



# Northwest Illinois Criminal Justice Commission

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Mobile Team Unit #1 is funded in partnership with the Illinois Law Enforcement Training & Standards Board

## Peer Support for 1<sup>st</sup> Responders

**DATE:** March 9-11, 2026

**Registration Ends:** March 1, 2026

**TIME:** 8:00 AM—4:00 PM      24 Hours

**LOCATION:** Stewart Center West, 2900 W. Pearl City Rd., Freeport, IL

**INSTRUCTOR:** Tammy and Dan Roach

### **PURPOSE OF COURSE:**

To introduce the student to the fundamentals, principles, and practices of 1 st responder peer support and enable them to provide peer support confidently and effectively to other 1 st responders who are in need of assistance and support.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW:**

Peer Support is a non-clinical process of listening, encouraging, sharing knowledge and skills, and providing assistance to peers in order to help them effectively deal with the challenges of stress and trauma as they experience them through their work and their life.

Peer Supporters are individuals who share common experiences and/or challenges with the people they are helping. Peer Supporters have the desire and enthusiasm to help their peers work through the emotional, physical, relational, and spiritual challenges they face as a result of the stress and trauma they have experienced through their jobs and life in general.

This 3-day Peer Support Training class will introduce the student to the process of peer support and equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide emotional support and practical guidance to other 1 st responders who are in need of assistance.

The course consists of a combination of classroom lecture and practical reality-based training scenarios in which the student will participate in listening exercises as well as mock one-on-one peer support sessions. The student will apply the knowledge and skills they learn during the classroom portion of the training in scenarios where they will alternately play the role of peer supporter and peer supportee.

### **COURSE GOALS:**

The goals of this course are:



1. To provide the student with a working understanding of the fundamentals, principles, and practices of peer support.
2. To heighten the student's knowledge about the unique environment of stress and trauma that encompasses a 1st responder's career and to demonstrate the overall health impact this has on the 1st responder and their family's overall well-being.
3. To describe the normal physiological and behavioral reactions to stress and trauma as well as the accompanying mental and physical health consequences and issues that may arise as a result, such as hypervigilance, PTSD, and suicide.
4. To introduce, reinforce, and highlight various communications skills and techniques that are the necessary tools of 1st responder peer supporters.
5. To discuss additional critical incident stress management interventions such as psychological first aid, critical debriefs, chaplain support, professional therapy, etc., that are related to peer support.
6. To introduce the student to the concept of resiliency and to equip them with some knowledge, techniques, and practices that can prepare and fortify them and their peer supportees to proactively address the negative effects of cumulative stress and trauma exposure on their physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual well-being.
7. To discuss some of the available support services that are available for 1st responders seeking help and assistance.
8. To engage in practical role-playing scenarios and exercises that will enhance the student's ability to provide real-world peer support to peers in need.

**This course has been certified by the ILETSB and approved to meet the following mandates:**

- Officer Wellness/Mental Health – 9.5 hours
- Procedural Justice – 5.0 hours
- Crisis Intervention – 5.5 hours
- Legal Updates – 1.0

**REGISTRATION:**

All registrations are received on the [MTU#1 website](#). Find Registration instructions [here](#)

**THIS IS NOT A PUBLIC MEETING**