

3060 Willamette Drive NE Lacey, WA 98516 360-486-2380 (Phone) 360-486-2381 (Fax) www.waspc.org

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CONTACT: Steven D. Strachan (360) 486-2380

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER WELLNESS APP LAUNCHED STATEWIDE

(Lacey, WA) –A mobile-based application (app) focused on law enforcement officer wellness has launched statewide in Washington State. It will provide anonymous on-demand access to wellness techniques, suicide prevention, resilience, physical fitness, nutrition and other behavioral health and wellness supports and additional wellness resources.

The state legislature allocated \$1 million in funds in 2022 for the app which was selected by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) and is available for free to active and retired law enforcement, corrections, dispatch professionals and their family/household members.

"The legislature acknowledged the need to support officers, deputies and their families by providing funding to address the emotional toll of a law enforcement career, and the increasing suicide rate among law enforcement officers," said Rep. Mari Leavitt (D-28), the sponsor of the original funding for the app. Rep Leavitt learned more about the need for officer wellness supports following a ride-a-long with Steilacoom Police Chief Tom Yabe.

According to the Washington Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) Mental Health Task Force Report (2021) *Exposure to trauma, substance misuse, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and depression can be related and also increase risk of suicide. It is important for LEO and their families to have access to timely services that are well informed about the field of law enforcement and its unique experiences, stressors, risk, and protective factors.*

"The average person will experience a handful of critical incidents in their lifetime," said Chief Mike Lasnier, Suquamish Police Department, and co-chair of the WASPC Wellness Committee. "Police officers will be present at hundreds of them. While officers are expected to function flawlessly during intense moments of danger, loss, violence, horror and death, such incidents can leave a lasting impact. Officers and their families need ways to offload the stress and horror that they see, so they don't end up carrying it through their lives. This app will provide resources to first responders to help keep them healthy and fit to continue serving."

In addition to Chief Lasnier, Shelton Police Chief Carol Beason, Bothell Police Chief Ken Seuberlich, and Langley Police Chief Tavier Wasser worked closely to guide the selection of the app. WASPC has partnered with <u>Lexipol</u>, a leader in policy, training, and wellness support for public safety, to utilize <u>CORDICO</u>[®] as the Statewide Wellness App.

Active and retired law enforcement, corrections, dispatch professionals and their family/household

members are encouraged to visit <u>https://www.waspc.org/law-enforcement-wellness-app</u> for additional information on accessing the CORDICO App.

"We deeply appreciate the support of Rep. Leavitt and her legislative colleagues for this important and critical support for our state's officers, deputies, troopers, corrections officers, communication center professionals, and their families. It is needed now more than ever," said Steve Strachan, executive director of WASPC.

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WASPC was founded in 1963 and represents executive and top management personnel from law enforcement agencies statewide. With more than 900 members it includes the 39 county sheriffs, and 240 police chiefs, as well as the Washington State Patrol, the Washington Department of Corrections, and representatives of several federal agencies.