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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

National Suicide Prevention Week Recognition

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is recognizing National Suicide Prevention Week through her role as Attorney General by encouraging mental health awareness within law enforcement agencies. National Suicide Prevention Week is Sept. 8-14. According to BlueHelp.org, 167 active and retired law enforcement officers nationwide committed suicide in 2018. This summer, Attorney General Moody hosted Mental Health and Criminal Justice Round Tables across the state. The first round table discussion focused on mental health in Florida's law enforcement ranks.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "One law enforcement life lost to suicide is one too many. I stand committed to do everything in my power to help our brave law enforcement officers so that no one has to suffer alone. Our officers carry a heavy burden, and see many traumatic events unfold but still they must act quickly to protect others. Providing help and assistance to our law enforcement officers and improving mental health programs and strategies is one of my priorities as Attorney General."

The International Association of Chiefs of Police produced a report, "The Signs Within: Suicide Prevention Education and Awareness," that includes resources for identifying and helping officers who exhibit suicidal tendencies so that treatment can be provided.

The report offers the following tips to improve mental health in law enforcement ranks:

- Encourage and promote wellness at each level of the organization;
- Look out for others and watch for any warning signs before the warning signs turn into an acute issue; and
- Talk about mental health and suicide early to reduce the stigma and stereotypes that exist with asking for help.

To read the full report, click here.

Attorney General Moody's Mental Health and Criminal Justice Round Table Summer Series focused on mental health issues in different aspects of the criminal justice system.

Most recently, Chief Justice Charles Canady co-hosted the Mental Health and Criminal Justice Round Table at the Florida Supreme Court in August, where the topic of discussion centered on mental health challenges in the Florida courts system.

In July, Attorney General Moody traveled to Bay County for the Mental Health and Criminal Justice Round Table, where the discussion focused on addressing mental health issues among

those individuals awaiting trial, serving time and released after completing jail sentences. Law enforcement from around the state joined Attorney General Moody in the discussion, which centered on preventing crime and reducing recidivism.

Attorney General Moody traveled to West Palm Beach in June for the Mental Health and Criminal Justice Round Table that focused on reducing recidivism and streamlining costs by coming up with innovative ways to handle persons experiencing a mental health episode prior to arrest.

Finally, Attorney General Moody hosted the first Mental Health and Criminal Justice Round Table in Tampa this past May, to focus on improving mental health within Florida's law enforcement ranks.

If you are suffering and need help, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741.

To find local support services, click here.