

COMMANDER
MARINE FORCES RESERVE
Suicide Prevention – Guidance to the Force



Recent data reveals a troubling trend: the incidence of suicides within our ranks now surpasses that of combat-related fatalities. Notably, many affected personnel have limited or no exposure to combat, highlighting one's personal crises, particularly those related to family and intimate relationships, are as critical as the threats encountered during military operations.

To mitigate this critical issue, it is imperative for commanders to leverage engaged leadership principles, aligning with the Core Leader Functions: Strengthen, Mitigate, Identify, Treat, and Reintegrate. Upholding our creed, "Mission first, Marines always," our leadership must enhance not only the combat readiness but also the personal resilience of our Marines to navigate daily life stressors. This approach underscores the importance of small unit leadership in fostering resilience.

It is mandatory for all units to maintain a current Suicide Prevention Implementation Plan, incorporating both national and local support resources. Leadership must ensure active engagement and verify that all Marines complete the Unit Marine Awareness and Prevention Integrated (UMAPIT) training within each calendar year. For all new Marines ranked E-5 and below, immediate telephonic resources must be provided and entered into their mobile devices under the supervision of their Staff Noncommissioned Officer-in-Charge or Inspector Instructor First Sergeant/Sergeant Major, including:

- A unit Senior Enlisted Point of Contact
- Military One Source number: 1-800-342-9647
- Veteran's Crisis line: 988

Furthermore, Uniformed Readiness Coordinators are tasked with distributing this crucial contact information to the families of Marines, encouraging prompt communication at the first sign of distress triggered by changes in personal relationships, employment, or living conditions.

An intensive sponsorship program shall be instituted for all newcomers. Peers of equal rank will be assigned to assist in acclimatization, keeping the new Marines informed of drill schedules, fielding queries, and maintaining regular check-ins. These peers will also be responsible for notifying the chain of command about any significant stressors encountered by the Marine, such as relational discord, employment loss, bereavement, or homelessness. Upon identifying signs of distress, the peer is to inquire directly about suicidal thoughts, offer non-judgmental support, and facilitate access to a Psychological Health Outreach Program for further assistance. Targeted efforts will focus on Marines aged 21-25, where resource allocation will be prioritized by Commanding Generals based on identified needs.

The integrity of small unit leadership is critical, emphasizing direct, "kneecap-to-kneecap" interactions as essential for maintaining the mental health and readiness of all Marines. This refined approach not only addresses immediate needs but also fosters a long-term supportive environment where Marines feel valued and supported.

Units that have established effective processes are encouraged to share their strategies with the Marine Forces Reserve (MARFORRES) Prevention Program Director, Ms. Jennifer Duhon, at jennifer.duhon@usmc.mil, and the MARFORRES Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) Director, Ms. Tracy Touchard, at tracy.touchard@usmc.mil, to enhance our collective preventative measures. Fight's On!

Semper Fidelis,



Leonard F. Anderson IV
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Commander