



# NSW POLICE FAMILY SUPPORT



**SUPPORT FOR NSW POLICE AND THEIR FAMILIES**

**FAMILY SUPPORT COORDINATOR**

(during standard office hours)

**T: 1800 803 040**

**E: [familysupport@police.nsw.gov.au](mailto:familysupport@police.nsw.gov.au)**





**COMMISSIONER KAREN WEBB APM**  
NSW Police Commissioner

## FOREWORD FROM OUR COMMISSIONER

There are few professions more demanding, rewarding and exciting than policing. Our employees have joined the NSW Police Force to protect and serve the community. This commitment to serve others comes with its own challenges.

The job expected of us can sometimes have an immense impact not only on our own mental health and wellbeing, but also on our families and those closest to us.

**'Without the constant love and support of our families we wouldn't be able to keep doing what we do.'**

They play a significant role in supporting our mental wellbeing and it is only right that we in turn are here to provide the same support to them. This is a key component of our commitment to Person Centred Support in the Mental Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025.

The NSWPF Family Support Coordinator provides a short-term information, advice and referral service that supports immediate family members. It provides resources to know when and how to seek help for your loved ones and provide avenues so they can also seek support for themselves.

**This brochure outlines some of the internal and external support services that are available to assist you and your family.**

I'd like to give a heartfelt thank you to all the families who play a huge role in keeping us healthy and happy, so that we can continue to serve the community. I encourage you all to take a proactive approach to your mental health and wellbeing and urge you to share this information with your families as part of your own commitment.







## The work of a police officer may be challenging for not only the officer, but you, as their family.

Research has shown that recognising the signs of stress and any mental health issues early, getting assistance in place and building resilience, assists greatly in enabling recovery and supporting wellbeing.

**Families are often the first to notice if an officer is having problems, and as such it is important that you are made aware of what to look out for, and what support services are available to help.**

It is equally important to recognise the impact of the officer's work on your own and your families wellbeing, and equipping you with the knowledge and resources to seek support for yourself and your family, when needed.

Remember, you are not alone. This booklet outlines some of the services available to you and your family, when you need some support.

'Who knew that true strength lies in asking for help and not in pretending I did not need any?'

\*

\* Cited in Kirschman 2018, p231, I love a Cop, 3rd Edition





# Seeking help

## WHEN TO SEEK HELP

An officers family, loved ones and colleagues may be the first to notice if an officer is facing challenges in their role, home life or changes in behaviour, due to what they may have seen or experienced.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

Your body and behaviour may show warning signs; that you, a colleague, loved one or family member can look for, these may include:

- Not sleeping or poor quality sleep.
- Loss of interest in usual activities.
- Lack of your usual energy.
- Feeling sad, hopeless and unmotivated.
- Increase in alcohol or other stimulants to cope with difficulties.
- Excessive worrying and fear, even when no danger exists.
- Irritability, mood changes and anger outbursts.
- Flashbacks / nightmares of incidents.

Cited in Phoenix Australia (Recovery After Trauma).

## WHAT TO DO

- ✓ **RECOGNISE** you have been through a stressful event and having an emotional reaction is normal.
- ✓ **RELAX** do things you enjoy; Music, walking, exercise, gym, yoga, and deep breathing are all helpful.
- ✓ **STRUCTURE YOUR DAYS** with at least one enjoyable activity every day and resume your normal routine.
- ✓ **TRY NOT TO BOTTLE THINGS UP**, do talk about your feelings and spend time with people you love. And most importantly,
- ✓ **KNOW WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP**

Cited in Phoenix Australia (Recovery After Trauma).

“Healthy behaviours such as not smoking, reducing alcohol, exercising regularly, and eating a range of foods will contribute to your overall health and wellbeing”.

Five More Things (A guide for Health and Wellbeing, p7)  
NSW Police Publication.

‘Family members are often the first to notice changes in a loved one’s behaviour and mood’.\*

\*Delprino (2017, p56, Understanding and Supporting Law Enforcement families: An Applied Research Perspective)





# Family Support Coordinator

The Family Support Coordinator supports the employees and families of the NSW Police Force (NSWPF) **with care, empathy, and warmth.**

This may include:

**1. ASSISTING NSWPF EMPLOYEES AND THEIR IMMEDIATE FAMILY,** with emotional support, information, guidance and referral to suitable services.

**2. PROVIDING SUPPORT** when an officer/employee or family member are experiencing difficulties and challenges to their wellbeing and ongoing short-term support may be required.

**3. REGULAR CONTACT** with employees and family who need support, while exploring what internal NSWPF and external services may be appropriate to assist.

**4. PROVIDING INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE** about services and in some cases referral to and coordination of support services.

**5. SEEKING HELP EARLY** is very important to ensuring positive outcomes, so please do reach out to the Family Support Coordinator.

In 2015 the NSW Police, in recognising the importance of family, set up the Family Support Coordinator role, to assist NSWPF employees and their immediate family to be provided guidance, support and assistance around accessing services.



## HOW DO I ACCESS THE SERVICE?

Family members can contact the Family Support Coordinator directly on:

**T: 1800 803 040** (During standard office hours)

**E: [familysupport@police.nsw.gov.au](mailto:familysupport@police.nsw.gov.au)**

Staff within commands can refer employees and their families, with their consent, using the same contact details.



## IS IT CONFIDENTIAL?

Conversations with the family support coordinator are confidential\*

The service is delivered;

**- OVER THE PHONE**

**- BY EMAIL**

**- IN PERSON**

\* Aside from standard mandatory reporting and NSWPF Code of Conduct



# Other Internal Services

INTERNAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY NSWPF FOR FAMILIES



## COMMON PROBLEMS WHERE AN APPOINTMENT WITH AN EAP PSYCHOLOGIST CAN HELP INCLUDE:

- ✓ Relationship and marriage issues
- ✓ Bereavement, grief and loss
- ✓ Anxiety, depression and stress
- ✓ Alcohol and addictions
- ✓ Conflict and anger management
- ✓ Managing life changes
- ✓ Supporting children and young people

Family members can make an appointment by calling from anywhere in Australia

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)



**T: 1300 667 197**  
24 HRS 7 DAYS

### Short term, free counselling service for NSWPF employees and their families

The Employee Assistance Program offers counselling to police employees and their immediate family through its extensive network of providers. Counselling can be accessed in the metropolitan area as well as in large regional centres. Telehealth and telephone counselling is also available during normal business hours and crisis telephone counselling can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For general counselling, the program maintains total confidentiality and privacy for everyone who uses the service.\*

In addition to standard counselling services, Aboriginal employees and their families can access support through the specialist [First Nations Helpline](#).

[Nutrition & Lifestyle Assist](#) can also be accessed via the Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Offering advice about nutrition, resilience, mindfulness, sleep, retirement and lifestyle changes.

[MoneyAssist](#) is also accessed via the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). It offers: accredited financial counsellors, crisis financial counselling, information and skill building advice including but not limited to financial habits, debt and bankruptcy.

**“I engaged with some counselling to have an extra person who I trusted to talk with. I can unload when I need to and I have developed some strategies to help me cope with the difficult times.”**

Annette, wife of police officer for over 30 years.

## FITNESS PASSPORT

Subsidised gym and pool access across NSW for families of serving NSW Police.

**W: [www.fitnesspassport.com.au/](http://www.fitnesspassport.com.au/)**



\* Aside from standard mandatory reporting and NSWPF Code of Conduct





### NSW POLICE CHAPLAINS OFFER:

- ✓ Support for work and family issues
- ✓ Trauma and bereavement care
- ✓ Psychological First Aid
- ✓ Spiritual and pastoral care
- ✓ Preside over religious and faith ceremonies

## NSW POLICE CHAPLAINS



**T: 02 9285 3555**

**E: [SENIORCHAPLAINS@POLICE.NSW.GOV.AU](mailto:seniorchaplains@police.nsw.gov.au)**

**Chaplaincy offers support to all members of the NSWPF and their families.**

The NSWPF chaplains assist local commands and specialist units with provision of confidential support and care for all employees of the Police Force and their families.

**The Chaplains are here for you, whether you are of faith or of no faith, and they offer a non-judgemental listening ear. They regularly visit police stations and specialist commands, offering friendly chats during the good times and confidential, genuine care when times are tough.**

**The Chaplains are a well-respected part of the NSW Police Force and can offer independent support, discussion, and encouragement.**

The chaplains can be contacted on Eagle net 53555 or from an external location on 02 9285 3555 or via email at [seniorchaplains@police.nsw.gov.au](mailto:seniorchaplains@police.nsw.gov.au).

Family members can call the chaplains during business hours, or in the case of a serious matter they can be called at any time. In the case of a life-threatening situation, it is recommended that you call triple 000 for assistance.

Further information is available during business hours by calling Workforce Safety on Eagle net 54728 or from an external location call 02 9265 4728.



# External services for NSWPF and their families

## TRIPLE 0

In an emergency always  
**dial 000**  
in the first instance.



## EMERGENCY & CRISIS

### LIFELINE 24 HRS 7 DAYS

**T: 131 114**

**W: [lifeline.org.au/get-help/](https://lifeline.org.au/get-help/)**

Provides access to 24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention services, including support for concerned family and friends. Nationwide, available 24/7.

### SUICIDE CALL BACK SERVICE 24 HRS 7 DAYS

**T: 1300 659 467**

**W: [suicidecallbackservice.org.au](https://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)**

A free, nationwide 24-hour professional telephone and online counselling service for anyone affected by suicide.

## MENTAL HEALTH

### BEYOND BLUE SUPPORT SERVICE 24 HRS 7 DAYS

**T: 1300 224 636**

**W: [beyondblue.org.au](https://beyondblue.org.au)**

Provides information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health. Immediate support. Access free, confidential support from trained mental health professionals. Beyond Blue's Support Service is available by phone and web chat (24 hours / 7 days a week).

## FAMILY WELLBEING SUPPORT

### FORTEM AUSTRALIA

**T: 1300 339 594**

**W: [fortemaustralia.org.au](https://fortemaustralia.org.au)**

Provides activities and wellbeing support to first responders and their families across NSW. This can include wellbeing activities, transition support and clinical support services.





## CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

### KIDS HELPLINE 24 HRS 7 DAYS

**T: 1800 551 800**

**W: [kidshelpline.com.au/](https://kidshelpline.com.au/)**

Kids Helpline is a free, confidential 24/7 online and phone counselling service for young people aged 5-25.

### KOOKABURRA KIDS

**T: 1300 566 525**

**W: [kookaburrakids.org.au](https://kookaburrakids.org.au)**

Supports children aged 8-18 years, living in families affected by mental illness. The program provides free evidence-based, age appropriate prevention and early intervention mental health services, embedded within a peer-based social and activity-based format and includes a First Responder Program, designed to support the unique needs of children of first responders.

### HEADSPACE

**W: [headspace.org.au](https://headspace.org.au)**

Headspace centres and services operate across Australia, in metro, regional and rural areas, supporting young Australians and their families to be mentally healthy and engaged in their communities. Headspace also offers online communities and additional support.

## CARERS

### CARER GATEWAY

**T: 1800 422 727**

**W: [carergateway.gov.au](https://carergateway.gov.au)**

Federal Government support providing in-person, phone and online services to carers. This may include carer coaching, counselling, respite care, online courses and financial support.

### PARENT LINE

**9am-9pm M-F, 4pm-9pm W/ENDS**

**T: 1300 130 052**

**W: [parentline.org.au](https://parentline.org.au)**

Parent Line is a free telephone counselling and support service for parents and carers with children aged 0 to 18 who live in NSW. Counsellors provide confidential and non-judgemental advice and support for parents, carers or professionals living in NSW, 7 days a week.





# External services for NSWPF and their families (cont)

## MENSLINE AUSTRALIA 24 HRS 7 DAYS

**T: 1300 789 978**  
**E: [mensline.org.au](mailto:mensline.org.au)**

A free, nationwide, 24-hour professional telephone and online support and information service for men in Australia.



## ADDICTION SUPPORT

### GAMBLING HELP ONLINE 24 HRS 7 DAYS

**T: 1800 858 858**  
**W: [gamblinghelponline.org.au](http://gamblinghelponline.org.au)**

Counselling, information and support available 24/7 for those affected by a gambling problem, as well as their families.

### ADIS (ALCOHOL DRUG INFORMATION SERVICE NSW) 24 HRS 7 DAYS

**T: 1800 250 015**

Funded by NSW Health - For those having issues with alcohol or other drugs, are concerned about someone else's alcohol or other drug use, or just have general questions about alcohol or other drugs. You can call ADIS any time of the day, 7 days a week for support, information, counselling and referral to services in NSW.

## RELATIONSHIPS

### RELATIONSHIPS AUSTRALIA

**T: 1300 364 277**  
**W: [relationshipsnsw.org.au](http://relationshipsnsw.org.au)**

Relationships Australia has some great resources and services to help you build communication skills - offering a range of relationship counselling and mental health services and providing relationship support to people regardless of age, religion, gender, cultural or economic background. Available state-wide.

### 1800 RESPECT 24 HRS 7 DAYS

**T: 1800 737 732**  
**W: [1800respect.org.au](http://1800respect.org.au)**

This is a 24-hour confidential, national sexual assault, family and domestic violence counselling line for any Australian who has experienced, or is at risk of, family and domestic violence and/or sexual assault.





MANY OFFICERS AND FAMILIES HAVE FOUND THE SUPPORT SERVICES AVAILABLE TO THEM THROUGH THE NSWPF TO BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL. HERE'S WHAT SOME HAVE SAID:

"It's encouraging to know your support is available."

Partner of Officer

"Thank you for your continual support, it's so appreciated."

Family member of Officer

"Thank you so much for the support shown to my family."

NSW Police Officer

"Thank you for your support and assistance this whole time, it has helped me through the hardest moments."

Family member of Officer

"I contacted Family Support to assist when going through some challenging times and they were very helpful."

NSW Police Officer





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**FAMILY SUPPORT**