

# St. Louis County Police Department Creates Wellness Unit

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ST. LOUIS - The St. Louis County Police Department is pleased to announce the creation of a new Wellness Unit, which was included in the recent changes to the organizational chart. The Wellness Unit is responsible for ensuring the mental, physical, and emotional health of Department employees.

In order to accomplish these tasks, the unit identifies resources for employees, assists those that are in crisis, and facilitates training, educational seminars, and workshops. The unit manages all department "help services," including the Peer Support Program, Police Chaplain Program, and psychological services.

These programs and services are available to all commissioned and professional staff employees, as well as their family members. “The emotional, mental, and physical well-being of our police officers and professional staff is essential to our success in helping our community,” said Chief Barton.

“This unit streamlines the process for our staff and their families to receive any support they may need in their road to personal and professional success.” “Over the last several years the law enforcement profession has realized this type of support is vital to maintaining all aspects of the health of the officer, detective, supervisor, dispatcher, and professional staff of any agency,” said Lieutenant Scott Roach, who will serve as the unit’s first commander.

“The growing national trend, no matter the profession, is to diminish the stigma attached to seeking help of any kind. Taking a proactive approach to wellness just makes perfect sense. Everyone should strive to be their best self. We hope to help our employees get there AND stay there!”

Michelle Bagwell, President and Executive Director, St. Louis Police Foundation had this to contribute, “Since 2014, the St. Louis Police Foundation has responded to requests for County Police Officers to provide the training, programs and resources they need to best protect us. The emotional, mental and physical wellness of our police officers is vitally important, not just for them but for their families and the communities they serve. We are privileged to provide them our support for this innovative initiative.”

Funding for the Wellness Unit’s programs, including the Peer Support Program, special events, and speakers is being provided by the St. Louis Police Foundation, a Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant, and donations from other organizations currently being sought.