



# UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY

## MEMORANDUM

24-029

March 1, 2024

TO: All Personnel

FROM: Battalion Chief Fossum

SUBJECT: Changes to Behavioral Health Program

---

In alignment with the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan, we have been working to establish better processes and long-term sustainability for the Behavioral Health Program. Recently, we hired Chris Ownsbey as the new Behavioral Health Program Coordinator. Currently, this is a grant funded position. The program coordinator will assist Captain Hilton in management of the program. This includes overseeing the calendar for Captain Hilton, coordinating referrals to our external providers, managing personnel requests to see Captain Hilton, and also working closely with EAP.

In the near future, Captain Hilton's phone number is going to be made private and will no longer be available. **The following phone number will become the primary means of obtaining access to behavioral health resources. That phone number is 801-743-7114.** Captain Hilton's availability will be Monday through Wednesday, 8 AM to 5 PM and Thursdays/Fridays from 8 AM to 1 PM. His schedule will be run through a calendaring system and his availability is largely going to fall within the hours listed above. This may at times push his availability out for three to four weeks.

The intent of this is to provide a regular and reasonable schedule for Captain Hilton. We appreciate the hard work and dedication he has given to the department, however, the schedule that he has been keeping is unsustainable. With this change, we have provided additional information below on resources that are available and have been vetted for first responders. We want to remind our personnel that access to the resources below is encouraged anytime there is a need, especially in moments of crisis.

### Firefighter Crisis Support Line

- 24/7 Support through Professional Firefighters of Utah in Conjunction with the U of U
- Contact info - 801-587-1800

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through Blomquist Hale AT ANY TIME THAT IMMEDIATE CRISIS INTERVENTION IS NEEDED, STATE "I NEED A FIRST RESPONDER APPOINTMENT." THIS TRIGGERS ADDITIONAL ACTION TO EXPEDITE THE PROCESS.**

- 24/7 Crisis Line: 800-926-9619
- Regular Hours or EAP Assistance: 801-262-9619 or 800-926-9619 (ask to speak with someone from the First Responder Team unless it doesn't matter if you see someone with First Responder training, in which case you can ask to talk with anyone that is available).
- [Supervisors Handbook](#) from Blomquist Hale

- [Policy 1200 – 010 – Employee Assistance Program](#)

### **Peer Support Resources**

The current [Peer Support List](#) can be found on LMS under the File Center > Health & Safety > Behavioral Health > Peer Support Resources. Please refer to the list on this memo and LMS as it has recently been updated. The following policies explain how our Behavioral Health Program operates, including access to Captain Hilton, Peer Support, and Behavioral Health After Action Reviews (formerly CISDs).

- [Policy 1200-070 – Behavioral Health and Wellness Program](#)
- [Policy 1200-080 – Peer Support](#)
- [Policy 1200-090 – Behavioral After-Action Review](#)

We also encourage our employees to seek providers on their own if our offerings are not adequate. Through your personal insurance, you may have access to other options that we currently do not have available. Refer to ‘Navigate My Benefits’ under the Employees tab of the UFA website or <https://ajg.employeenavigator.com/employee/Home> or contact the HR Division for assistance. You can also log into your account at SelectHealth, navigate to ‘Find Care’ on the left side and click on ‘Find a Doctor’ and look through available services. We are also working with Gallagher and SelectHealth to continue to bolster and provide the best resources available. As with your physical health, we strongly suggest that you are taking steps to provide for your own health and wellness beyond what our program offers.

It is important to remember that our behavioral health program is designed to address the challenges related to traumatic exposure in the workplace. As we move forward, we will be placing more emphasis on peer support and other resources to help address the impacts of being a first responder. It is great that our program is being utilized and the feedback we hear is often positive in regard to the impact it is having on ourselves and our families. For us to be able to continue to provide a high level of care for these situations, it will be important to triage and prioritize those being impacted due to their role as a first responder. We always encourage you to reach out in times of need and we will help provide guidance to the proper resources.

As a reminder, contact Chris Ownsbey, you can reach him at 801-743-7114 or [cownsbey@unifiedfire.org](mailto:cownsbey@unifiedfire.org).

Thank you for your understanding in helping us make the behavioral health program more efficient and effective. Please reach out to BC Fossum with any issues or concerns.