

Suicide in Public Safety Personnel Compared to the General Population, 2014-2018: Preliminary Results



* What Do We Know?

Due to the nature of their work, Public Safety Personnel (PSP) are chronically exposure to potentially psychologically traumatizing events (PSTE). There is conflicting evidence whether PSP have higher suicide rates than the general population.

Suicidal ideation
27.8%*

Suicidal planning
13.3%*

Suicidal attempts
4.6%*

5 10 15 20 25 30

The Study

- Police, firefighters, paramedics, and correctional workers who died by suicide from 2014 to 2018 were identified from social media, personal contacts with PSP organizations, and screening death notices from newspapers and obituary websites.
- We then linked these PSP suicides with coroner records.
- Each PSP coroner record was matched with two suicide deaths from the general population.



We identified a total of 31 PSP suicides from 2014-2018. These were matched with 62 records from the general population.



Only 3% of the PSPs who died by suicide were women, which is significantly lower than in the general population (25%).



PSPs were more likely to be divorced or separated than the general population.



PSP who died by suicide had served an average of 18 years. They were also more likely to experience employment stress than the general population.

4x

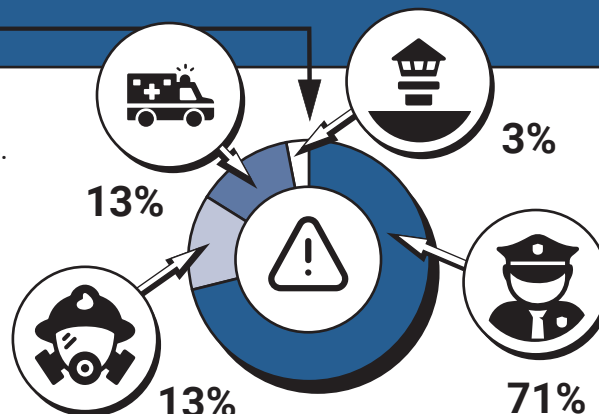
PSP were nearly 4x more likely to die by suicide using a firearm. 10/11 firearms deaths involved a service weapon.



PSP were more likely to be experiencing symptoms of depression and PTSD than the general population.

* Findings

We identified a total of 31 PSP suicides from 2014-2018. 71% were police officers, 13% were firefighters, 13% were paramedics, and 3% were correctional workers. These were matched with 62 records from the general population.



Keep an eye out for the full results here:

