



OUR MISSION

911 At Ease International (AEI) exists to support first responders and their families, so they can be at their best to serve their community. AEI is committed to *Keeping our first responders strong.*

ABOUT US

Founded in 2014 by Sgt. Mike McGrew and Michael A. Hammer, 911 At Ease International serves first responders and their families, including police, fire, paramedics, emergency medical personnel and other essential agencies. Support services are free, confidential, and provided through professional, trauma-informed counselors.

From his 31-year career as a police officer and sergeant, co-founder and executive director Sgt. Mike McGrew knows first-hand the dramatic impact of working the front lines as a first responder. The emotional injuries incurred in service are invisible, but no less real and often more damaging than physical trauma. As a result, first responders suffer from staggering rates of alcoholism, divorce and suicide. Worse, services offered through employers are frequently riddled with red tape and tempts those looking for help to look over their shoulders instead. The need for independent professional trauma-informed counseling for those on the front lines is evident.

HOW IT WORKS

First responders call or click to get started. We make it simple.

First responders include police, firefighters, sheriff, emergency medical personnel, dispatchers, district attorneys' office and other essential agencies. AEI expands awareness about issues relating to Post Traumatic Stress Injuries with first responders and their families. Through this awareness and looking at these injuries as something that can be treated, we begin to change the culture of first responder agencies. The phrases we often hear are 'I don't need help' and 'I won't ask for it' or 'I don't want to risk losing my job because I need help', etc.

The need for independent, professional trauma-informed counseling for those on the front lines is evident and necessary. Support services are free, confidential, and provided through professional, trauma-informed counselors. AEI is a nonprofit organization and services provided are independent of agency oversight.

SERVICES

- *Confidential Counseling*
- *Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy*
- *Referral Services*
- *Peer to Peer Support*
- *Critical Incident Debriefing*
- *Critical Incident Response*



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Post Traumatic Stress Injury?

Post-Traumatic Stress Injury (PTSI) can develop after a person has experienced or witnessed a traumatic event. This often occurs during the career of a first responder. Symptoms of PTSI can surface through flashbacks, nightmares, anxiety, depression, anger and negative thoughts which may increase and/or last for months or years. PTSI has been known to severely interfere with a person's daily work and home life. While many people have difficulty adjusting to and coping with the daily requirements of work and home life after experiencing traumatic events, they may improve and heal from these injuries with access to psychological support, spiritual care, and other types of support.

Why don't first responders use insurance or Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) to get counseling?

Services offered through Employee Assistance Programs or other avenues covered by insurance may not necessarily remain confidential and therapists may not be prepared to handle the unique circumstances that first responders experience. Many first responders may not feel they can be completely transparent with an employer or insurance authorized service. Therapists approved by 911 At Ease are trauma trained and prepared to work with first responders and their families on their unique needs.

How is AEI funded?

911 At Ease International services are funded through the generosity of individual donations, business donations, corporate sponsorships, unions, foundations and grants. This allows AEI to provide the much-needed counseling services to first responders and their immediate family members free of charge, removing yet another barrier to get the help they need.

START A NEW CHAPTER IN YOUR REGION

AEI ensures the launch of a new Chapter is successful by supplying a full program implementation plan. AEI takes its proven existing program and creates a turnkey startup operation for each chapter in the area it is requested.

This includes:

- Preliminary conversations with department heads, union leaders, community and business leaders, as well as the line-level members of each agency.
- Assist with the planning, oversight and implementation of each chapter.
- Provide the seamless in-take process for clients through the 911aei.org website and toll-free number
- Provide counselor procurement, vetting and oversight, fundraising assistance and support stream ideas to fund services, accounting and billing support for clinicians.
- Provides on-going support for chapters through guidance, collateral material such as brochures and chapter website page through main site, resources and marketing.

Please feel free to reach out directly with any further questions or if you would like to start a chapter in your area.