



FIRST RESPONDER PTSI FACT SHEET

- **MORE FIRST RESPONDERS DIE FROM SUICIDE THAN IN THE LINE OF DUTY**, according to a study conducted in 2018 by Ruderman (White Paper on Mental Health and Suicide of First Responders), cited by the US Fire Administration.
- Pennsylvania first responders are ineligible to receive proper care for PTSI (post-traumatic stress injury). A 1990 PA Supreme Court case (Martin v Ketchum) set the bar to require a mental injury claim to be the result of an abnormal working condition. Fire fighters are routinely denied mental injury claims as they're told that their mental injury "is just part of the job."
- Pennsylvania would join 25 other states that provide workers' compensation benefits to first responders who suffer from PTSI. Pennsylvania will soon be in the minority of states that do not provide help for their first responders.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs has reviewed the treatment outcome evidence and found that there are multiple effective treatments for PTSI. Approximately 60% of people receiving evidence-based treatments report symptom improvement, while about 40% no longer meet criteria for PTSI at the end of treatment. Most treated individuals report a return to functional status. Thus, the preponderance of evidence indicates that PTSI is treatable.
- First responders routinely work in environments characterized by multiple risk factors traditionally associated with mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression and PTSI. The job is marked by high stress, sleep deprivation, low control, personal risk, and exposure to trauma and human suffering. These exposures can result in increased substance abuse and suicide if not treated properly.
- The long-term fiscal impact to a municipality by replacing a qualified experienced first responder far outweighs the short-term costs of treating and returning a first responder to duty.



It's time to recognize the hazards that first responders face and provide treatment and support for our public servants.

Please support legislation to provide mental health care to first responders.