



The Washington Report

The Newsletter of the National Association of Police Organizations
Representing America's Finest

September 1, 2022

President Signs into Law Bill to Cover PTSD Under the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program

On August 16, President Biden signed into law the Public Safety Officer Support Act ([PL 117-172](#)), which makes post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) a line of duty injury under the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program and ensures that officers who suffer from PTSD and those who take or attempt to take their own life as a result of on-duty trauma will be eligible under the program. The Act also covers officers who die by trauma-linked suicide by directing the PSOB Program to presume that suicides are a result of job duties in certain circumstances, such as a mass casualty event, where there is evidence that PTSD would be caused by the trauma.

To qualify for **PSOB disability benefits** under this Act, the officer must:

- Be diagnosed with PTSD, acute stress disorder, or a trauma and stress related disorder connected to on-the-job trauma *and* meet the stringent disability requirements of the PSOB Program; or
- Have reached out or attempted to reach out to get professional help (including to an employee assistance program or a peer counseling program) prior to attempting suicide and the attempt has left them catastrophically injured; or
- Has experienced one or more traumatic events while on duty and attempted to take their own life, leaving them catastrophically injured.

To qualify for **PSOB death benefits** under this Act, the officer, who has committed suicide, must:

- Have been diagnosed with duty-related PTSD, acute stress disorder, or a trauma and stress related disorder prior to taking their own life; or
- Have reached out or attempted to reach out to get professional help (including to an employee assistance program or a peer counseling program); or
- Have experienced one or more traumatic events while on duty.

PSOB claims can be submitted for PTSD and suicide-related deaths or injuries that occurred on or after January 1, 2019.

Until now, the PSOB Program did not cover duty-related PTSD or suicide claims and families were advised against submitting a benefits claim as it would be denied. For cases that were submitted and denied, the PSOB Program has stated it will re-examine them under the new law. **But, because most survivors probably never submitted a claim because suicide-related death or injury was never covered, it's extremely important to get the word out that these types of cases can now be submitted for**

consideration, for all suicide actions or attempts on or after January 1, 2019. Further, while PSOB death and disability claims usually must be submitted within three years of the date of injury or death, this Act allows for the submission of PTSD, suicide or attempted suicide death and disability claims that date back to January 1, 2019. It is vital that this information get out to officers suffering from debilitating PTSD and the families of officers who have taken or attempted to take their own lives due to trauma experienced on the job since January 1, 2019.

NAPO continues to actively be involved in the PSOB Stakeholder Advisory group, which last met on August 15, and we will work to ensure that the Program implements this law as it was intended by NAPO and Congress to ensure every officer and family who has suffered such tragedy does not get left behind.

Information on the PSOB Program and how to submit a claim can be found at www.psob.gov. If you have any additional questions about the PSOB Program and benefit eligibility, please contact the NAPO Office at (703) 549-0775.

Federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program Eligibility Expanded Through October 31, 2022

The [Public Service Loan Forgiveness \(PSLF\) Program](#) is a program through the U.S. Department of Education that allows individuals who have worked for a non-profit or a federal, state or local government entity for 10 years to have their federal student loans forgiven. To qualify, borrowers must make 120 payments on a Direct Loan while on a qualifying repayment plan and be employed by a qualifying public service employer.

The Department of Education announced a change to the PSLF Program rules through October 31, 2022, to allow federal student loan borrowers to receive credit for past periods of repayment that would otherwise not qualify for PSLF. Specifically, under temporary rule changes:

- Borrowers who have Federal Family Education Loans (FFEL), Perkins loans, or other federal student loans, can consolidate their loans into a Direct Consolidation Loan and receive PSLF credit for periods of repayment prior to consolidation. Periods of repayment on parent PLUS loans are not eligible under the limited PSLF waiver. Before consolidating, borrowers should check to see if they work for a qualifying employer using the [PSLF Help Tool](#).
- Past periods of repayment will now count regardless of whether a borrower made a payment, or made that payment on time, for the full amount due, or on a qualifying repayment plan.

If you have not yet worked 10 years for a qualifying public service employer, you will get credit towards forgiveness.

The waiver will run through October 31, 2022. That means some borrowers will need to consolidate and/or submit a PSLF form—the single application used for a review of employment certification, payment counts, and processing of forgiveness—on or before October 31, 2022, to have previously ineligible payments counted. After October 31, 2022, normal PSLF rules will apply.

For additional information on the PSLF Program, the waiver, whether you or your children qualify, and how to apply, visit the www.pslf.gov or click [here](#) to see if you qualify.

NAPO Meets with Associate Attorney General Regarding Implementation of Police Reform Executive Order

NAPO Executive Director Bill Johnson met with U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Associate Attorney General (AAG) Vanita Gupta and staff to discuss our concerns with how the Department will implement the President's Executive Order on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety. The meeting was in response to the [July 14, 2022 letter](#) NAPO sent to Attorney General Garland outlining concerns we continue to have with the Executive Order as well as recommendations for the implementation of certain provisions as they relate to how the order impacts rank-and-file officers.

Johnson raised four issues that are of greatest import to NAPO:

1. Regarding Section 5: National Law Enforcement Accountability Database, NAPO's concerns center on due process rights for officers. We believe due process includes, at a minimum, notice and an opportunity to be heard prior to inclusion of officer information in the database. The Executive Order does not define due process, and the provisions contemplated in Section 5 seem to fall short of minimal due process. Also, the concept of such a database itself has already been in process with a working group led by the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST) that includes labor, management, administrators, prosecutors, and credentialing commissioners for some two years. NAPO submits that it is inefficient and unnecessary to reinvent this wheel.
2. Section 12: Limitations on Surplus Equipment concerns us as this provision as written seems to further restrict access to defensive personal protective equipment such as helmets and shields (based on NAPO's earlier experience with the Law Enforcement Equipment Working Groups established under the Obama Executive Order on this exact issue) and will serve to make our men and women less safe. Also, the contemplated broad prohibition against "grenades" and "grenade launchers", as written, will prohibit obtaining purely defensive items such as non-lethal smoke devices.
3. Concerning Section 19: Accreditation Standards and Section 20: Grantmaking, these two sections, taken together and in view of their incorporation of various other sections of the Executive Order, will impose a "Washington knows best, one-size-fits-all" approach to law enforcement throughout the United States. The broad policy views shown by the Order tend to mirror policy decisions being made in various jurisdictions across the country, decisions that have resulted in increased violent crime, reduced public safety, low officer morale, officer burnout, and difficulties in officer recruitment and retention.
4. We are very concerned with Section 13: Body-Worn Cameras, particularly subsection (c), which retreats from current Department of Justice guidance on best practices, which currently calls for law enforcement officers to be able to review body-worn camera footage prior to making a statement, and now calls for a new study. The implication seems clear that a different outcome is desired, especially since the study is limited to use of force incidents, and does not include, for example, dash cam video of a DUI suspect, street camera footage of a robbery or assault, bank surveillance footage of a robbery, etc. We believe that the earlier study by the COPS Office and the Police Executive Research Forum, [Implementing a Body-Worn Camera Program: Recommendations and Lessons Learned](#), which carefully considered arguments pro and con regarding this issue, correctly determined that the better practice is for officers to be able to review footage.

In a follow-up email from the AAG's Office, DOJ indicated that they have already forwarded our concerns and viewpoints to the appropriate contact persons within DOJ and the Department of Defense. They also committed to continuing to solicit NAPO's views on behalf of rank-and-file officers as we move forward on these issues. NAPO appreciates the opportunity to discuss these pressing issues and the open lines of communication that we have with the Department. We will continue to engage with the Administration and the DOJ regarding implementation of the Order's sections as we believe we can work collaboratively to address our concerns.

NAPO-Backed TBI & PTSD Law Enforcement Training Act Signed into Law; Includes JMHCP Reauthorization

President Biden signed the TBI and PTSD Law Enforcement Training Act on August 16, which provides for much-needed additional training opportunities for law enforcement to improve officer response to persons affected by traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It also reauthorizes the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration (JMHCP) Program for five years and increases its authorized funding level to \$54 million per year. The JMHCP has long been a priority for NAPO as it supports crisis intervention teams and training programs for law enforcement and corrections personnel to identify and respond to incidents involving individuals with mental health conditions.

Law enforcement officers are increasingly on the front lines in responding to and intervening in mental and behavioral health crises, including individuals with TBI or PTSD. Officers must be given the tools and training they need to identify and respond to mental health issues in the communities they serve. For these reasons, NAPO strongly supports federal funding and programs to help agencies train their officers to recognize and identify symptoms of TBI and PTSD so they can better respond to these situations. Once implemented, the TBI and PTSD Law Enforcement Training Act will make training and guidance available that departments can use as a basis to support improved responses and outcomes to interactions between police officers and persons affected by TBI and PTSD.

Importantly, this legislation also recognizes that law enforcement and first responders are among those in our communities who suffer from these afflictions and requires the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to do a study on the prevalence TBI and PTSD in the profession.

NAPO's Legislative Positions & Sponsor/Cosponsor Updates

NAPO's updated "Sponsor/Cosponsor" spreadsheet is available on [NAPO's website](#). The spreadsheet accompanies the latest "[Legislative Positions](#)" document, which is also available on the NAPO website. NAPO's Legislative Positions is a document that highlights all the legislation that we have taken an official position on or are monitoring during the 117th Congress. It is continually updated to reflect the work we are doing on Capitol Hill.

The "Sponsor/Cosponsor" spreadsheet is a useful tool to check if your members of Congress have supported pieces of legislation that will impact our members. NAPO updates this spreadsheet regularly and continues to ensure our voice is heard on Capitol Hill.



Register Now for NAPO's 2022 Fall Seminar

October 31– November 2, 2022

**Marriott Harbor Beach Resort & Spa
Fort Lauderdale, Florida**

Join NAPO for our [2022 Fall Seminar](#) in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This important Seminar will focus on the mid-term national elections, and what the outcome means for control of the Congress and NAPO's legislative priorities. We will also look at how the current Administration's policies and Congressional efforts are impacting police departments, including civil rights investigations and Qualified Immunity, and the public perception of policing in America. We will also review recent Court decisions as well as other important current issues for Law Enforcement Unions & Associations and the men and women we represent.

The Fort Lauderdale Marriott Harbor Beach & Spa, located on a quarter mile stretch of pristine private beach, offers a lagoon-style pool, watersports, luxury spa and unique restaurants. The resort is the perfect location for shopping and dining on Las Olas Boulevard and is just 15 minutes from the Fort Lauderdale International Airport.

We need to plan for your arrival! Please register at your earliest convenience either [online](#) or mail-in the registration. Information regarding hotel reservations, airline discounts and the agenda can be found at www.napo.org/fall22.

Please monitor NAPO's website, www.napo.org, and Facebook page: [National Association of Police Organizations](#), and follow us on Twitter at [NAPOpolice](#) for breaking news and updates.



JOIN TEAM HURST



NOW HIRING POLICE OFFICERS



HIRING SALARY

\$74,755.20



BENEFITS

120 Hours vacation per year
120 Hours sick per year
10 Paid holidays
Additional pay opportunities
Pension and Social Security
State Civil Service



POST PROBATION SALARY

\$81,848.00

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- United States Citizen
- At least age 21 at the time of testing
- High school diploma or GED
- 30 hours college OR two years of experience as a licensed peace officer OR an honorable discharge from the US Military
- Vision correctable to 20/20 - no color blindness
- Normal hearing
- Must be licensable by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement
- Good moral character
- Stable employment history
- Valid Texas Driver's License (or able to obtain one)
- Under age 45

TEST DATE AND TIME

**Saturday, September 17, 2022
9:00 AM**

**Hurst Justice Center
825 Thousand Oaks Drive
Hurst, TX 76054**

817-788-7141

HURSTTX.GOV/POLICECAREERS