



OHANA HOMEFRONT  
FOUNDATION

***"We cannot bring back those we have lost, but we hope that we can in some way honor their memory by doing more — right now — to prevent future tragedies from suicide among our wider DOD family"***

- Sarah Otto, OHF President & Co-Founder

### **OHF Past, Present & Future**

The Ohana Homefront Foundation was founded on October 4, 2021 by Marine MilSpouse, Natalie Ealy, and (Ret.) Navy MilSpouse, Sarah Otto.

Both Natalie & Sarah have been MilSpouses for over 2 decades and have a heart for the Military Community as a whole. They realized that there is a gap when it comes to Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention and want to make sure that EVERYONE in the Military Community is receiving the care that they need to their Mental Health.

Ohana Homefront Foundation is working to bring the talk of suicide to the front for the Military Community as a whole and to offer support to all that are, and have ever been, within the Military Community. There is a gap when it comes to Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention within our Military Community and OHF wants to make sure that EVERYONE in the Military Community is receiving the care that they need for their Mental Health. To do so, we have a team of licensed Counselors on board, along with a Life Coach, Health Coach & Peer-to-Peer Mentors; all services from OHF are of no-cost to the Military Community.

Throughout 2021 & 2022 we built community through programs, resources and events - Counseling services, National/State/Base specific resources, Friday morning Coffee Connection, National/State Partnerships. We also received input from Military Families, as we actively chart new ways to support our Military Community when it comes to Mental Health and Suicide Prevention.

2023 & 2024 will bring accreditation of a virtual crisis center, which will include a hotline, text line and chat line that will be open to all that are, and have been, within our Military Community.

## **Suicide Statistics within the Military Community**

*“We cannot bring back those we have lost, but we hope that we can in some way honor their memory by doing more — right now — to prevent future tragedies from suicide among our wider DOD family.” - Sarah Otto, OHF President & Co-Founder*

### ***Military Families***

There were 202 reported suicide deaths among military family members in 2020. 25 family members who died by suicide were also Service members at the time of their death

### ***Military Spouses***

133 military spouses who died by suicide in 2020, with 79% under the age of 40, with the majority being female.

### ***Military Dependents***

69 military dependents died by suicide in 2020. The majority were male and under the age of 18. 37% were between the ages of 18-23.

### ***Active Duty, National Guard, Reserves***

In total, 519 active-duty, National Guard and Reserve troops died by suicide in 2021 — down from 580 in 2020.

### ***Veterans***

2020 shows a decrease in suicide among Veterans from 2019. In total, 6146 Veterans died by suicide in 2020, 343 fewer than in 2019. The decrease, reflecting the lowest number of Veteran suicides, since 2007, provides hope and motivation for continued prevention efforts.

### **OHF Social Media Links:**

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OhanaHomefrontFoundation>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/ohana\\_homefront\\_foundation/](https://www.instagram.com/ohana_homefront_foundation/)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/OhanaHomefront>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ohanahomefront>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@ohanahomefrontfoundation>

TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@ohanahomefront>

Pinterest: [www.pinterest.com/OhanaHomefront](http://www.pinterest.com/OhanaHomefront)

### ***Ohana Homefront Foundation***

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*Ohana Homefront Foundation is a 501(c)(3) as determined by the IRS.*

*EIN: 87-4534525*

**If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, contact the Ohana Homefront Foundation Hotline to receive free, confidential support available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.**

**Call (804) 607-9899**

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### **Suicide is preventable (with intervention)**

In 2021, the White House declared the epidemic of suicide in the military community\* as a “public health and national security crisis” (White House, 2021a, para 1). Even though the War on Terror has now come to a close, suicide persists within our military community as a result of the continued stressors of ever evolving missions and command climates. The impact of suicide goes well beyond just those who’ve lost their lives, as the welfare of their families, loved ones, and fellow service members is harmed as well. These incidents of suicide often occur at points of failure inherent to the present structure of military and veteran caregiving, which are further exacerbated by changes of station, retirements or transitions, and even the reluctance of the Service Member to report issues out of fear of repercussion. More seriously, the military-focused nature of these services often neglect other mental crises ongoing in the Military Home. The Ohana Homefront Foundation (OHF) plans to bridge these gaps by giving access to crisis intervention for the Military Community as a whole, thereby ensuring true continuity of care not just for the Service Member, but for their families as well.

### **Why is OHF the answer?**

OHF, a 501c3 nonprofit founded by military spouses, is composed of military spouse, veteran, and civilian volunteers. The cultural competency of the military spouse is a unique perspective that assists our OHF volunteers in understanding the stressors that life within the military can impose. Our spouses and veterans readily recognize the signs and symptoms from a personal point of view, knowing what to look for in service and/or family members, and our civilian volunteers provide valuable insight from the ever evolving views and struggles of “normal” society.

The mission statement of OHF aligns directly with the White House’s priorities for reducing suicide by providing connections within the military community to allow our families to heal.

### **The OHF Virtual Crisis Center**

OHF is building a Virtual Crisis Center (VCC) in order to provide stability to our military community. The OHF VCC will consist of chat, text, and a static phone system. The individual will be able to reach an OHF volunteer 24/7 in order to reduce the risk of self-harm. Additionally, OHF interaction with the individual will not end after initial contact with the crisis center; OHF is committed to providing a continuity of care currently not seen in the military system. Individuals who reach the crisis center will be connected with an individual on the OHF mental health team after the call is disconnected. Our mental health team will provide follow-up correspondence, virtual visits with a mental health professional, and/or peer-to-peer support dependent upon the individual need. OHF will monitor progress of the individual while within the OHF system and all services will be of no charge.

National accreditation for the virtual crisis center is currently in process.

## Everyone stands to benefit

From crisis intervention to follow on counseling, all involved will benefit; OHF will provide an outlet for the military community in which they will speak to an individual who is competent in military culture. Military commands will be able to refer service members to OHF as a free resource when there is no available counseling at their military installation.

\*OHF defines the military community as - the service member, the veteran, spouse, child, or caregiver



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