



Suicide Prevention Statement of the Commander, Marine Forces Reserve

In 2019, more Marines died from suicide than in combat operations. The overwhelming majority of those who took their own lives had little, if any, combat exposure. They succumbed to personal challenges, which can be as daunting as the operational dangers they face in battle.

Commanders must mitigate suicide risk through engaged leadership. There is nothing more important than taking care of our Marines. In keeping with the motto "Mission first, Marines always," we prepare Marines to stay in the fight, relentlessly maneuver both physically and mentally to ultimately overcome all obstacles. Just as we train for combat, small unit leadership will be crucial in helping Marines overcome this challenge. A critical element of this is team building and a sense of belonging. **NCOs are in the lead!**

I am directing all units to have an up-to-date Suicide Prevention Implementation plan, which includes national as well as local resources. Further, units will ensure all Marines complete Unit Marine Awareness and Prevention Integrated Training (UMAPIT) by the end of the calendar year and there is continuous engaged leadership throughout the year. All Marines' lives are precious and it is the responsibility of leaders to provide the tools and support to combat this issue.

All newly joined E-5s and below will be required to add the following contacts in their personal phones: a unit Senior Enlisted Point of Contact; the Military One Source at 800-342-9647; and the D-Stress Hotline at 877-476-7734. The unit Uniformed Readiness Coordinators will also provide the contacts to family members and encourage them call if they are concerned about their Marines' safety.

Commanders shall institute an comprehensive sponsorship program for new joins. In addition to assisting the new Marine with integrating into the unit, the sponsor will work with the chain of command if the Marine is at risk of suicide due to issues such as troubled personal relationships, unemployment, or or sudden loss of a loved one. The unit will direct affected Marines to seek consultation with a Psychological Health Outreach Program representative to help cope and recover.

Research indicates those between 21-25 years old are most vulnerable to suicide. Commanding Generals are to allocate resources to assist Marines and Sailors in this demographic.

This is not an exhaustive list, and leaders are not limited to what's directed above. Units executing successful processes are encouraged to share them with the Marine Forces Reserve suicide prevention program director, Ms. Jennifer Duhon, at jennifer.duhon@usmc.mil.

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DGB", written over a white background.

David G. Bellon
Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commander