Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council

Agenda
June 23, 2026
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

1. **1:00 p.m. – Call to Order/Welcome**
   Jessica Felts, Chair
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of April 21, 2026, Council Meeting Minutes**
   Jessica Felts, Chair
4. **Florida Suicide Statistics and 988 Florida Lifeline Program**
   Javy Passalacqua, 988 Coordinator
5. **Guest Speaker**
   Ending Veteran Suicide: A Data Driven Community Approach
   DJ Kint, Florida Veterans Support Line
6. **Guest Speaker**
   Supporting Mental Health and Resilience for Active-Duty Personnel
   Wade T. Keckler, Naval Hospital Pensacola
7. **Public Comment**
8. **Closing Remarks**
   Jessica Felts, Chair

Council Members

Secretary Taylor N. Hatch
Florida Department of Children and Families

Ralph E. Cash, PhD., ABPP
Florida Association of School Psychologists

Executive Director Matt Dunagan
Florida Sheriffs Association

Paul Jaquith
Florida Initiative of Suicide Prevention

Rachelle S. Burns
Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition

Wendy Thompson
American Foundation of Suicide Prevention

Karen Brill
Florida School Board Association

Dan Reidenberg, PsyD
National Council for Suicide Prevention

Melanie Brown Woofter
Florida Behavioral Health Association

Carly Paro-Tompkins, Ed.D., LMHC
Florida Counseling Association

Carali McLean
NAMI Florida

Ryan C.W. Hall, MD
Florida Medical Association

Farah Ferreiro, DO
Florida Osteopathic Medical Association

Council Members

Joseph E. Thornton, MD
Florida Psychiatric Society

Diane A. McKay, PsyD
Florida Psychological Association

Executive Director Joe Marino
Veterans Florida

Natalie K. Kelly
Florida Association of Managing Entities

Secretary Michelle Branham
Florida Department of Elder Affairs

Joseph A. Ladapo, MD., PhD
Florida State Surgeon General

Commissioner Anastasios Kamoutsas
Florida Department of Education

Secretary Shevaun L. Harris
Florida Agency for Health Care Administration

Secretary Matt Walsh
Florida Department of Juvenile Justice

Secretary Ricky D. Dixon
Florida Department of Corrections

Commissioner Mark Glass
Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Executive Director James S. Hartsell
Florida Department of Veterans Affairs

Secretary J. Alex Kelly
Florida Department of Commerce

Call to Order and Introduction of the SPCC Chair
The quarterly meeting of the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council (SPCC) was called to order at 1:02 p.m. EST on June 23rd, 2026, by Jessica Felts, SAMH Suicide Prevention Coordinator with the Florida Department of Children and Families.

Roll Call, Introductions and Approval of Meeting Minutes
Chairperson Felts provided the following reminder: The SPCC is dedicated to using non-stigmatizing language as a method for suicide prevention, especially as one way to promote help-seeking for those struggling with suicide-related experiences. To commemorate this dedication, meetings regularly commence with encouragement to replace the words "commit" and "complete" suicide with died by suicide, similarly to how language refers to someone who "died by heart disease" or "died from cancer".

Roll call was conducted for required members and delegates. Guests were invited to include their names and professional affiliation in the chat for record-keeping. Council member Wendy Thompson began a motion to amend page four of the meeting minutes. There was a motion to approve April's meeting minutes by delegate Paul Bebee. The motion was seconded by council member Natalie Kelly.
The meeting minutes were unanimously approved as edited.

Florida Department of Children and Families Data Overview
Javy Passalacqua, The Department's 988 Coordinator, provided information on annual suicide death count and rate data for calendar years 2014-2025, as well as Florida veteran death data. Suicide prevention data is provided by Florida Department of Health and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, visit www.flhealthcharts.gov and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Passalacqua also provided data for 988 Florida Lifeline. 988 is a free behavioral health support service that connects Floridians experiencing suicidal thoughts, substance use disorder, and mental health crises with a crisis counselor in their immediate area. In State Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (through April 30, 2026), the 988 Florida Lifeline answered 138,174 calls, diverting 95% of callers from higher-level crisis care. Of these calls, 1,168 calls included an active suicide in progress that resulted in the caller making it to the next stage of care alive.

The Veterans Crisis Line (Dial 988 then Press 1) provides a similar service to Veterans, service members, National Guard and Reserve members, and those who support them while connecting callers to the Veterans Health Administration and/or other local resources.

Guest Speaker: DJ Kint, Florida Veteran Support Line
DJ Kint presented on the Florida Veterans Support Line. Mr. Kint serves as Team Lead for the line, which provides immediate emotional support and connections to community resources based on the needs of the caller. Calls are free and confidential, and the resource is available to Veterans, service members, National Guard and Reserve members, or a loved one of any of these populations, regardless of discharge status.

The Florida Veterans Support Line number is 1-844-693-5838. Mr. Kint's contact information is dj.kint@uwwf.org.

Guest Speaker: Captain Wade T. Keckler, Naval Hospital Pensacola

Captain Wade T. Keckler, Senior Mental Health Executive at the Naval Hospital Pensacola, presented on mental health treatment options for active-duty personnel on Florida's Gulf Coast. Captain Keckler discussed the unique features of Naval Air Station Pensacola, which employes more than 16,000 military and 7,400 civilian personnel and together with other local commands combines direction and control of all Navy education and training. The average age of the enlisted at the installation are 18- to 21-year-olds, individuals who've recently finished bootcamp and are at Naval Air Station Pensacola for education and training in their respective career fields. Enlisted personnel receive mental health screenings to determine fitness for duty in all roles and advanced screenings for certain roles. Such screenings may limit serious or acute crises in active-duty personnel. Naval Hospital Pensacola provides outpatient mental health services and partners with Tricare Network Facilities for inpatient mental health services. Capt. Keckler discussed one of the protective factors within this group, which includes strong relationships with other enlisted men and women.

Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council Updates

Chairperson Felts provided updates for the Statewide Office for Suicide Prevention and Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council. September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, National Recovery Month, and September 8th is 988 Day. Council members and guests were encouraged to begin planning outreach and awareness activities now. We encourage you to visit the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration websites for resource directories, media assets, and program recommendations. Additionally, SAMHSA has 988 print materials including stickers, magnets, and notepads available for free on their website (allow 2-3 weeks for delivery).

Chairperson Felts updated council at the next meeting of the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council being held at Department Headquarters in Tallahassee, Florida at one o'clock on September 24, 2026. The Department has begun planning for 2027 Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council meetings. It was requested that if anyone had a recommendation for future meeting topics, to please contact Jessica Felts, SPCC Chair at jessica.felts@myflfamililes.com and Daniela Santos, Suicide Prevention Specialist at daniela.santos@myflfamilies.com.

Public Comment

Michael Hartford, a retired Navy medical Service Corps officer and Retired VA Director, discussed the intersectionality of brain health and suicidal behaviors. Mr. Hartford spoke on behalf of the Mac Parkman Foundation, an organization on the cutting edge of treatment options for Veterans with repetitive brain trauma. The Foundation has had recent programmatic successes and is seeking bridge funding for the upcoming

fiscal year. If anyone is aware of funding opportunities that the Mac Parkman Foundation could submit applications to, please contact Mr. Hartford at mwhartford@outlook.com. The Foundation will host it's Third Annual International Summit on Repetitive Brain Trauma September 16th and 17th in Tampa Florida.

Kristin Barlow shared the date for the Dance for Life Suicide Awareness Gala in Miami, Florida on January 23rd, 2027 at the Miami Dade College Lehman Theatre.

Council member Burns of the Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition shared the dates for the 2027 Annual Statewide Suicide Prevention Conference, scheduled for March 1st to March 3rd, 2027, in Tampa, Florida. Please email Ms. Burns at chairfspc@floridasuicideprevention.org if you would like to be added to the email list so you can get more information on the conference as it becomes available.

Dr. Mike Crum shared dates for a LivingWorks ASSIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) Training in Tallahassee, Florida on July 10th and July 11th, 2026, at the American Red Cross. Contact Mr. Crum at s.michael.crum@gmail.com for further details.

Jessica Toy invited members and guests to one of two AFSP Florida in-person, full-day education events. Events are free and there is space for community resource tables.
August 1: Broward County: https://hopestartsherebroward.attendease.com/
August 24: Pensacola: https://hopestartshere.attendease.com/
Contact Ms. Toy for registration assistance: jtoy@afsp.org

Maggie de Cambre Borges provided information for Mission United, an initiative of United Way Broward to support veterans as they transition into civilian life.

Motion to Adjourn
There was a motion to adjourn by council member Rachelle Burns. The meeting was adjourned at 2:21 p.m. EST.

Minutes submitted by Daniela Santos.

Florida Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council (SPCC)

Representing	Appointed Official	Delegate
Florida Department of Children and Families	Taylor N. Hatch	Amanda VanLaningham
Florida Association of School Psychologists	Ralph E. Cash	
Florida Sheriffs Association	Matt Dunagan	Allie McNair
Florida Initiative of Suicide Prevention	Paul Jaquith	
Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition	Rachelle S. Burns	Steve Roggenbaum
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention	Wendy Thompson	Courtney Hadl
Florida School Board Association	Karen Brill	
National Council for Suicide Prevention	Dan Reidenberg	Jennifer Owens
AARP Florida	*Vacant*	
Florida Behavioral Health Association	Melanie Brown Woofter	Jennifer Johnson Ute Gazioch
Florida Counseling Association	Carly Paro	
NAMI Florida	Carali McLean	Suzanne Mailloux
Florida Medical Association	Ryan Hall	
Florida Osteopathic Medical Association	Farah Ferreiro	
Florida Psychiatric Society	Joseph Thornton	
Florida Psychological Association	Danna Fowble	Dr. David Kirk
Veterans Florida	Joe Marino	Jeremy Sinnemaki
Florida Association of Managing Entities	Natalie K. Kelly	Paul Bebee
Florida Department of Elder Affairs	Michelle Branham	Gretta Jones
Florida State Surgeon General	Joseph A. Ladapo	Laura Corbin Mary Prim
Florida Department of Education	Anastasios Kamoutsas	Beverly Wilks Taqueria Thompson
Florida Agency for Health Care Administration	Shevaun L. Harris	Dr. Timothy Buehner
Florida Department of Juvenile Justice	Matt Walsh	Dr. Tracy Shelby Joy Bennink
Florida Department of Corrections	Ricky D. Dixon	Dr. Adam Wasserman
Florida Department of Law Enforcement	Mark Glass	Rebekah Corley
Florida Department of Veterans Affairs	James S. Hartsell	Al Carter Roy Clark
Florida Department of Commerce	J. Alex Kelly	Wendy Castle
Governor's Appointee	*Vacant*	