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Army Releases Number of Suicides in March



DOD

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The Army released suicide data today for the month of March. Among active-duty soldiers in March, there were 13 (11 active Army; one Army National Guard; one Army Reserves) potential suicides: one (active Army) has been confirmed as suicide, and 12 (10 active Army; one Army National Guard; one Army Reserves) remain under investigation. For February, the Army reported 14 potential suicides (11 active Army; one Army National Guard; two Army Reserves) among active-duty soldiers. Since the release of that report, two of those (two active Army) have been confirmed as suicides, and 12 (nine active Army; one Army National Guard; two Army Reserves) remain under investigation.

During March, among reserve-component soldiers who were not on active duty, there were eight (eight Army National Guard; no Army Reserves) potential suicides: none have been confirmed; all eight remain under investigation. For February, among that same group, there were eight (six Army National Guard; two Army Reserves) potential suicides. Of those, five (three Army National Guard; two Army Reserves) were confirmed as suicides and three (three Army National Guard) are pending determination of the manner of death.

For reference, the Army's total for 1st Quarter Calendar Year 2009 was 53 for active-duty and 23 for not-on-active-duty. For 1st Quarter Calendar Year 2010, the totals were 39 for active-duty and 32 for not-on-active-duty.

"In partnership with the National Institute of Mental Health and civilian research institutions, the Army is preparing to launch several large representative surveys of soldiers as a major component of an ongoing five-year study," said Col. Chris Philbrick, director, Army Suicide Prevention Task Force. "The goal of the study is to provide the tools and information that will not only help the Army mitigate suicides and suicidal behavior, but will help our country address the problem of suicide among all Americans."

"The Army Suicide Prevention Task Force is completing a review of more than 600 programs related to health promotion, risk reduction and suicide prevention," Philbrick said. "The Army intends to refine programs and focus on those that provide commanders the best tools to address the key issues that cause behavioral health concerns."

"To help commanders with local concerns regarding suicides, the Army recently established a Specialized Suicide Augmentation Response Team, Philbrick said. "This is a team of experts that can be dispatched to augment local command response to an increase, identify gaps in policies and procedures, and offer recommendations for improvement."

Soldiers and families in need of crisis assistance can contact Military OneSource or the Defense Center of Excellence (DCoE) for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury Outreach Center. Trained consultants are available from both organizations 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.

The Military OneSource toll-free number for those residing in the continental U.S. is 1-800-342-9647; their Web site address is <http://www.militaryonesource.com>. Overseas personnel should refer to the Military OneSource Web site for dialing instructions for their specific location.

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