HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 24-129

RESOLUTION

URGING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO PROVIDE ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FIRST RESPONDERS.

WHEREAS, in the State of Hawai'i, first responders include police officers, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, lifeguards, and firefighters, most of whom are employed by county government; and

WHEREAS, first responders receive specialized training to provide assistance, medical attention, incident resolution, or de-escalation of conflict situations at the scene of an emergency, such as a crime, accident, medical emergency, disaster, or terrorist attack, and as a result, are often exposed to life-threatening situations; and

WHEREAS, first responders are repeatedly engaged in emergency calls that may involve distressing situations or traumatic events, trigger emotional responses, cause lingering psychological effects, or disrupt overall well-being; and

WHEREAS, the high frequency and severity of traumatic exposures in dealing with death, danger, serious injury, and violence on the job are to blame for the higher prevalence of mental health conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder ("PTSD") among first responders than the general population; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, approximately 30 percent of first responders develop PTSD, compared with 20 percent of the general population; and

WHEREAS, untreated mental health conditions can result in unnecessary disability, unemployment, substance abuse, suicide, involuntary hospitalization, or diminished capacity and significant functional impairment in coping with the daily demands of life; and

WHEREAS, mental health assessments are designed to diagnose mental health conditions, such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, suicidal ideation, addiction, and psychotic disorders; and

WHEREAS, mental health assessments may reveal mental health conditions or disorders and predispositions to certain mental health conditions, whether temporary or permanent, and may identify personal issues and struggles that may affect or interfere with job performance; and

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, studies have also shown that some first responders have reported withholding from their employer information relating to a mental health diagnosis in fear of losing their job or being found unfit for duty; and

WHEREAS, the City Council ("Council") finds that effective awareness, recognition, and management of mental health are vital to understanding and addressing the unique mental health needs of first responders as they are at a higher risk of developing PTSD symptoms; and

WHEREAS, many government agencies require that first responders undergo a preliminary and annual general physical examination in determining fitness for duty; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that due to the nature of the job, mental health assessment opportunities should be available to first responders as part of routine health and wellness screenings to determine whether mental health treatment and recovery or access to mental health resources is needed in assessing fitness for duty; now, therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that it urges the City Administration to provide annual mental health assessment opportunities for first responders and that participation in and consent to a mental health assessment and/or evaluation be on an opt-in basis; and

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 24-129

RESOLUTION

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Director of Emergency Services, the Chief of Police, and the Fire Chief.

INTRODUCED BY:

Radiant Cabral

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

MAY 7 2024

Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

CERTIFICATE

RESOLUTION 24-129

Introduced: 05/07/24 By: RADIANT CORDERO Committee: PUBLIC SAFETY (PS)
BUDGET (BUD)
COUNCIL (CCL)

Title: URGING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO PROVIDE ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FIRST RESPONDERS.

Voting Legend: * = Aye w/Reservations

05/07/24	INTRO	Introduced.
05/23/24	PS	Reported out for adoption. CR-187 3 AYES: DOS SANTOS-TAM, OKIMOTO, TULBA 1 ABSENT: TUPOLA
06/05/24	CCL	Committee report and Resolution were adopted. 7 AYES: CORDERO, DOS SANTOS-TAM, KIA'ĀINA, SAY, TUPOLA, WATERS, WEYER 2 ABSENT: OKIMOTO, TULBA

I hereby certify that the above is a true record of action by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu on this RESOLUTION.

GLEN I. TAKAHASHI, CITY CLERK

TOMMY WATERS, CHAIR AND PRESIDING OFFICER