



SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE
SAFER COMMUNITIES



OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Your Ref :
Our Ref: 23-0948
Enquiry:
Telephone: 7322 3347
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Hon. Ms Laura Curran MLC
Parliament House
Adelaide SA 5000

Email: lungisa.bickle@parliament.sa.gov.au

Dear Hon. Curran

Re: Freedom of Information Act application

In reference to your application made pursuant to the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* (FOI Act), access was sought to:

“Please provide copies of all documents containing the following information: A complete list of mental health services available to SAPOL employees, former employees and their families.”

On 31 October 2022, I had a telephone conversation with Ms Bickle regarding the scope of your request. She confirmed that you were not seeking all documents as stated, just the last part of your request. She narrowed the scope to:

“A complete list of mental health services available to SAPOL employees, former employees and their families.”

South Australia Police (SAPOL) has located a document that falls within the scope of your request. The document is numbered and described in the following schedule. The schedule contains the details of the determination in compliance with section 23.



**Government of
South Australia**

Service Integrity Leadership Collaboration Courage Respect

South Australia Police, GPO Box 1539, Adelaide SA 5001 ABN 93 799 021 552 www.police.sa.gov.au



SA POLICE - FREEDOM OF INFORMATION UNIT SCHEDULE		
No.	Document Description	Status
1	List of mental health services for serving SAPOL employees	Full Release

In accordance with the requirements of Premier and Cabinet Circular PC045, details of your FOI application, and the documents to which you are given access, will be published on the SAPOL website Disclosure Log. A copy of PC045 can be found at https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/20818/PC045-Disclosure-Log-Policy.pdf. If you disagree with publication, please advise the undersigned in writing by 23 December 2022.

Yours sincerely



Senior Sergeant Paul Friend
Freedom of Information Unit
(Accredited Freedom of Information Officer)

23 November 2022

LIST OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR SERVING SAPOL EMPLOYEES

The following mental health services are available to *-serving* SAPOL employees. Like the community, former employees and their families can seek Mental Health Services through the usual channels.

- The South Australia Police (SAPOL) Employee Assistance Section (EAS) provides a state-wide professional psychological, medical and social work support service with the aim of maintaining or improving the physical and mental health of employees. This incorporates collaborative work with employees and local managers to mitigate risk and encourage safe and healthy workplace practices. EAS also provides a consultancy, training and assessment service in the areas of physical and psychological mental health and wellbeing.
- EAS mental health clinicians have experience in counselling and can provide support as well as direct employees to appropriate external services. EAS aims to assist SAPOL deliver safe, healthy and harmonious working environments so all employees can perform their duties effectively and develop to their full potential.
- EAS can assist employees with work-related issues, for example: coping with change, restructuring and redevelopment challenges, work-related stress, financial issues, interpersonal relationship issues, critical incident debriefing, harassment and bullying, staff performance problems, suicidal ideation, sexual assault, anger management, grief and loss issues as well as non-work related matters such as family concerns and relationship breakdowns.
- An on-call EAS psychological service is available for all employees 24 hours a day, seven days a week through SAPOL Police Communications.
- Whilst EAS provides support to all employees, there is a significant focus on delivering training, education and support to police officers who are in the early stages of their careers; this includes training in suicide awareness. An EAS professional (Psychologist / Social Worker) is allocated to each Academy recruit course and becomes the central point of contact / support for those recruits during Academy training and then as Probationary Constables.
- Psychological mental health and wellbeing annual reviews are conducted with employees working in identified high-risk areas such as One/Two Person Stations (commenced 2022), Special Crimes Investigation Branch, Investigation Support Branch, Major Crash Investigation Section and Special Tasks and Rescue Group (STAR). SAPOL continues to monitor work groups and locations for potential risks to mental health and wellbeing.

- Upon request, or as a proactive strategy EAS attend workplaces to engage and speak with employees, individually or as a group (debrief) to support employees or provide information and training.
- SAPOL has an early intervention strategy to undertake assessment of recovery and return to work needs within 48 hours of an injury notification. The assessment involves early contact with the injured employee and their supervisor and provides guidance towards evidence based treatment that supports a biopsychosocial approach to rehabilitation.
- EAS will often refer employees to SAPOL's confidential Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Each employee or their immediate family has six free consultations with an EAP professional. The EAP is an external, confidential professional counselling service provided by the Corporate Health Group (CHG) contracted by SAPOL.
- SAPOL has a dedicated hotline (Safe Space) for employees who have/are experiencing sex discrimination, sexual harassment or predatory behaviour. Employees contacting Safe Space have access to independent specialised professional services.
- In response to Covid19, EAS established a Hotline to provide specific advice and support to employees in relation to Covid19 related matters.
- In support of employee mental health and wellbeing SAPOL has actively engaged with, promoted and participated in external mental health and wellness programs. These include Beyond Blue, RUOK, Movember, Men's Health Week and most recently SAPOL entered numerous teams in the Push Up Challenge to raise awareness of mental health within the workforce.
- In 2018, SAPOL engaged with an external provider to deliver MHFA training to approximately 1,000 SAPOL Sergeants, Senior Sergeants, and employees at one-person stations. The training involved a two-day course specifically tailored to policing. SAPOL evaluated the effectiveness of the training and found that it had increased mental health literacy, improved leadership capability, and reduced mental health stigma in SAPOL's employees. SAPOL then expanded delivery of the program to all senior officers, and senior non-sworn managers. Refresher training is available.
- Equipt Mental Health App—The Equipt App is a wellbeing application for current and former South Australia Police officers and employees and their family members. The App aims to help strengthen physical, emotional and social wellbeing and it can put employees in touch with help and support if needed.

- The Health and Wellbeing Officers (HWO) network has been established to build employee resilience in the SAPOL workplace through the promotion of healthy work and life habits. Currently, SAPOL has a total of 56 trained employees undertaking roles in the HWO network at various locations throughout the State. These officers can act as a support person to their colleagues and take responsibility for educating and encouraging the workforce to be physically active, to eat nutritiously and provide support for those suffering from mental health issues. All employees can utilise the HWO network by simply contacting a HWO.

EAS maintains a designated page on SAPOL's Intranet, which is accessible by all SAPOL employees, where relevant information about support and other services is provided.