produces a monthly newsletter, *The Informer*, in an effort to keep our members involved and aware of what is happening not only on the national level but in auxiliaries across the country. By way of another course of communication, we have recently added monthly virtual training on various topics of interest to our members.

These are just a few of the programs and projects that we have developed and put into action as a result of our past 39 Biennial Conferences. We welcome FOP members to visit our meeting room at the National Conference in Indiana, or stop by our Expo booth to learn more about how an auxiliary can assist your lodge. We are here for you and will continue our efforts to support law enforcement and their families. We want to assure the FOP and their families that we will "Never Let Them Walk Alone." **FOP**

// **WRITE TO US!** Contact the National Auxiliary at lhennie@aol.com to learn more about opportunities to support law enforcement families.

SHARE YOUR STORY!

So many of us learn from the experiences of others, especially others with whom we share things in common. Do you have a story to tell of overcoming adversity in your own life? The National Officer Wellness Committee would like to hear it!

Whether you would just like to share your story privately with peers on the Committee or are willing to share with readers so that all can learn from it and celebrate with you, we want to hear from you! Contact us confidentially at officerwellness@fop.net.





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