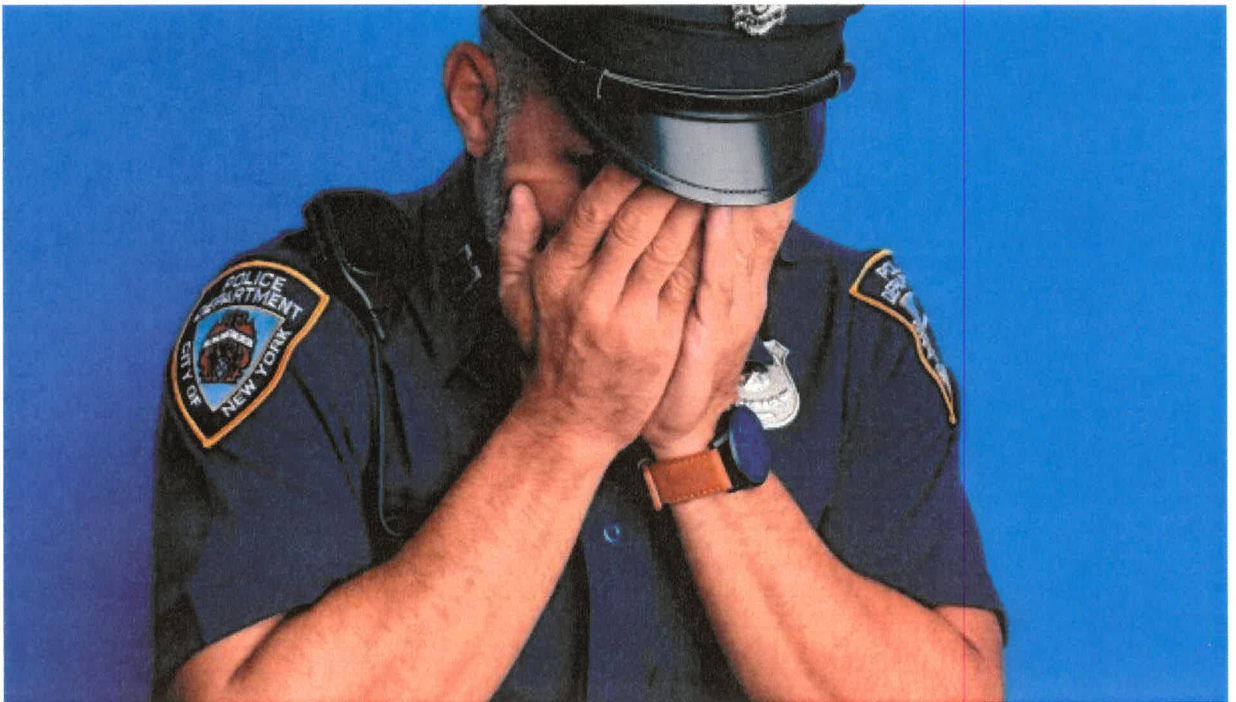


# NYPD detectives union enlists outside group for suicide prevention help for cops

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The NYPD detectives union has partnered with a former cop turned social worker so cops in need can turn to mental health professionals without worrying they will have their careers stalled. (Shutterstock)

The NYPD detectives union has partnered with a former cop-turned-social worker so that officers in need can turn to mental health professionals without worrying they will have their careers stalled.

[Scott Munro](#), head of the union, the Detectives Endowment Association, said too many cops, despite assurances from the

NYPD to the contrary, believe that if they talk about their issues with the NYPD or with organizations affiliated with the department, they will be labeled as troubled and not be able to get promoted or transferred to better assignments.

“The department offers a lot,” Munro said. “This is not about criticizing the department. This is about giving detectives, and any other cop who is interested, another option.”



Scott Munro, head of the Detectives Endowment Association. ([nycdetectives.org](http://nycdetectives.org))

Talk to Me Post Tour Processing allows cops to speak virtually with a counselor. The counselor appears on-screen, the cop does not. A second counselor listens in, coordinates a group chat, if more than one cop is involved, and starts private chats with any officer who needs immediate help if it appears he or she is about to commit suicide.

“It’s a completely anonymous program,” said [Dr. Robyn Cannariato](#), Talk to Me president and a former NYPD officer. “They’re afforded an opportunity to come forward in an absolutely anonymous forum. The officers feel very safe in this environment because we really don’t know who they are and there aren’t any ramifications if they come forward.

“They believe there will be consequences — whether there will be or not — if they use department resources.”

Cannariato and [Chris Hetherington](#), a retired NYPD deputy inspector, will speak Thursday at a One Police Plaza suicide prevention and awareness seminar.

The NYPD, which will discuss its own mental health efforts, did not comment on the long-standing feeling that cops risk harming their career if they say they need mental health help — but it did say that “every available service is critical to our members’ mental health and well-being, which is of paramount importance not only to the department, but also to the New Yorkers they serve.”

In early 2018, following [three suicides](#) in less than three months, then-NYPD Commissioner James O’Neill posted a video on YouTube letting cops know the services available to them.

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Then-NYPD Police Commissioner James O’Neill is pictured at a crime stats press conference in Brooklyn, N.Y., on Nov. 6, 2019. (Jesse Ward for New York Daily News)

The rest of that year just one cop committed suicide, but 10 more took their lives in 2019, according to the NYPD. Last year, there

were six suicides, up from four that happened each year from 2020 through 2023.

Hetherington said that in a time of tremendous stress for police officers — following the “defund the police” movement and new laws seen as limiting an officer’s ability to do the job without getting sued — he’s encouraged that more and more officers are willing to say “I need help” rather than refuse to even acknowledge something was troubling them.

“For a long time, people just stuffed it down and weren’t going to bring it up and talk,” he said. “Now, they seem more willing to do so.”