



## Are you experiencing frequent nightmares or flashbacks?

Do you feel an emotional numbness and/or avoidance to places, people, and activities associated with a particular event?

### Data

**Officers are not immune** to the effects of witnessing tragedy and trauma. If these effects go untreated, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) could develop.

Symptoms of PTSD<sup>1</sup> can manifest physically, behaviorally, and emotionally and can include:

- Avoidance, including staying away from anything related to or similar to the event
- Panic attacks, including an elevated heart rate
- Nightmares and flashbacks
- Irritability or outbursts of anger
- Being overly alert or easily startled
- Uncontrollable shaking
- Extreme fear of harm
- Numbness

Most people who go through traumatic events may have temporary difficulty adjusting and coping, but with time and support, they usually get better. If the symptoms get worse, last for months or even years, or interfere with your critical decision making or day-to-day functioning, you should seek help as soon as possible.

PTSD is a disorder that can seriously impact your mental well-being and requires immediate medical consultation. Those experiencing PTSD are more likely to use coping mechanisms that compound or increase other issues. Reach out! It's okay. Everyone needs help from time to time.

### Resources

**There are many resources** available, including your agency's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), a counselor, a physician, a friend, a supervisor, or a provider hotline. It's okay to talk in a confidential manner to your supervisor.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers 24/7, free, and confidential mental health treatment at 1-800-662-4357.

Call 988 for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (or text "BLUE" to 741741).

<sup>1</sup> Coping with a Traumatic Event, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/coping.PDF>



Agency EAP:

Agency Chaplain:

Visit [valorforblue.org](http://valorforblue.org) and [safleo.org](http://safleo.org) for additional resources on PTSD.