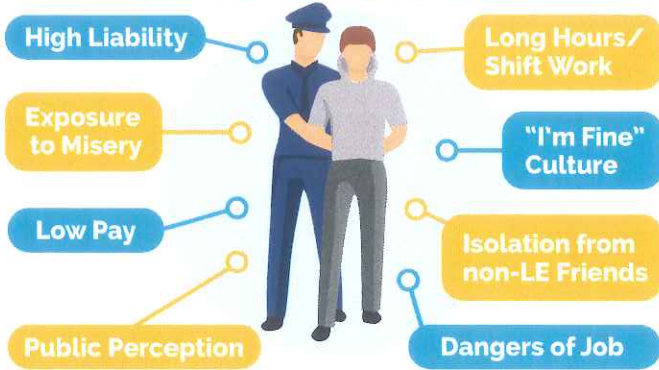


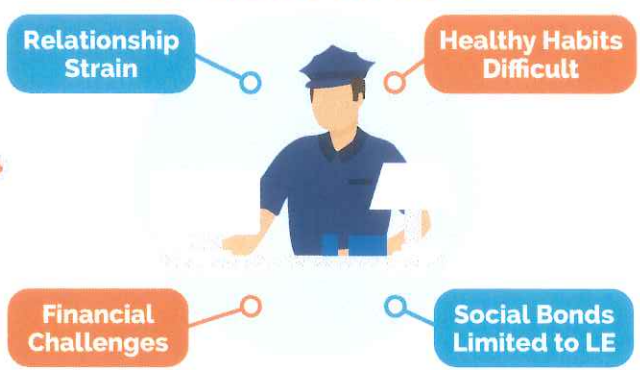


# Understanding the Cycle of Stress and Its Associated Risk Factors Within the Law Enforcement Profession

## REALITIES OF JOB



## EFFECTS OF JOB



## RESULT OF JOB EFFECTS ON A PERSON

**Stress**

## UNHEALTHY COPING



## CONSEQUENCES OF UNHEALTHY COPING



## RESULT OF STRESS CYCLE

**Hopelessness**

## SUICIDE





# Defining Stress

When dealing with mental wellness of officers it is important to be able to articulate what stress is and how it manifests in officers.

Stress by its very nature is good and bad. It is literally how you respond to demands placed on you. Some forms of stress are lifesaving.

Stress: a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

Different kinds of stress include:<sup>2</sup>

- Acute stress: the most common form of stress. It's the recent happenings and anticipation of the near term demands. Most people thrive under this type of stress.
- Episodic stress: perpetually under acute stress. For officers it's going from call to call without a break or the ability to process what they dealt with.
- Chronic stress: cumulative piling up of stressors. Often it occurs in officers due to not dealing with the daily exposure to stress. Without taking personal inventory it can then spill over in their lives in the form of substance abuse, problematic behavior, relationship issues, job issues, etc. These unrelenting demands and pressures may continue for seemingly interminable periods of time and lead to hopelessness.



Trauma: When an event, or series of events, causes a lot of stress, it is called a traumatic event.<sup>3</sup>

Critical incidents: events that will strain one's ability to function. These events, which include having to witness or experience tragedy, death, serious injuries, and threatening situations are called "critical incidents."<sup>4</sup>



PTSD: Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an intense physical and emotional response to thoughts and reminders of the traumatic event that last for many weeks, months, or years after the traumatic event.<sup>5</sup> PTSD is a medical condition that can be diagnosed by a mental health clinician.

## References

1. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/stress>
2. <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/stress-kinds.aspx>
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/coping.pdf>
4. <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergency-preparedness/guides/critical.html>
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/coping.pdf>



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