



## National Data Shows Firefighters' Mental, Emotional Health Not Getting Enough Attention

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News Type: Weekly Spark, Weekly Spark News

[NBC Bay Area](#) [1]

According to national data, many firefighters are struggling with mental health issues. In partnership with the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF), NBC stations in California and New York recently surveyed 7,000 firefighters about the mental health challenges associated with their job. The survey found that 19 percent of respondents have experienced suicidal thoughts, 27 percent have struggled with substance abuse, and 65 percent are haunted by memories of traumatic work situations. More than 80 percent of firefighters said that asking for help would make them seem weak or unfit for duty. IAFF currently offers a variety of mental health services for its members, including inpatient treatment for substance abuse and post-traumatic stress disorder. It also sends peer support teams to disaster sites across the country, such as wildfires and school shootings, to help minimize the mental health impact on first responders. "We're going to take a hard look at this survey to determine what is it we're doing right and more importantly, where are the gaps, what programming do we need to provide to make sure our members get the help they need," said IAFF Director of Health and Safety Jim Brinkley.

**Spark Extra!** Learn more about suicide prevention among [first responders](#) [2].

Populations: People in Particular Occupations

Settings: First Responders

About Suicide: Data and Statistics, Behavioral Health Disorders, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Substance Abuse, Suicidal Thoughts and Behavior, Ideation

### Links within this resource

[1] <https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/National-Data-Shows-Firefighters-Mental-Emotional-Health-Not-Getting-Enough-Attention--475605253.html>

[2] <http://www.sprc.org/settings/first-responders>

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