



One Size Doesn't Fit All: Finding A Provider That Works

Clinician Edition

The Importance of Finding Providers That Work

Determining if you (or a co-worker) needs support and what that looks like can be a daunting task if you are not already familiar doing so. Understanding what types of resources are available, where to find them, and how to find the best fit can make that process easier.

When exploring mental health and wellness options for first responders, it may be helpful to begin with a previously vetted list of providers, but don't stop there. What works for one person may not work for the next and. Spending time thinking about what you are looking for and then use these questions to help guide you to find your best fit. Remember, just because a provider is on a 'first responder approved' list, doesn't mean you will feel they are a suitable match for you. By asking questions and getting to know them, you can determine if they are a professional resource you are comfortable working with.

Types of Providers

- Peer Support
- Therapy K9 Handler Teams
- Critical Incident Response
- Chaplains
- Clinicians

Questions to Ask

- What do you know about the first responder culture? Tell me about your experiences working with first responders.
- How do you stay current with understanding this culture? (department visits, ride alongs, trainings, etc.)
- What skillsets/topics do you specialize in providing support for? What has your training and experience been for these?
- How do you handle a circumstance where a client doesn't seem to be a match for you or your services?

Types of Clinical Support:

- **Outpatient:** Care provided onsite over multiple days or weeks with overnight accommodations
- **Intensive Outpatient:** Care provided over multiple days for several hours at a time with no overnight accommodations
- **Inpatient:** Care provided for a shorter duration of time (typically weekly, 50-60 minute sessions) over several weeks or months



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Clinician Outpatient Questions:

Availability & logistics:

- Where is your office(s) located?
- What days/times do you have available?
- What is your cancellation policy?
 - Special considerations for duty related postponement
- Do you provide services in person and online (telehealth)?
- How does insurance coverage work with your practice?
- Do your services fit in with my department's EAP offerings?

Experience:

- How long have you worked with first responders?
- How many first responders have you worked with?
- Explain your cultural competence working with first responders.

Clinical Style:

- What modalities do you use?
- Do you have any specialties in _____?
- Trauma informed, family services, etc.
- How do you approach clients with 'dark thoughts' or suicidal ideation?

Their Profession:

- Why did you get into this work?
- Why do you choose to work with first responders?

Clinician Inpatient Questions:

- Describe your assessment process.
- What conditions can you treat? Will I see multiple providers for different needs?
- What does the treatment schedule look like?
- What makes your care a safe space for first responders?
- How does my insurance work with your services?
- What kind of communication can/will the provider give to administration regarding the fitness for duty prognosis of the patient and/or suitability for their current role?

Clinician Intensive Outpatient Questions:

- Describe your assessment process.
- What conditions can you treat? Will I see multiple providers for different needs?
- What makes your care a safe space for first responders?
- How does my insurance work with your services?
- How long will I be away?
- Can I leave at any point?
- How do you help connect me with resources after treatment?
- What kind of communication can/will the provider give to administration regarding the fitness for duty prognosis of the patient and/or suitability for their current role?

As well as any listed questions for outpatient services