



Cumberland County Board of Commissioners

Gary Eichelberger, Chairman . Jean Foschi, Vice Chairman . Vincent T. DiFilippo, Secretary

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2022

MEDIA CONTACT:

Samantha Krepps, *Communications Director*
O: 717.240.6343 | M: 717.706.0001
skrepps@ccpa.net

Cumberland County Leads PA with New First Responder Assistance Program

Carlisle, PA – The Cumberland County Commissioners and Department of Public Safety today announced the First Responders Assistance Program (FRAP). The program, commissioned by the Cumberland County Commissioners, was developed by Ali Rothrock, founder, and lead instructor for “On the Job and Off”.

“Any organizations greatest asset is its people. Investing in their mental health and wellness is crucial in providing the best quality services to our county,” said Robert Shively, Jr., Director of Public Safety.

FRAP connects first responders with therapists trained to understand emergency services careers.

“Cumberland County is leading the state by implementing this access of care to first responders,” said “Commissioner Gary Eichelberger. “This type of care is vital for first responders, and with this program, we are not putting additional pressures on the already heavily utilized county programs currently in place.”

FRAP provides Cumberland County First Responders support for trauma, stress, depression, anxiety, grief, eating disorders, gambling, substance use, and more. It also includes crisis intervention and group debriefings for departments and clear paths to in-patient mental health or substance use treatment.

“During my 15 years of experience in the fire and emergency services, I saw a pattern. First responders had nowhere to turn if they needed the support of a counselor or therapist. Clinicians were hard to find, not readily available, and never trained to work specifically with first responders, that’s why we created this program.” said On the Job and Off founder, Ali Rothrock.

This program is available for all our dedicated first responder agencies in the county including the Cumberland County Department of Public Safety, Prison, Probation, Sheriff and Coroner Offices, and all of the fire department, law enforcement, and EMS agencies in the county.

“Having this resource, this tool, available for our first responders, is just as important as the equipment they carry on their emergency apparatus, said Commissioner Jean Foschi. “This program will help retain our dedicated first responders by avoiding burn-out, and assist them in processing traumatic events, enabling them to better manage stress, becoming a better version of themselves.”

Cumberland County Commissioners approved \$49,320 to fund the program for five years, at the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners’ meeting Nov. 15, 2021.

"First responders are dedicated to saving lives, and we are investing in them so that they can continue to respond to our county's needs," said Commissioner Vince DiFilippo. "The assistance that FRAP provides first responders helps them continue the vital work in our community."

On the Job and Off: FRAP grants access for first responders to counselors who are culturally competent in emergency services, providing support for trauma, stress, depression, anxiety, grief, eating disorders, gambling, substance use, and more. Counselors work with volunteer & career emergency service personnel and both individuals and departments are eligible to join.

Editors' Note: A first responder openly shared their feedback on the positive impact FRAP made in his life: *"I was connected with a counselor from On The Job and Off's First Responder Assistance Program at a time when I really needed help. My grief included anger, irritability, breakdowns, and sleeplessness. I wasn't able to run fire calls or spend time at the firehouse. I know now, that reaching out for help does not make you weak. It takes a lot of courage to tell someone you don't know how to handle what you're going through. I want other first responders to know they can ask for help and that the help I got was exactly what I needed."*