



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 442D SIGNAL BATTALION
FORT GORDON GEORGIA 30905

COMMAND POLICY LETTER

ATZH-LCB

27 August 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Commander's Policy Letter #4 – Stigma Reduction in Support of Suicide Prevention

1. References:

- a. US Army G1 Suicide Prevention Program Website:
<http://www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/suicide/sitemap.asp>
- b. DA Pam 600-24 Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention, 14 April 2015
- c. DoD Directive 1010.10, Health Promotion and Disease/Injury Program, 28 April 2014
- d. DoD Directive 6200.04, Force Health Protection, 23 April 2007

2. Purpose: The purpose of this policy memorandum is to formalize efforts to reduce the stigma faced by personnel seeking behavioral health care.

3. The well-being of the force is always our top priority. The Army published the Army Campaign Plan on Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention in April 2009 because senior leaders recognized the current suicide rate as a critical threat.

4. Although we constantly strive to decrease the number of suicides that claim our fellow Soldiers, civilians, and Family members, they still face an unacceptable stigma associated with seeking behavioral health care. The same "can-do" Army culture that rewards physical and mental toughness often hinders efforts to provide our people the care they truly need.

5. All leaders are required to ensure that Soldiers with serious combat and life stress issues have access to mental health professionals and that we encourage personnel to seek appropriate psychological help. In order to combat the stigma of asking for help, commanders will implement the following guidance effective immediately:

- a. Personnel are prohibited from belittling others for seeking help for behavioral health problems.
- b. Leaders will utilize high levels of discretion when identifying personnel seeking help when in the presence of others who do not have a need to know.
- c. Leaders will actively emphasize that it is acceptable, not shameful, to seek psychological help.

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6. We must work together to show that help is available as we strive to reduce the number of team members we lose to suicide.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE: This policy replaces Commander's Policy Memorandum #4, dated 9 January 2014.

Ready Rapid Reliable

//ORIGINAL SIGNED//

ERIC A. ANDERSON

LTC, SC

Commanding

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