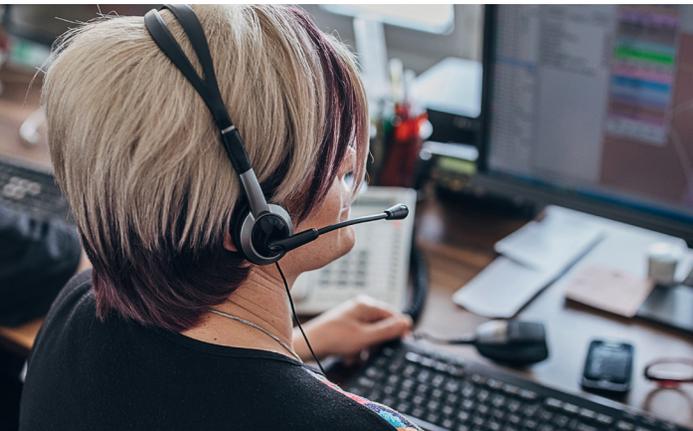


What is SECURE?

SECURE (Skills and Experience for Calling Up Resiliency) is a new peer mentorship program for Vermont first responders. Selected applicants receive education and training to assist their departments in achieving wellness goals, building resiliency, and assisting first responders who may be in crisis. Participating peer mentors work with licensed clinical health professionals to form a statewide support network that can be used and deployed in the event of a traumatic incident or mental health crisis. This program is made possible through a collaboration between the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department, and Invest EAP Centers for Wellbeing.



How Do I Sign Up to Be a SECURE Peer?

First responders interested in applying to be a SECURE peer can contact Bobby Arnell at bobby.arnell@vermont.gov or by visiting our website at www.securepeer.org and submitting an online application.

How Do I Learn More about SECURE?

For more information on the Vermont SECURE peer program and other LEMWHA peer implementation projects, visit www.securepeer.org.



Keeping Vermont's First Responders Strong and Resilient



How Does SECURE Work?

SECURE peers are trained to assist first responders in need of mental health and wellness services. A SECURE peer is trained to assist other first responders in crisis and connect individuals to any necessary follow-up services. SECURE peers are also trained in preventative, resiliency-building strategies that can be shared and employed in departments throughout the state.

Selected peers work to build wellness goals and strategies for their own departments by participating in the creation of a first responder wellness toolkit. A SECURE peer group will be established in five regions in Vermont:

- Northwest: Williston Fire Department
- Northeast: Orleans County Sheriff's Department
- Central: Lamoille County Sheriff's Department
- Southwest: Bennington Police Department
- Southeast: Springfield Police Department

What Kind of Training Will SECURE Peers Receive?

Peers participating in the SECURE program receive evidence-based training in providing immediate psychological assistance to first responders in crisis and in facilitating group debriefings in the aftermath of a critical incident. Educational curriculum also focuses on wellness objectives that increase psychological resiliency, such as sleep hygiene, proper nutrition, and physical exercise. A Vermont licensed counselor facilitates regional peer meetings and also assists in identifying local resources, establishing response and deployment infrastructure, and compiling policy goals into a Vermont SECURE Toolkit.

Why is SECURE Needed?

First responders and emergency services workers have inherently dangerous jobs and face a greater risk of mental and physical injury than the general public. The demanding nature of these jobs—and the compounding exposure to stress—can have negative effects on first responders' work, health, and relationships. SECURE provides a safety net of training that peer participants can use to establish and improve their own departments' wellness programs while also working together as a cohesive group, providing assistance to any first responder or department in need.

