

298-19  
Corrected

**Introduced by:** Presiding Officer Richard J. Nicoletto, Deputy Presiding Officer Howard J. Kopel, Alternate Deputy Presiding Officer Denise Ford, and Legislators C. William Gaylor III, Vincent T. Muscarella, James Kennedy, Thomas McKeivitt, Laura Schaefer, John R. Ferretti, Jr., Rose Marie Walker, and Steven Rhoads

LOCAL LAW \_\_ - 2019

**A LOCAL LAW TO ESTABLISH WITHIN THE NASSAU COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS DIVISION**

APPROVED AS TO FORM



Majority Counsel

2019 SEP -4 P 1:43

NASSAU COUNTY  
CLERK OF THE COUNTY

WHEREAS, the Nassau County Police Department provides a unique and valuable service to the residents of this County; and

WHEREAS, reports of increased hostility to police officers who are simply doing their jobs have become commonplace; and

WHEREAS, the nature of police work entails pressures that are unique to the men and woman who serve as police officers; and

WHEREAS there has been an increase in mental health tragedies involving police officers nationwide, and

WHEREAS, reports indicate that ninety percent of the 8,000 active and retired police officers in 49 states who responded to a 2018 survey conducted by the Fraternal Order of Police and NBC News on officer wellness said there was a stigma to seeking mental health counseling; and

WHEREAS, one study reported that there have been 122 police suicides nationwide this year through early August, in 2018 there were recorded 167 suicides, in 2017 there was 169 suicides in 2017 and 142 in 2016, and

WHEREAS National Law Enforcement Officers Fund reported that more police officers died by suicide last year than the 145 who died in the line of duty, and

WHEREAS Centers for Disease Control puts the suicide rate for police officers at around 23 per 100,000 officers whereas the rate of the general population is estimated at 14 suicides per 100,000 people, and

WHEREAS, to support the men and women in law enforcement, experts recommend implementation of mental and physical wellness programs, employee assistance services and peer support systems, NOW THEREFORE

BE IT ENACTED by the County Legislature of the County of Nassau as follows:

Section 1. The Nassau County Administrative Code is amended to include the following section:

§8-33.0. Health and Wellness Division.

a. There shall be within the Nassau County Police Department a Division of Health and Wellness. It shall be the duty of the Division to provide health and wellness training to the members of the Nassau County Police Department. The Health and Wellness Division shall:

1. Maintain a smartphone application and website for active and retired police officers to provide information on the signs of depression, signs of suicidal behavior, links to the American Foundation of the Prevention of Suicide and

additional information as determined by the Commissioner of Police to assist retired and active police officers;

2. establish and determine funding for a formal peer support program for police officers;
3. provide in-service wellness training and resources for all Nassau County police officers for a minimum of one-hour per calendar year;
4. establish a mental health action plan, to be evaluated by the Nassau County Police Department annually, to examine the mental health policy, procedures, and resources of the Department and identify necessary updates;
5. establish guidelines to protect the privacy of police officers to the maximum extent allowable by law;
6. coordinate with the New York Police Department to maximize mental health services offered to Nassau County residents who are New York City Police Officers;
7. coordinate with the various police departments located within Nassau County to maximize the mental health services offered to the police officers of those departments;
8. perform such other duties as determined by the Commissioner.

## **§2. Severability.**

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part of this law or the application thereof to any person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or

unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this law, or in its application to the person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance directly involved in the controversy in which such order or judgment shall be rendered.

**§3. SEQRA Determination.**

It is hereby determined pursuant to the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act, 8 N.Y.E.C.L., section 0101 et seq. and its implementing regulations, Part 617 of 6 N.Y.C.R.R., and Section 1611 of the County Government Law of Nassau County, that the adoption of this local law is a “Type II” Action within the meaning of Section 617(c)(20) and (27) of 6 N.Y.C.R.R., and, accordingly, is of a class of actions which do not have a significant effect on the environment, and no further review is required.

**§4. Effective Date.**

This Local Law shall take effect immediately.

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