

# IAFF CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

## FAMILY RESOURCE GUIDE



IAFF Center of Excellence for  
Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery

Being the spouse or loved one of a fire fighter is not easy. If your fire fighter has struggled with post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, or other behavioral health problems, it may be a difficult time for you and your family. It is important to practice self-care, seek social support, and keep up your own routine. If stress is overwhelming your ability to cope, consider talking to a mental health professional, your primary care doctor, or department chaplain.

In addition to self-care, take steps to educate yourself and explore available resources. Understanding your loved one's behavioral health needs may not only aid in their recovery, but help you cope as well.

### FIRE FIGHTER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RESOURCES

- **IAFF Behavioral Health Webpage:** The official website of the behavioral health program of the International Association of Fire Fighters offers training, education, important contact information, and more. Visit [iaff.org/behavioral-health](http://iaff.org/behavioral-health).
- **IAFF Center of Excellence Resources Page:** Here you will find a series of one-page guides on a variety of mental health and recovery topics relevant in the fire service. Visit [iaffrecoverycenter.com/resources](http://iaffrecoverycenter.com/resources).
- **The 2nd Alarm Project:** The 2nd Alarm Project is a nonprofit organization that offers comprehensive, evidence-based resiliency programs and services to support the mental health of first responders. Visit [2ndalarmproject.org](http://2ndalarmproject.org).

### GENERAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INFORMATION

- **National Center for PTSD:** [ptsd.va.gov](http://ptsd.va.gov)
- **National Institute of Mental Health:** [nimh.nih.gov](http://nimh.nih.gov)
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:** [samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov)

### CLINICIAN REFERRALS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

If you need a referral to a local mental health clinician for yourself or your fire fighter, contact the IAFF Center of Excellence Clinical Outreach team at [Outreach@IAFFRecoveryCenter.com](mailto:Outreach@IAFFRecoveryCenter.com). If you need emergency support, dial 988 to reach the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

### SUPPORT FOR FIRE FIGHTER FAMILY AND SPOUSES

- **Spouse Support Groups:** Check your fire department or IAFF Local to see if a spouse support group exists. If not, consider initiating a weekly potluck to connect with other spouses in your department who understand what you are going through. While spouse support groups are more common in large urban departments, online communities, such as Fire Wife Sisterhood, can be good source of support as well.
- **Firefighter/ Family Crisis and Support Line:** Call **1-844-525-FIRE (3473)** to access a 24/7 hotline for fire fighters and family members to speak with mental health counselors who are trained in fire service culture.
- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:** If you or a loved one is in crisis or distress, call, chat or text 988 for free and confidential support. Visit [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org).
- **Saving Those Who Save Others: Family Edition:** A course designed to assist fire department and EMS spouses and partners to understand the life they live and the behavior of their spouse/partner. Visit [ffbha.org](http://ffbha.org).
- **Al-Anon:** This 12-step group is open to spouses, partners, parents, children, friends, and other individuals who have been affected by the disease of addiction. To find local in-person or online meetings, visit [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org).
- **Nar-Anon:** Similar to Al-Anon, Nar-Anon applies the 12-Step principles to recovery to the loved ones of individuals struggling with substance use disorders. To find a local in-person or online meetings, visit [nar-anon.org](http://nar-anon.org).
- **SMART Recovery – Family & Friends:** A secular alternative to Al-Anon, SMART Recovery Family & Friends group supports the loved ones of individuals in recovery using non-12 step approach based in rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT). To find on online or in-person meeting, visit [smartrecovery.org/family](http://smartrecovery.org/family).
- **NAMI Family Support:** NAMI offers going support groups and a 12-week educational series for families, significant others, and friends of people with mental health problems. Visit [nami.org/Find-Support](http://nami.org/Find-Support) to find a local group near you.

For admissions/inquires to the IAFF Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery, call **1-855-900-8437** or visit [www.IAFFRecoveryCenter.com](http://www.IAFFRecoveryCenter.com)