



# SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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## NEWS RELEASE

San Mateo County Sheriff, Carlos G. Bolanos is proud to announce a new comprehensive program which will directly address mental health needs of first responders. The Program for Resilience in Modern Emergency Response or "PRiMER" will provide peer support, family education, and resiliency training for all employees. It is designed to provide healthy coping mechanisms to prevent the use of negative patterns associated with high-stress careers of Sheriff's Office and County's Public Safety Communications employees.

This program is the direct result of a partnership between Sheriff Bolanos and Dr. Scott Morrow, the San Mateo County Health Officer. Through this collaboration, dedicated psychologists will use an approach specifically geared towards assisting first responders. They will focus on early detection, treatment, and management of stress-related issues and will be able to help provide necessary support to employees (including retirees) and their families.

Sheriff Bolanos is committed to this proactive approach to giving employees the support they deserve. He hopes consistent and timely access to health and wellness services will help alleviate issues commonly found among first responders. Sheriff Bolanos said, "I am excited about the implementation of this new program, bringing a new standard of mental health care for my staff and their families."

Dr. Scott Morrow said, "The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office is leading the industry in creating and implementing a comprehensive mental health program designed to address the needs of first responders at every stage of their careers. The program will include both new modules as well as the best of what is already being offered across the Bay Area to create a new standard in public safety mental health." The fundamental objective is to enhance the overall quality of life and to promote the well-being of employees who endure years of high-stress situations that can cause mental health issues, self-destructive behavior, and family-related problems.

Some of the goals of this program include improved peer support training, critical incident stress management, and clinician-led debriefings. This program will work in conjunction with the County's Employee Assistance Program to help develop and train a group of therapists to meet our specific needs.

