

Suicide in Construction Awareness Action Steps

On February 7, 2023, at the Florida Transportation Builders Associations Construction Conference, thirty-two industry leaders signed a proclamation agreeing to initiate and/or encourage open conversations relating to Suicide and Mental Health Awareness in the Construction Industry. They agreed to promote responsible activities that aim to strengthen the industry and provide an optimal environment to encourage construction workers to discuss mental health struggles without fear of repercussions.

Steps that can be taken include the following:

1. Encourage and promote conversations relating to mental health and suicide awareness.
2. Pledge that when I hear the words Mental Health, I will no longer associate them with Mental Illness. Establishing a positive Mental Health Environment can assist in avoiding Mental Illness, just like a robust physical training program can assist in avoiding a bodily injury.
3. **Go to the website <https://theasphaltpro.com/suicide-proclamation/> and encourage all associates and employees to digitally sign the document.**
4. Take the pledge to stand up for suicide prevention.
https://preventconstructionsuicide.com/form.php?form_id=26&c=1
5. Display Posters of 988, Crisis Text Line, and company Employee Assistance Programs throughout the office and remote/project sites.
6. Evaluate your Employee Assistance Program to understand the services available and promote the availability of such resources.
7. Distribute wallet cards and hard hat stickers with contact information for 988, Crisis Text Line and/or Employee Assistance Program.
8. Discuss suicide annually during Suicide in Construction Awareness week in September. (September 4 – 8, 2023)
9. Participate in person or virtually in the 1st Annual Construction Hike for Hope. (April 15, 2023).
<https://supporting.afsp.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.event&eventID=8868#:~:text=The%20Construction%20Hike%20for%20Hope,mental%20health%20and%20suicide%20prevention>
10. Commit to four toolbox or daily huddle talks annually to be led and promoted by an Executive of the Organization.
11. Send a team of employees to be trained in Mental Health First Aid. This group can become the peers in your organization with whom employees can discuss problems and resources.
<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/>
12. Engage the services of a speaker at your trade association meetings, annual company safety day meetings, etc., to discuss mental health awareness, opioid, and alcohol use.
13. Company leaders or their designees should attend a conference annually that educates on mental health and well-being in the construction industry.

Vince Hafeli prepared this document as an individual. The “suggestions” contained within have not been endorsed by any employer or trade association. The steps above are his recommendations to be considered. Should you need further guidance, seek the advice of your Human Resources Manager or Legal Counsel.