

# Officer Wellness Programs: Mental and Financial Aspects

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## **Abstract**

*Law enforcement officers face many challenges within the span of a career. Mental health has become a forefront issue with law enforcement suicides outnumbering law enforcement killed in the line of duty. Not only is mental health an issue, financial health and the ability to retire without going to a second career leads to more stress. By creating a Wellness Program that encompasses mental, financial and physical health aspects, agencies can mitigate some stressors law enforcement officers face and create a more productive and content employee.*

## **Introduction**

Becoming a law enforcement officer for many is a lifelong dream; something one has dreamed of for many years. During these years of dreaming, no one thinks of the repeated exposure to chronic incidents and the constant stress of the job. Seeing mankind at their worst on a daily basis is never considered when one is called to be a law enforcement officer. Being a law enforcement officer means one must be tough and ready to handle the simplest of calls to the most dynamic calls flawlessly. Law enforcement officers do this daily and are expected to overcome adversities, cope well and be the American Hero.

During a career, one may stop and ask why they became a law enforcement officer to begin with. This makes a few leave the profession and seek other employment. Some officers become revitalized and can have a stellar career. If agencies began a Wellness Program at the beginning of one's career, could it make a difference? If a Wellness Program was included in training at the Academy to prepare recruits for the job of being a law enforcement officer, would they benefit? Would new law enforcement officers participate in a Wellness Program that included mental health training, financial planning, officer nutrition and strategies to prevent traumatic stress? Would veteran law enforcement officers participate in a Wellness Program that included family support programs, financial planning and retirement planning? Would these types of programs make for a healthier, more well-adjusted agency capable of serving the community better? Does the agency bear the responsibility for helping its officers remain healthy throughout their career? These are the questions this study will examine in an effort to create a Wellness Program.

## Literature Review

### Mental Health Challenges:

Law enforcement officers are dying at an alarming rate by their own hand. Suicide rates among law enforcement officers is higher than the number of law enforcement officers being killed by the criminals. (Dudley & Wyllie, 2019). There is still a stigma associated with law enforcement officers discussing their coping mechanisms and the need for mental counseling. Many agencies leave their officers to deal with the daily internal and external stressors of the job on their own. Some agencies offer an Employee Assistance Program or a peer support program. Law enforcement officers handle stress differently and cope in their own ways. Some turn to alcohol, drugs, destructive behavior, and many end up divorced. Even though the signs of struggle are usually visible, we as law enforcement officers are missing them. This is evident by the number of law enforcement suicide deaths in 2018 and the previous decade. (Nanavaty, 2015).

Being exposed to the most unthinkable acts of criminal behavior in our society has also left many suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a mental health problem created by exposure to a traumatic event. (Parekh, 2017). Dealing with a child sexual battery or child death routinely is not what an average citizen deals with. Law enforcement officers deal with this, tuck it away and respond to the next call for service, that may or may not be a critical incident. A career of twenty-five to thirty years of this continued exposure wears on even the strongest people. This can be seen when law enforcement officers are preparing for retirement and have a hard time walking away. To be amid the action daily and then transition into a normal life is challenging. Many agencies do nothing to prepare law enforcement officers for retirement. (Goerling, 2012).

Law enforcement officers work as many off-duty jobs and overtime as they possibly can. This compounds the increasing stress of working the job with too many hours worked, not enough sleep and bad decision making. Not only does the job become more stressful, this pulls the law enforcement officer away from the family and increases the stress at home. Lack of financial planning early in one's career lends to living paycheck to paycheck. Many law enforcement officers begin the job as a single individual with minimal debt and then start buying "toys" that all law enforcement crave, such as guns, tactical gear, and all things black with Velcro. Before long, debt begins to pile and then thoughts of a marriage come to fruition. Before long, children are added to the mix and the financial security is limited and no planning has exacerbated the problem. (Moore, 2005)

In the last decade, the criticism of law enforcement has increased dramatically. Many high-profile cases throughout the country has led many law enforcement officers asking how they can continue to serve with so many unknowns in our profession occurring. With ever growing numbers of police suicides and divorce rate on the rise, officers don't feel safe approaching their respective agency for fear of being deemed unfit for duty or jeopardizing a career. While agencies train on safety tactics, driving and shooting, many fall short on wellness training and identifying the problems. While teaching our men and women in law enforcement patrol tactics and safety measures is

important, training on the everyday struggles that lead down a dark path are also important. Law enforcement is a tough job and a reminder of “Does good still overcome evil?” is sometimes enough to recharge some officers. (Bernhard, 2016)

When civilians start the Academy training to become a law enforcement officer, a transition takes place. They receive the training and then their perspective changes once they are exposed to the daunting tasks of daily work as a law enforcement officer. Agencies provide officers with many tools to include a handgun, rifle, ballistic vests and Tasers to protect themselves and the community they serve. However, very few agencies provide officers with the tools needed to withstand the mental health aspects of daily exposure to traumatic events. The beginning step needs to be agencies recognizing the individuals of the agency, sworn and nonsworn are their greatest asset. (Mattos, 2010)

As a new law enforcement officer within an agency, psychological testing occurs to ensure the individual is ready for what lies ahead. Once the academy training and field training occurs, they are then placed into a car with months of tactical and patrol training. No “emotional armor” has been given to the officer for the years ahead of stress and how to deal with it. While new officers are in training, they are seeking guidance and emulate what they are taught. This is a crucial stage in their careers where if equipped with a Wellness Program early, agencies have the opportunity to provide the seeds of emotional wellness and make a difference. (Mattos, 2010)

The primary years for law enforcement officers are when the decisions are made as to what kind of officer one will be. As one progresses into the five year plus timeframe, the daily exposure starts to take a toll. Many have been touched by sadness, shock, grief and emotions many people don't deal with daily. “We live daily in a vastly different world than the rest of our society and are exposed to a barrage of forces that challenge our ability to live happy, healthy lives.” (Mattos, 2010). This can lead an officer to become emotionally jaded and the days of telling officers to “buck up and get to work” are gone. “The cumulative exposure of both acute and chronic trauma degrades an officers' wellness.” (Goerling, 2012). Agencies must assist officers with their mental wellbeing in an effort to reach the finish line. (Mattos, 2010)

San Diego Police Department (SDPD) launched The Wellness Unit in July 2011. This became a necessity for the agency after having 10 officers investigated for criminal offense and six of those being arrested. The Wellness Unit is comprised of two sergeants, one officer and one civilian and provides not only counseling services, but also wellness educational seminars, brochures and workshops on many wellness issues. By including a nonsworn member in the unit, this sends a very clear message to all staff members that everyone is a valued member. During the implementation phase of the Wellness Unit, the biggest hurdle with officers was the confidentiality of the mental health services. To counteract this, the first day in the Wellness Unit, confidentiality is discussed with the officer and they are informed of all the mandatory disclosures. If an officer needs further counseling, the Wellness Unit member provides a list of resources for further follow up. SDPD took the Wellness Unit very seriously and screened potential applicants for the Wellness Unit for interpersonal skills and identified members that the officers trusted. Police officers are strong willed and will not open up to someone they do not trust, therefore, the Wellness Unit members had to be respected and trusted. Once chosen, the Wellness Unit members go through a three-

day training that includes peer support training, active listening, substance abuse, grief counseling, crisis intervention and then each is followed by a role play exercise. Members are also taught when they need to make a referral and confidentiality issues. (PERF, 2018)

SDPD's Wellness Unit took the initiative to provide brochures, newsletters and posters throughout the agency. When new officers start the agency, they are provided a brochure in an effort to create a culture of wellness. Sergeant Ed Zwibel, former member of the SDPD Wellness Unit says, "The only product we produce as an agency is our employees, and all of their work is improved if they're well." (PERF, 2018). This approach to ensuring employees are well on a mental, spiritual, financial and physical basis has a positive impact on the agency as a whole. Mentally, physically and financially fit law enforcement officers come to work, make good decisions and prepare for retirement at an early stage in their careers. (PERF, 2018)

In 2017, Congresswoman Susan Brooks introduced the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act of 2017. It passed both the House and the Senate and was signed by President Donald Trump in January 2018. This Act allows resources to be developed for agencies to assist in addressing the mental health challenges faced by law enforcement officers. The introduction of this Act will help agencies with developing peer mentoring programs. Research has shown that law enforcement officers will talk to each other within agencies, as other officers are aware firsthand of the stress related to law enforcement duties. Creating a culture of wellness within an agency leads to better job satisfaction and can benefit the agency in decreasing turnover. ("The Law Enforcement," 2017)

### **Financial Challenges:**

While the daily rigors of being a law enforcement officer are strenuous, financial woes add to the stress. When rookies begin their careers, financial planning and looking to retirement are not often considered. Retirement is the farthest element of one's career. (McVicker, 2015). Law enforcement officers are "not doing it for the money. We're doing it because we want to serve and protect." (Clark, 2014). New officers are given information about their pension and other ways to save in either a 401k plan or a 457 plan. Not being financial planners, this information passed along is no more than a "complicated system with myriad rules and options, including a defined benefit plan, a defined retirement account, cash investments in mutual funds and a self-directed brokerage account" (Paikert, 2015).

Being a law enforcement officer has moved from a blue-collar job to a profession over the last few decades. Labor unions have assisted in increasing the salaries as a means of an incentive. Higher salaries and better benefits such as a defined benefit plan assists with a lower turnover rate and more employee satisfaction (Schuck & Hemp, 2017). However, some police officers continue to work as many off-duty jobs and overtime as possible.

There is a difference between being financially well and financially resilient. The ideal rookie would start their career as financially well "debt free, spend less than they earn, and put that extra money into their 401k for retirement" (Englert, 2018). If the rookie were to remain resilient, they would have the capability to recover quickly from

difficulties throughout their career, such as divorce, illness or an unexpected \$1,000 expense. Unfortunately, research has shown “67% of those in the United States earning between \$50,000 and \$100,000 could not afford a surprise \$1,000 expense.” (Englert, 2018). When a crisis occurs, the expense has to be handled with credit cards, payday loans or borrowing from family and friends. This can lead to a debt spiral when the next crisis occurs and eventually turns into potentially crushing debt for the law enforcement officer (Englert, 2018).

When an officer is carrying too much debt, they work off duty jobs and overtime, not trying to manage paycheck to paycheck, but to work out of suffocating debt. When debt ridden, an officer doesn't have their mind at work and may experience fatigue from working extra. This leads to a phenomenon called “presenteeism.” This is the term “used to signify showing up for work in body, but not in productiveness” (Moore, 2005). Sound decision making is vital in the field of law enforcement and not being present in mind and body can lead to fatal errors. Agencies can control the amount worked via off duty jobs and overtime, but the worry and burden of being debt ridden cannot be controlled unless financial counseling services are added as part of an employee assistance program. (Moore, 2005)

Financial planning that does not occur in the early years of one's career needs to be addressed and thought about by the 12 to 15-year point. At this time in one's career, retirement is on the horizon and it is time to start thinking about being able to retire. Generally, law enforcement officers retire after 25 to 30 years on the job and are still relatively young. Many law enforcement officers will move to “Career Phase II” (Wasilewski, 2016). Some enter the field of insurance work or security as they have experienced this during their law enforcement career. If the planning stage occurred at the beginning years of one's career, would a secondary career be necessary? Planning early is a big advantage and sets one on the path to retirement comfortably. (Wasilewski & Olson, 2016)

Planning early in one's career for retirement will assist when the unexpected occurs, such as a divorce or illness. Defined benefit plans for law enforcement officers are a retirement tool but will not be enough to sustain long-term. Many law enforcement officers do not seek out financial planning other than talking to their fellow officers as to what they are doing. This can lead to bad advice and one can't “enjoy retirement unless you have financial peace of mind” (Clark, 2014). Retirement planning must happen early in one's career and the biggest mistake is waiting to develop a retirement plan. Making sure one is familiar with the pension plan and all possible savings route is imperative to a successful retirement. (Clark, 2014)

Greater financial security and control of a plan for retirement lends to happier employees and more productive employees. Financial stress causes absenteeism and increase in personal illness among officers. If an officer does not feel financially stable, “organizational commitment and job satisfaction in the workplace” suffer and leads to disgruntled employees (Kim & Garman, 2003). Unhappy workers utilize sick days more frequently and are less productive while at work. In the law enforcement field, this can lead to a decrease in morale and affect other officers inadvertently. (Kim & Garman, 2003)

Retirement confidence varies with each generation. Baby Boomers are approaching retirement and only 17% are confident they will have the necessary funds

for a comfortable retirement. Comparatively, 60% of Millennials are “very confident” they will have enough funds for a comfortable retirement even though the research shows two-thirds have absolutely nothing saved for retirement. Once the Millennials approach retirement, their outlook is sure to change. The move away from defined benefit plans to a defined contribution plan will mean saving during ones working years is imperative. More research will have to be done to see the outcome of Social Security and if it remains as a benefit that is funded (Oakley, 2019).

In 2012, the Palm Beach Town Council closed their pension plan under the guise that it would reduce employer costs for unfunded liabilities. This has proven not to be the case, but it has taken Palm Beach years to regain their pension plans. Unexpected changes like this make planning for retirement difficult if one has not been saving early in a career. Closing of the plan also created mass exodus of employees that couldn't afford to stay. “Pensions have a magnetic effect on employees.” With 67% of public sector employees rating retirement benefits as highly important, this indicates that planning for a comfortable retirement is very important. Overall wellness is important on a mental, financial and physical spectrum. Financial resilience is important at all stages of one's career. (NIRS, 2018)

## **Methods**

The purpose of this research was to identify the need for an Officer Wellness Program for the Tallahassee Police Department. The research also examined the willingness to utilize such program if offered within the confines of the police department training. The survey was done in conjunction with another person within the Tallahassee Police Department focusing on physical wellness.

The data was gathered using an electronic survey provided to all members of the Tallahassee Police Department, utilizing specific questions for sworn members only for some questions. The survey grouped members into gender, age and tenure categories. This was done to see if the stress of law enforcement had any correlation to tenure within the job. Members were also asked if they had resources outside the department for stress relief, such as hobbies or support groups. This data was also used to determine if there was any correlation in tenure and willingness for members to utilize mental health resources if provided.

Some questions asked in the survey were specific to financial health and the willingness to participate in a financial health program if offered. The data collected was done to determine if there was a correlation between members that started planning for their retirement early in their career or not and the added stress this can cause at the end of one's career.

The survey did not require members to identify themselves to encourage more people to participate. A weakness in the data collected is the willingness of members to admit a mental health challenge and desire to seek assistance being known. No matter the effort taken to ensure the survey is anonymous, members still felt their identity could be determined when completing very personal questions. Another weakness in the survey was the ability to determine financial stability relative to lifestyle. Generational differences with regards to what financial health means in retirement is also another

weakness. Being unable to determine a person’s definition of sustainment financially in retirement could not be overcome.

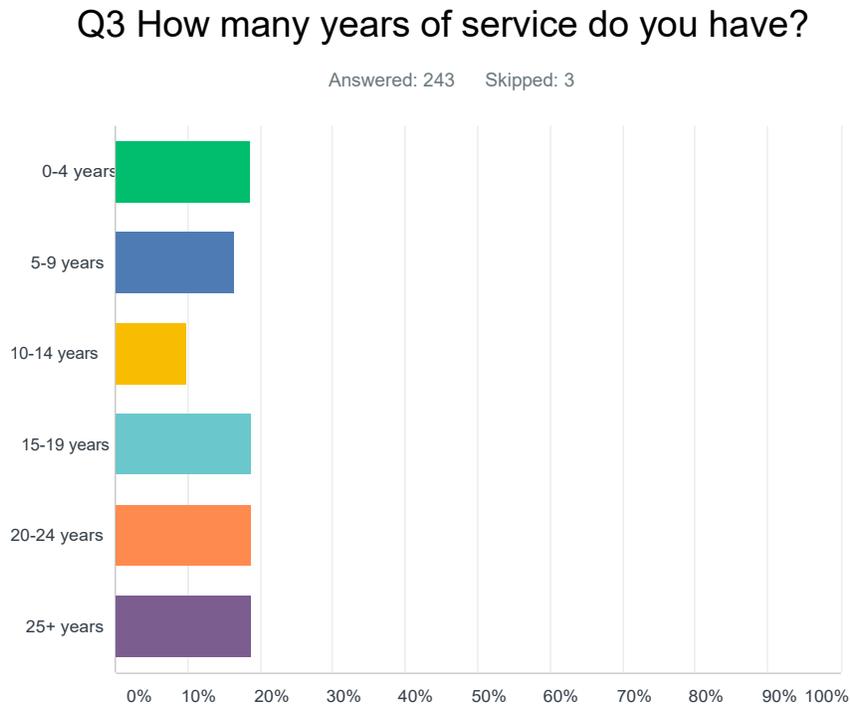
## Results

The survey went to 494 sworn personnel and civilian personnel within the Tallahassee Police Department. I received 246 responses, for a response rate of 49%. Of those 246 responses, some respondents chose to skip some of the questions in the survey. The first four questions on the survey asked respondents for race, gender, years of service within the agency and sworn versus nonsworn status.

One hundred sixty-seven respondents (68%) were male and seventy-eight (32%) were female. Twenty-nine (12%) respondents were between the ages 20-29; sixty-seven (27%) were between ages 30-39; ninety members (37%) were between the ages of 40-49; and fifty-nine (24%) were over 50 years old. One survey participant chose to skip both questions.

The third question asked respondents to indicate their years of service. Forty-five (19%) reported 0-4 years; forty (16%) reported 5-9 years; twenty-four (10%) reported 10-14 years; forty-six (19%) reported 15-19 years; forty-six (19%) reported 20-24 years; and forty-two (17%) reported 25+ years of service. Three survey participants chose to skip this question.

TABLE 3: Years of Service:

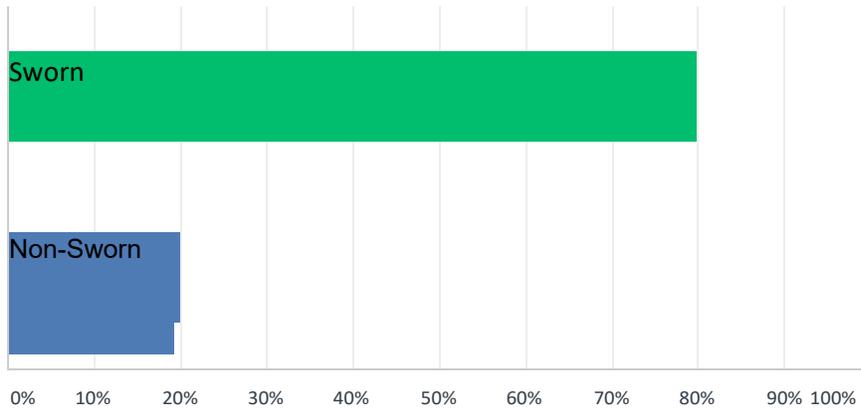


The fourth question inquired whether the respondents were sworn or non-sworn. One hundred ninety-eight (80%) were sworn and forty-seven (20%) were non-sworn. One survey participant chose to skip this question.

TABLE 4: Sworn or Non-Sworn:

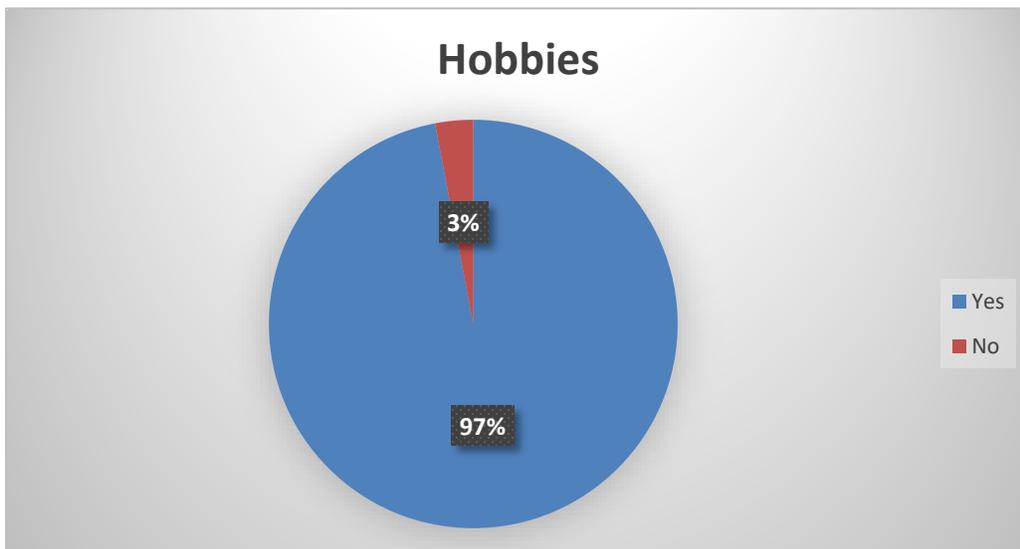
### Q4 Are you sworn or non-sworn

Answered: 245 Skipped: 1



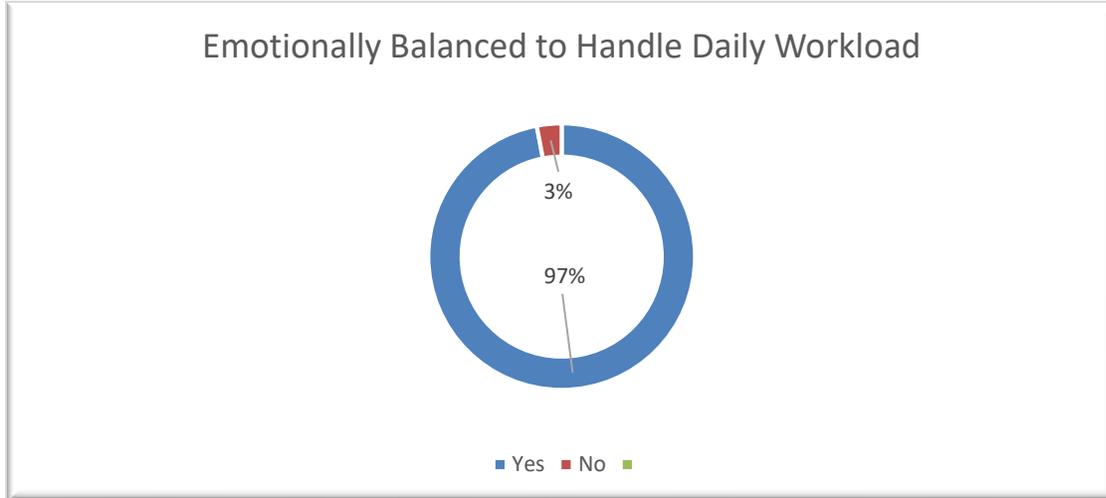
Question 5 asked respondents if they engaged in hobbies outside of work. Two hundred thirty-seven (97%) indicated yes with eight (3%) indicating no they do not. One survey participant chose not to answer this question.

TABLE 5: Hobbies



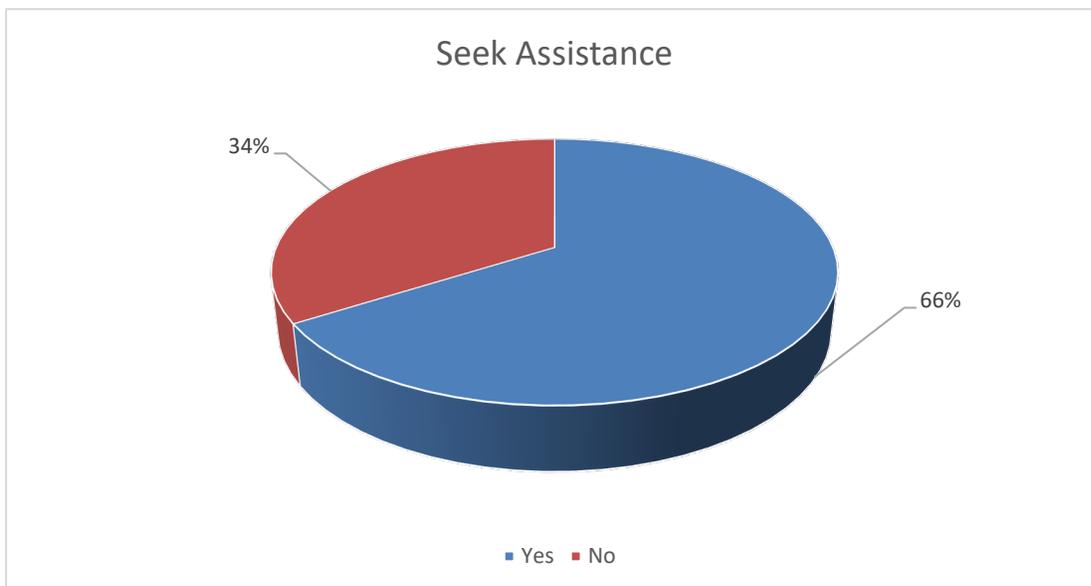
Question 6 asked survey participants if they felt emotionally balanced to handle their daily workload. Two hundred thirty-eight (97%) said yes with seven (3%) responding no. One survey participant chose to skip this question.

TABLE 6: Emotionally Balanced:



Question 7 asked whether participants sought assistance when a problem arises they can't emotionally handle. One hundred sixty (66%) responded yes and eighty-two (34%) responded no. Four survey participants chose to skip this question.

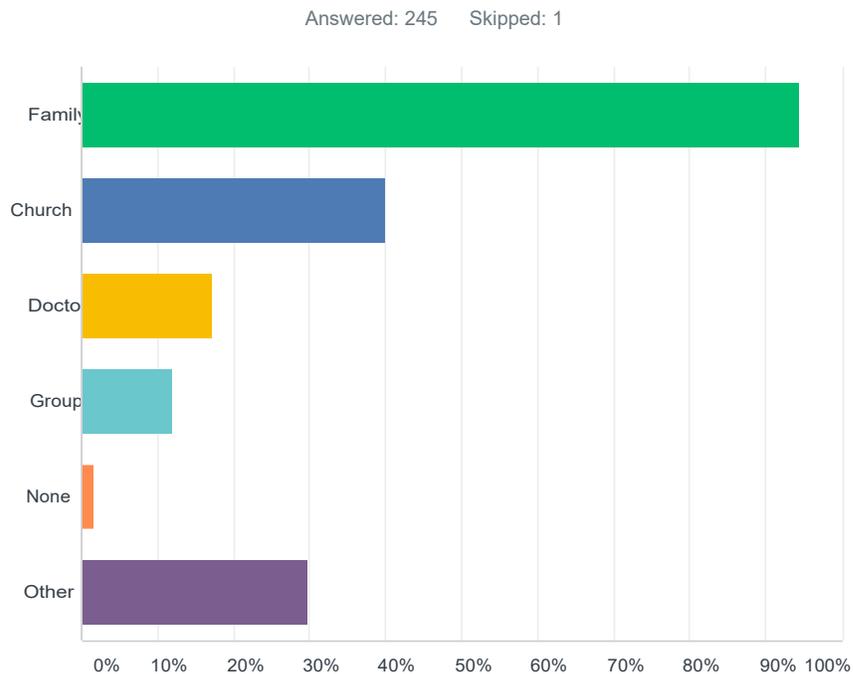
TABLE 7: Seek Assistance



Question 8 asked participants if they have a support system outside of the agency. The question listed options such as family, church, doctor, group, none or other and they could check all that apply. Two hundred thirty-one (94%) indicated family; ninety-eight (40%) indicated church; forty-two (17%) indicated doctor; twenty-nine (12%) indicated a group; four (1%) indicated none; and seventy-three (30%) indicated other. One survey participant chose not to answer this question.

TABLE 8: Support System

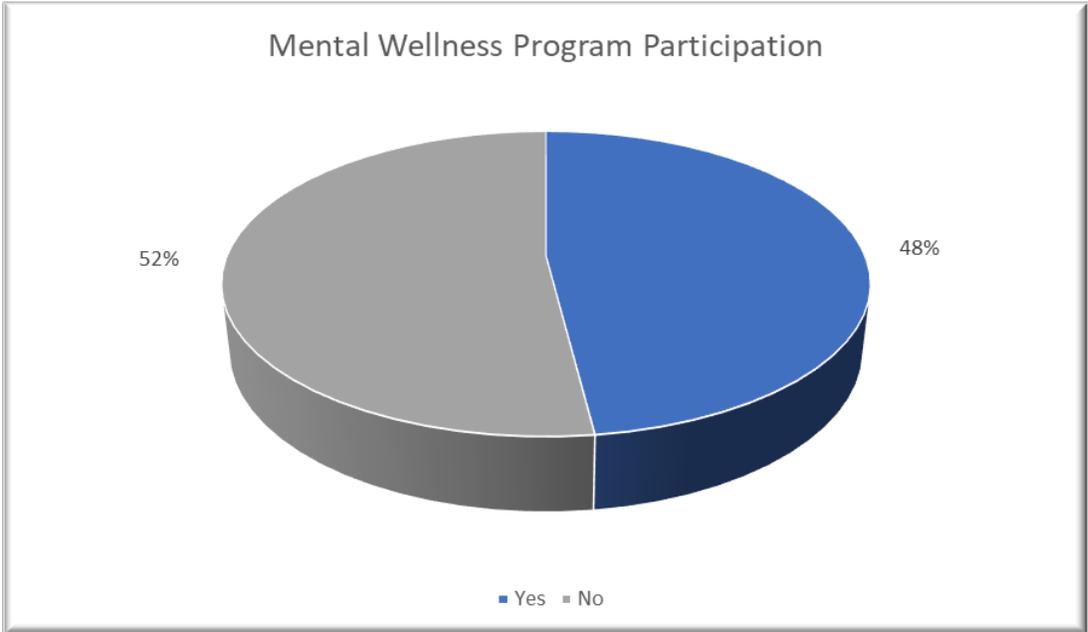
### Q8 What type of support system do you have outside of the agency?



Question 9 asked each participant if they had experienced a life-changing event in the last 12 months. Eighty-six (35%) indicated yes, they had and one hundred fifty-nine (65%) indicated no, they had not. One survey participant chose to skip this question.

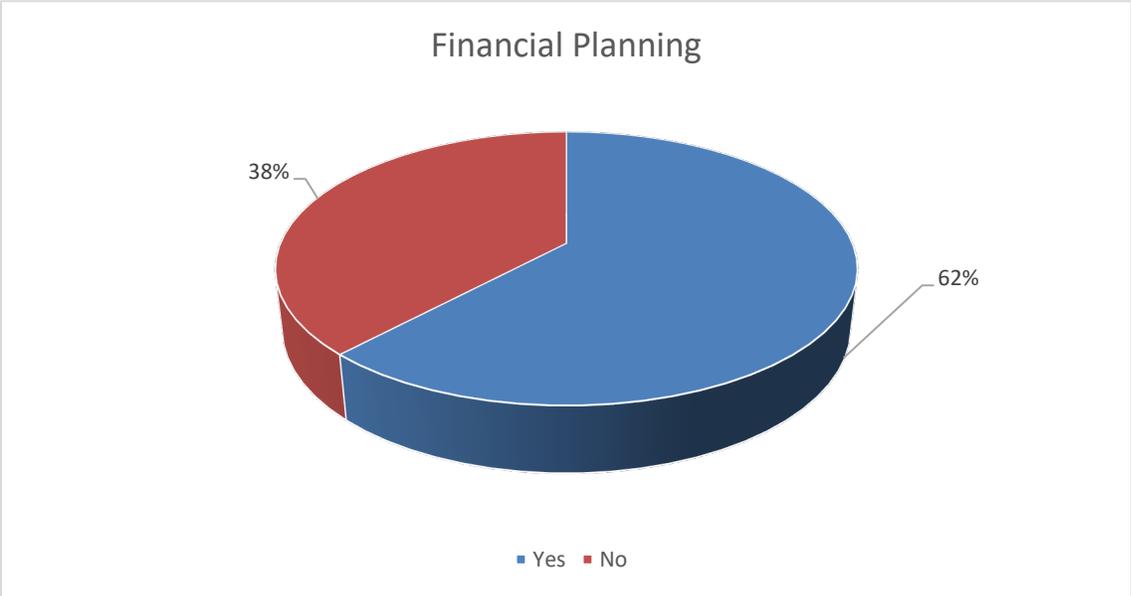
Question 10 asked if a Mental Wellness Program with a Peer Support Team were offered, would they participate. One hundred sixteen (48%) selected yes and one hundred twenty-five (52%) selected no. Five survey participants chose to skip this question.

TABLE 10: Mental Wellness Program:



Question 11 asked if you began planning for retirement when they started their career. One hundred forty-nine (62%) indicated yes, they had and ninety-one (38%) indicated no they had not. Six survey participants chose not to answer this question.

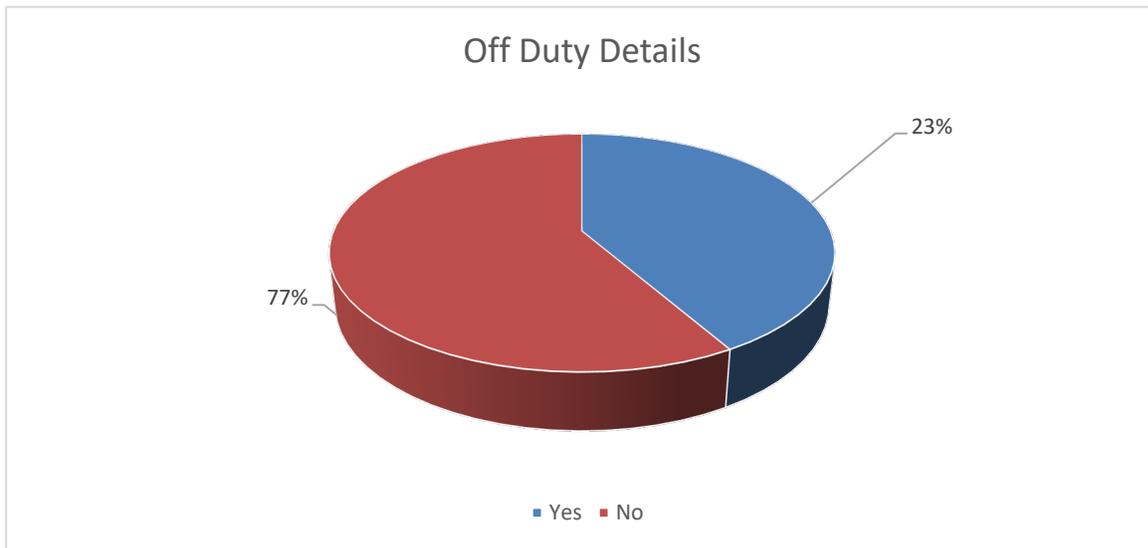
TABLE 11: Financial Planning



Question 12 asked survey participants if they felt their pension benefit would sustain their desired lifestyle in retirement. One hundred fifty-five (64%) indicated yes and eighty-seven (36%) indicated no. Four survey participants chose not to answer this question.

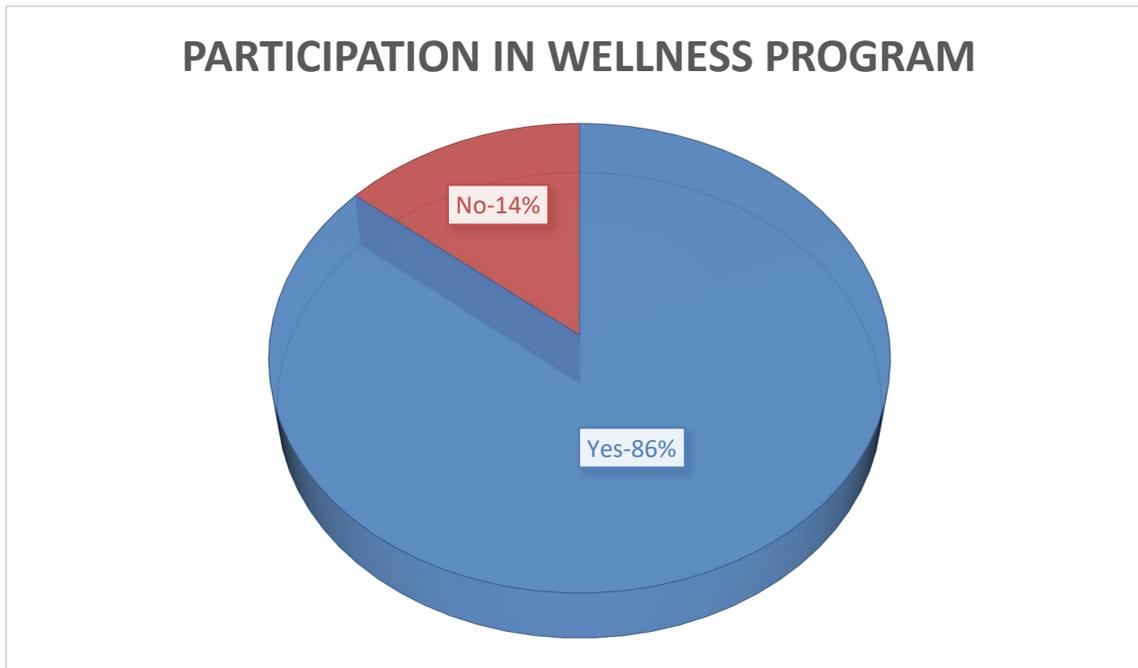
Question 13 asked survey participants if they worked off duty details (secondary employment) in order to pay their bills. Fifty-five (23%) indicated they do and one hundred eighty-four (77%) indicated they do not. Seven survey participants chose not to answer this question.

TABLE 13: Off Duty Details



Question 14 asked survey participants if they had a financial planner. One hundred six (43%) stated yes and one hundred thirty-eight (57%) stated no., Two survey participants chose not to answer this question. However, question 15 asked if financial services were offered as part of a Wellness Program, would participants utilize the service. Two hundred ten (86%) indicated yes while thirty-four (14%) indicated no. Two participants chose not to answer this question.

TABLE 15: Financial Services in Wellness Program



Question 30 was an open-ended question to allow participants to comment on what they would like to see incorporated into a Wellness Program to facilitate all three (Mental Health, Financial Health & Physical Health). One hundred twenty-two (25%) participants left comments indicating support from the agency was vital, time for the program to grow, utilizing qualified personnel and communication was key for a successful program.

### Discussion

The results of the survey for the Mental Health portion indicate most officers at the Tallahassee Police Department feel they are equipped to deal with their daily jobs and the emotional roller coaster that entails. Many survey participants indicated they would seek assistance if not able to emotionally handle situations, but alarmingly 34% would not. When asked if a support system outside of work was utilized, most officers indicated they had a plethora of ways to release their emotions. Family was the overwhelming support system with 94%, followed by 40% choosing church. As expected, law enforcement officers are supposed to be seen as tough and able to handle the daily situations encountered. Within the last few years, the toll the daily calls for service takes on an individual has started being discussed. This was sparked by the overwhelming number of law enforcement suicides experienced by our nation. As for the Tallahassee Police Department, we have not experienced an officer suicide, but 52% of survey participants also indicated they would not participate within a Wellness

Program with a Peer Support Team. Some of the comments left by survey participants felt mental health appointments with a doctor should be mandatory and supervisory training to recognize and/or handle subordinates who are having problems would be of great benefit. We as a profession have to recognize there is a need for mental health counseling and it is not a bad stigma to seek assistance.

The results for the Financial Health portion were alarming, in that 62% started planning for retirement upon starting their career, but 64% felt their pension would sustain their lifestyle into retirement. Research shows that pension alone will not sustain one's current lifestyle into retirement due to increased medical costs. For the last two and a half years, I have taught a thirty-minute session with all incoming new officers explaining our retirement plans and defined contribution plans. I have to believe that these new officers lend to the high percentage in Question 11 of beginning the planning for retirement. With this question, there is a conflict of whether the survey participants understand preparation for retirement. When 57% of survey participants do not have a financial planner, the reasoning would be most do not understand completely what retirement planning entails and the needs for financial security to retire without having to work another job. We have 23% of our force working off duty details to just pay their bills. This survey results indicates we have officers living beyond their means and need assistance with planning.

The most shocking statistic within the survey was 86% of survey participants being willing to utilize financial services if offered as part of a Wellness Program. This indicates there may be some desire to understand finances better and many comments within the survey requested financial classes and asked if we offer financial education to new hires. One comment requested financial advice on par with Dave Ramsey and assistance with developing steps and a plan to reach certain goals. The Tallahassee Police Department has utilized a firefighter that is a financial planner and understands our retirement plans for a one-day class.

Several comments within the survey were concerned with confidentiality for the mental and financial health programs and many indicated an outside source was needed. Of the comments that were willing to try an in-house program, the common thread was needing adequate time for the program to grow and the need for influential officers to lead the way.

## **Recommendations**

The survey results indicate that law enforcement officers feel emotionally capable of handling their day to day life. However, the research shows that many law enforcement officers are not. The residual effects of high intensity calls for service and repeated exposure to critical incidents has a long-lasting effect. Research shows the effects over time of repeated exposure and no or very little treatment can lead to alcohol abuse, drug abuse, divorce and even suicide.

Each year new classes of recruits are coming into law enforcement agencies to begin a career of what they believe to be exciting times with the view of putting criminals in jail. There is no foresight as to what the repeated exposure to people doing bad things will do to one's psyche and wellbeing. If a Wellness Program was started the day

a new recruit enters an agency and their mental health was addressed from day one, could we lower the suicide rate amongst law enforcement officers? Could we lower the divorce rate? Lower the alcohol abuse and officers getting into trouble? There is indication within the survey results that officers would not willingly participate at the onset of one's career. This lends to creating a mandatory program upon hire.

Law enforcement officers do not get into the profession for the money or the benefits. However, in order to survive and be capable of retirement on time, many officers are working off duty details. The survey results indicate an overwhelming majority, 86% would participate in financial services if offered. With 57% indicating they do not have a financial planner; the survey would lead one to believe that officers are dependent upon their pension plan. With 64% stating this is what they believe, the research shows that law enforcement officers either work a second job after retirement or either go into a second career choice.

With a Wellness Program implemented, financial services could be offered to new recruits entering an agency to prepare them for retirement in 20 to 25 years. Research shows there is a difference between financially well and financially resilient. In order to retire comfortably, financial resiliency is necessary and must start early in one's career. A Wellness Program could do this for new officers. Veteran officers should participate and show a desire through the survey to have financial advice provided. Many survey participants indicated a trustworthy person would have to be in charge of the program and the implementation.

Law enforcement officers have a tough job daily with the highest and lowest of emotions. A Wellness Program to incorporate mental health services and financial services would assist in two aspects of education. This would lead to a more well-rounded and content person throughout one's career, with the goal of a longer more prosperous life after work.

In closing, I would recommend for the Tallahassee Police Department to

- Develop a Unit within the Tallahassee Police Department to begin developing a Wellness Program
- Develop a Wellness Program that utilizes a Peer to Peer Program
- Continue to teach all incoming recruit officers about retirement plans and defined contribution plans available
- Continue to utilize a financial planner for day sessions
- Begin a Financial Wellness Program for all employees that provides access to one on one sessions for individualized planning

Tracy Clark has been with the Tallahassee Police Department since August 3, 1998. She has served as a Patrol Officer, Traffic Officer, COPPS Officer, Internal Affairs Investigator, Field Training Officer until promoted to Sergeant in December 2013. As a Sergeant, she supervised the Target Enforcement Squad, Drug Interdiction Unit and the Special Events Unit, until promoted to Lieutenant in April 2017. As a Lieutenant, she supervised Field Training Program and the Training Unit. In October of 2019, Tracy was promoted to Major. She has a Bachelor of Science in Criminology and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Florida State University.

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## Appendix A

### Survey Questions

#### Introduction:

Please see the attached link for a survey for Lt. Clark and Lt. Porter for our Senior Leadership Research Project at FDLE. We are requesting you take the time to complete the survey, which is anonymous for our data. Thank you for taking the time to assist us in this project.

#### Survey Questions for Development of Wellness Program Mental, Financial and Physical

1. What is your gender?  
Male                  Female
  
2. What is your age group?  
20-29  
30-39  
40-49  
50+
  
3. How many years of service do you have?  
0-4 years  
5-9 years  
10-14 years  
15-19 years  
20-24 years  
25+ years
  
4. Are you:  
Sworn                  Non-sworn

#### **Mental Health**

5. Do you participate in hobbies outside of work?  
Yes                  No
  
6. Do you feel you are emotionally balanced to handle your daily workload?  
Yes                  No
  
7. Do you seek assistance when a problem arises you can't emotionally handle?  
Yes                  No

8. What type of support system do you have outside of the agency? Check all that apply.  
Family  
Church  
Doctor  
Group  
None  
Other

9. Have you experienced a life-changing event in the last 12 months?  
Yes            No

10. If a Mental Wellness program with a Peer Support Team were offered, would you participate?  
Yes            No

### **Financial Health**

11. When you started your law enforcement career, did you begin financially planning for retirement?  
Yes            No

12. Do you feel your pension benefit will sustain your desired lifestyle in retirement?  
Yes            No

13. Do you work off duty details to pay your bills?  
Yes            No

14. Do you have a financial planner?  
Yes            No

15. If financial services were offered as part of a Wellness Program, would you participate?  
Yes            No

16. (This was question 30 on the survey)  
If the Tallahassee Police Department incorporated a Wellness Program to facilitate all three (Mental Health, Financial Health & Physical Health) what would you like to see within the program?