
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

FAQS





WE CARE ABOUT WELLBEING

We care about the wellbeing of our public safety employees and their families. The following document provides some information for those who are seeking treatment for a mental health related condition or just simply want information on the type of support available to them. This document includes information from a variety of sources. Although this is designed to provide some clarity and information on the available support, it is not comprehensive, and we encourage you to reach out if you have any questions.

What is mental health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important and can have impacts on an employee's ability to do their job protecting and serving our community.

How common are mental illnesses?

Very common. Mental illnesses are among the most common health conditions in the United States. More than 1 in 5 adults live with a mental illness of some kind.

I am suffering from a mental health condition and looking for support. What are my options?

There are several options for staff on our police and fire teams who need mental health support. Keep in mind, some of these options may not be available depending on each particular situation, such as worker's compensation. We encourage employees to reach out to human resources with any questions on these resources.



Support	Benefit Description
Embedded Mental Health Teams	The city has invested significant resources in providing a robust embedded mental health program in our police and fire teams. Staff have free access to these services for work and non-work-related mental health related support.
Employee Assistance Program	The city offers an employee assistance program that can connect staff to mental health professionals. Employees are eligible to receive up to four free sessions per year.
Worker's Compensation	If an employee feels their mental health condition is linked to their employment with the city, they can file a claim through worker's compensation.
PERA Psychological Treatment Requirement	PERA (Public Employment Retirement Association) offers a psychological treatment requirement for public safety personnel suffering from a mental health condition that is preventing them from doing their sworn duties.
Personal Health Insurance	The city offers a rich benefit package that includes access to affordable and quality health insurance. You may look for your own provider to use through your personal insurance, if desired. Reminder, you can use your HRA and HSA money to pay for mental health care treatment.

EMBEDDED MENTAL HEALTH

The city provides free access to mental health resources through our mental health programs. These programs are designed to meet the unique needs of our police and fire teams. See below for more information and please reach out if you have any questions or need support.

Embedded Mental Health Provider

Marie Ridgeway and Associates (Police) | Jonathan Bundt (Fire)

Contact Information



Marie Ridgeway and Associates

Phone: 612-314-9169

<https://ridgeway-and-associates.appointlet.com/>



Jonathan Bundt

jonathan.bundt@burnsvillemn.gov



POLICE

What does our police mental health program do?

Through trauma-Informed therapy practice and evidence-based treatment modalities, the mental health program in our police department provides free access to a team of mental health professionals that specialize in supporting and caring for first responders. Employees of our police department and their immediate family members can reach out for support and assistance when needed. In addition, they work alongside our police teams in debriefing critical incidents and building resiliency, so our officers are better equipped to manage the stress and trauma they deal with in their work.

How many free sessions do I receive?

You can continue to seek care through Ridgeway & Associate's as long as you participate in their program and are making progress towards your stated health goals. In some cases, employees may be referred out to deal with certain types of mental health conditions that go beyond the expertise offered by Ridgeway & Associate's. In these cases, employees would be responsible for paying for care through their personal insurance or other means.

Is my information confidential?

Yes. Ridgeway & Associates are independent consultants that are working with the city to provide a service to our police team. All conversations and treatment is kept confidential in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations. Your information or treatment plans are not shared with anyone at the City.

Can I continue to work while seeking treatment with Ridgeway & Associates?

Yes. You can continue to work while seeking treatment with Ridgeway & Associates as long as you are able to perform the primary functions of your position. If you have any concerns about your ability to work, we encourage you to speak with your care team and human resources.

What if I want to seek treatment outside of Ridgeway and Associates?

We understand mental health treatment is personal and individualized to each person. In your quest to find meaningful care that works for you, you may decide to seek treatment from a provider outside the Ridgeway & Associate's care team. The City supports you in your decision. However, the cost of that treatment would be the responsibility of the employee unless they qualify for one of the other resources listed in this document (i.e. worker's compensation, PERA psychological treatment plan, etc.).

Keep in mind, you and your family have access to the City's employee assistance program, which does provide up to four free sessions with a mental health professional.



FIRE

What is embedded mental health?

Our embedded mental health program in our fire department provides free and timely access to a mental health professional that specializes in supporting and caring for first responders. Employees of our fire department can reach out for support and assistance when needed. In addition, the mental health professional works alongside our fire teams in debriefing critical incidents, advising on organizational initiatives, providing scene support, and building resiliency. So, our responders are better equipped to manage the stress and trauma they deal with in their work.

What is the role of the mental health professional?

The fire department embedded mental health provider supports our current fire department staff and their immediate family members. The mental health professional will work on proactively building an environment of mental health wellness amongst fire department members and take the role of a navigator in understanding and intervening with a wide range of mental health and relationship challenges. Some of these challenges are but not limited to depression, anxiety, addiction, martial, and trauma. The role is being readily available to assess, diagnose, and intervene. If needed, also refer to external treatment resources.

Is my information confidential?

Yes. Masa Consulting (Jonathan Bundt) is an independent consultant that works with the city to provide a service to our fire team. All conversations are kept confidential in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations. Your information is kept from everyone at the City.

What if I want to seek treatment outside of Masa Consulting?

We understand mental health treatment is personal and individualized to each person. In your quest to find meaningful care that works for you, you may decide to seek treatment from a provider outside the support provided by Jonathan. The City supports you in your decision.

What mental health treatment is paid for?

The cost of that treatment would be the responsibility of the employee unless they qualify for one of the other resources listed in this document (i.e. worker's compensation, PERA psychological treatment plan, MNFIRE etc.) Keep in mind, you and your family have access to the City's employee assistance program, which does provide up to four free sessions with a mental health professional.

What is MNFIRE?

MNFIRE is a non-profit organization that provides health and wellness support for fire service personnel across the state. MNFIRE has a network of mental health providers and will pay for 6 mental health sessions within their network of providers.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The city provides access to an employee assistance program for all employees and their family members. This program provides access to a variety of resources, including mental health support, at no cost. All employees and dependents are eligible for up to four free sessions with a mental health professional or counselor. See below for more information.

Employee Assistance Program Provider



SandCreek
888-243-5744
sandcreekeap.com

What is an employee assistance program?

An employee assistance program (EAP) is a free and confidential benefit to employees to assist employees who are dealing with personal difficulties or life changes.

What does an EAP include?

Our employee assistance program through SandCreek provides services ranging from:

- Mental Health Sessions
- Life coaching
- Financial Consultation
- Legal Referrals
- Work-Life Resources and Referrals
- Personal Assistant
- Medical Advocacy

What are the mental health services offered?

The employee assistance program can connect you with mental health professionals to help you manage stress, anxiety, depression, resolve conflict, improve relationships, and address any personal issues. These sessions can be done in-person or over the phone.

I've reached out and found a mental health professional to help me. How many free sessions do I receive?

The city provides four free counseling or therapy sessions through the SandCreek EAP. If you'd like to continue receiving treatment from this provider, you can transition to using your own personal health insurance to help cover the cost of additional treatment or sessions.

Does the city find out who uses this service?

SandCreek does not share any information about who has reached out and is utilizing the service. Your participation is 100% confidential.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

An employee who sustains a work-related injury, including a mental health condition, may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits such as wage loss benefits, medical benefits, and other services. Admittedly, worker's compensation can be confusing, but we are here to help employees navigate the process. See below for some more information and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Insurance Provider



The League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust
(651) 281-1200
lmc.org

Does worker's compensation cover mental health conditions?

Sometimes, but not always. Compensable claims under worker's compensation is determined by Minnesota state statute. Under statute, worker's compensation claims involving psychological/mental problems are divided into three categories:

- Cases in which mental stress produces a physical injury
- Cases in which physical trauma produces mental injury
- Cases in which mental stress produces mental injury

Minnesota only recognizes the first two categories as compensable under worker's compensation. An exception is for certain diagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder injuries. However, it is important to note that all claims will be reviewed individually on a case-by-case basis by the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust.

Is post-traumatic stress disorder the only mental health condition compensable under worker's compensation?

Yes. A licensed law enforcement officer or firefighter/paramedic who is diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder (and had not previously been diagnosed with PTSD), then the injury would be considered compensable under worker's compensation. The diagnosis of PTSD must be made by a licensed psychiatrist or psychologist and must meet the most recent description of PTSD under the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders published by the American Psychiatric Association.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

What type of benefits would I receive if approved for worker's compensation?

If approved for worker's compensation for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), you could be eligible to receive payment for ongoing treatment. You also may be eligible to receive payment for loss of wages if unable to perform the full duties of your position and potentially vocational rehabilitation benefits.

Can I still work as a police officer or firefighter/paramedic with a PTSD diagnosis?

Yes, as long as your treating physician has cleared you to work, whether it be full duties, part-time, or light duty. Depending on your condition, you may still be eligible for wage loss benefits and medical benefits.

I have a mental health condition directly related to my work as a police officer or firefighter/paramedic. What should I do?

We encourage you to seek the help of a licensed psychiatrist or psychologist for diagnosis and treatment. We also encourage you to reach out to your supervisor or human resources so you can complete a first report of injury if you believe the cause of your mental health condition is related to your work. You can always contact human resources with any questions on the worker's compensation process.

What should I do if I think my mental health condition is related to my employment?

We encourage you to report the injury to your supervisor immediately and complete the city's first report of injury form. This information will be passed onto the League of Minnesota Cities for review and they will contact you to determine if your injury is compensable under state statute.

PERA PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENT REQUIREMENT

The Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) administers the psychological treatment requirement for employees covered under the police and fire plan who are suffering from a mental health condition that is impacting their ability to do their job.

Organization



Public Employees Retirement Association

651.296.7460

mnpera.org

What is PERA?

PERA is the public employees retirement association that provides pension benefits for public employees in the state of Minnesota.

Does applying for the psychological treatment requirement mean I'm applying for disability?

No. The PERA psychological treatment requirement is designed to help public safety officers receive treatment for a mental health condition and return them back to full duty. However, to qualify for duty disability for a mental health condition, you first must complete a psychological treatment requirement.

How long is the psychological treatment requirement?

The treatment plan can last up to 24 weeks, but can be shorter or extended up to an additional 8 weeks, depending on the recommendation from your care team.

What are the benefits of the treatment requirement?

The benefits of the psychological treatment requirement provides eligible

public safety officers with the ability to receive mental health treatment at no cost for up to 24 weeks. If you qualify for the requirement, you may be eligible for:

- Reimbursement of expenses related to your mental health treatment
- Continuation of salary and benefits

How do you qualify for the program?

You must contact PERA and apply for the psychological treatment requirement. To qualify, you must be suffering from a mental health condition that is a result of duties related to your position and that is preventing you from completing the normal duties of your position.

Can I still be working and qualify for the program?

You won't qualify for the psychological treatment requirement if you are still able to work full-time in your normal, sworn capacity. To qualify, you must be unable to perform the basic duties of your position, meaning you are either out of work, working a reduced schedule, or on a light duty assignment.

HEALTH INSURANCE

The city provides a rich benefit package for our employees to ensure they can take care of themselves and their families. There may be cases where an employee may need or want to use their personal insurance to cover treatment for a mental health condition. See below for more information on when that might be necessary and what resources HealthPartners has to help.

Insurance Provider



HealthPartners
952-883-6000
www.healthpartners.com

Does our medical insurance cover mental health care?

Yes. Mental health is just as important as your physical health and our HealthPartners medical insurance provides coverage for your mental health care.

What does our medical insurance cover?

You have access to a variety of mental health resources, specialists, and support. Depending on which insurance plan you are enrolled in, you may be responsible for co-pays or deductibles for your treatment. As a reminder, mental health treatment is an eligible expense for your health savings account, health reimbursement account, or flexible spending account.

When would I need to use my personal health insurance for mental health care?

You may need to use your personal health insurance if your injury or condition is not directly related to your work. In the case of worker's compensation, a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder is necessary to be considered a compensable injury under Minnesota law. You also will be required to use your personal insurance when seeking treatment under the PERA psychological treatment program, although any out-of-pocket expenses can be reimbursed by the employer.

How do I find mental health care or resources through HealthPartners?

You can visit the mental health hub online by logging into your HealthPartners account (www.healthpartners.com) and visiting the Living Well page. From there, sign into your authenticated web account where you can check out available resources or get connected with a behavioral health navigator, who will help provide guidance and connect you with care in your plan network.

What other resources are available through HealthPartners?

Our health insurance plans also provide options to save time and reduce barriers to mental health access. You can use resources such as Doctor on Demand (www.doctorondemand.com) or Teladoc (www.teladoc.com) to seek mental healthcare treatment virtually (phone and/or video).

HealthPartners also offers a variety of other tools that may help with certain mental health conditions. These include:

- **MyStrength:** A flexible and comprehensive digital program with proven tools and activities for stress, depression, sleep, and more.
- **Wellbeats:** On-demand fitness, nutrition, mindfulness, meditation, and stress management classes to help you live a healthier life.
- **Wellbeing Phone Coaching:** Provides coaching to address stress management, nutrition, fitness/exercise, and more.

You can access these resources and more by visiting www.healthpartners.com/livingwell.

