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MnFIRE PROVIDER CONNECTIONS

Resources and Tools for the MnFIRE Assistance Program Network

**From Rochelle Hawthorne -
Peer Support Program Director, MnFIRE**

Hello,

As program director of the Minnesota Firefighter Initiative (MnFIRE) Peer Support Program, a licensed professional counselor and a seasoned firefighter/paramedic, I hear day in and day out about the troubles that are presenting in the fire service. [Moral injury](#) is something we're seeing a lot of lately. Moral injury is defined as "the psychological, social and spiritual impact of events involving betrayal or transgression of one's own deeply held moral beliefs or values occurring in high-stakes situations."

Potentially Morally Injurious Events (PMIE) occur by:

- Acts of commission (doing something that goes against one's moral code/belief system)
- Acts of omission (failure to do something in line with one's beliefs)
- Witnessing behaviors that go against one's values and beliefs
- Betrayal by leadership or others in position of power or peers that may result in adverse outcomes



Some examples of PMIE are:

- Having to make hard decisions that affect the survival of others
- Killing or harming others (often for military and law enforcement)
- Inability to care for/help all who need it
- Freezing or failing to perform a duty during a dangerous or traumatic event
- Engaging in or witnessing acts of disproportionate violence and/or other traumas/tragedies

Based on the above examples, it's not hard to see why firefighters and other first responders are at risk for moral injury. Although not considered a mental illness, moral injury is very real and dangerous. This is especially true if combined with [post-traumatic stress injury \(PTSI\)](#) since the combination of the two puts people at a higher risk for suicide. However, a person can have moral injury and not meet PTSI criteria. Some similarities and differences between moral injury and PTSI are as follows:

- **Similarities:** Both begin with an event that is often life-threatening or harmful to others. Guilt and shame are core features, and both possess feelings of betrayal and loss of trust.
- **Differences:** PTSI includes additional symptoms, such as hyperarousal/hypervigilance, and is more about fear and trauma. Distress from morally injurious events is more about guilt and shame related to one's actions, inactions or experiences, and can lead to different symptom profiles.

So, what signs and symptoms does one look for when diagnosing moral injury? Symptoms can include profound feelings of guilt, shame or disgust, difficulty trusting oneself or others, feelings of being unworthy, difficulty forgiving oneself or others, loss of meaning, hope, and/or religious faith, and self-condemnation.

There are ways to get help. Several effective moral injury therapy modalities can be used to treat the condition, including Prolonged Exposure Therapy, Cognitive Processing Therapy, eye movement therapies such as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and Accelerated Resolution Therapy (ART), group therapy, art therapy, and other forms of support, such as peer support, family support and faith/church groups.

We'll continue to monitor the increase in moral injury cases. If you have questions about caring for firefighters with moral injury, please reach out. We're here to support your work strengthening the resiliency and emotional wellness of Minnesota's fire service.

Thank you,
Rochelle

Rochelle Hawthorne, MPNA, MS, LPC, FF/EMT-P
MnFIRE Peer Support Program Director
rochelle@pronetworktools.com

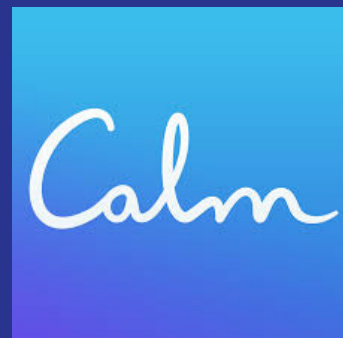
[Visit MnFIRE's Website](#)

[MAP Network FAQs](#)

Tools for Your Practice

Calm App

Did you know that MnFIRE members can access the Calm app -- at no cost? The Calm app helps members manage stress, promotes sleep and feel more present. Be sure to mention this resource to the members you serve!



ACCESS THE CALM APP FOR BETTER SLEEP AND RELIEF FROM STRESS AND ANXIETY

To use this app, members need to do the following:

1. Download the Calm app in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.
2. Open the app and create an account.
3. To access the Calm Premium library, go to: Profile > Settings > Link Organization Subscription.
4. Enter organization code: Optum EWS
5. In the group code field, enter the company access code: MnFIRE

Important Information

REIMBURSEMENT RATES

As a reminder, MnFIRE's reimbursement rate is \$150 a session

Thank you for your unending support to the fire service and your expertise in this field.

AUTHORIZATION VERIFICATION

While submitting a claim on [Provider Express](#), providers can view insured information. On claim entry step #2, verify that the employer group name is "MnFIRE" to expect the enhanced MnFIRE reimbursement rate.

Insured Information			
Id Number	Insure Name	Address	Telephone
Group Number	Insurance Plan Name	Employer Group Name MNFIRE	

CLARIFICATION ON AUTHORIZATIONS

While speaking with providers throughout the state of Minnesota, a consistent question is "How many authorizations can MnFIRE members receive?" Let's break this down:

MnFIRE Assistance Program (MAP) support specialists are available 24/7, 365 days of the year for unlimited consultations and support. MAP also provides virtual visits and/or face-to-face services with network clinicians specializing in first responders, for up to 5 visits per member, per issue, per year.

The following is an example of per member, per issue, per year. In this case, an "issue" is indicative of an incident or life event, rather than something formal that could be diagnosed.

Say a firefighter calls into MAP support early in the year because they had a death in the family and would like to seek clinical assistance for grief counseling; they would be able to call the MAP support phone number and have a specialist open up an authorization for **five** face-to-face or virtual visits, and then be referred to a clinician to help with that issue.

If the same member calls into the MAP support program later in the year because their spouse lost their job, which has resulted in extra stress and anxiety, they would then be able to call the MAP support phone number again, and have a specialist open up a new authorization for that issue, and receive another bank of **five** face-to-face or virtual visits and see a clinician for that different issue.

While members are allowed more than one authorization each year, **EAP is not intended for ongoing psychotherapy**. Each circumstance is clinically reviewed prior to authorization to ensure that it is appropriate to address under the EAP benefit.

[Here is more information](#) on the difference between EWS (Emotional Wellbeing Solutions is EAP rebranded) and ongoing psychotherapy.

Utilize the Peer Support Network

Firefighters are exposed to traumatic stress at particularly high rates and getting help from someone who has lived similar experiences can make all the difference. Please utilize [MnFIRE's Peer Support Network](#) to complement the work you are doing in your sessions with firefighters and their families. This confidential service is free to all Minnesota firefighters and offers them the unique opportunity to connect and converse with someone who has been through similar experiences. By providing emotional support outside of the traditional medical system, peer support directly reduces the culture of silence in the fire service that has all too often resulted in worsening mental health and suicide.



Hometown Heroes Assistance Program Elements

MnFIRE Assistance Program

- Up to five no-cost, confidential counseling visits per issue per year with trained mental health professionals.
- Confidential Peer Support with fellow firefighters.

Critical Illness Program

- A Critical Illness insurance policy providing up to \$20,000 towards expenses after a diagnosis of cancer, cardiac, PTSD or another critical illness.
- Minnesota firefighters are automatically enrolled.

Department Training

- Ongoing health and wellness training for firefighters to stay up to date on their occupational health risks.
- Fire departments can choose from general MnFIRE Awareness training and deep-dive sessions covering, emotional wellness, cancer, cardiac, sleep, nutrition and fitness.

Firefighters who are in crisis or need help, need to file a critical illness claim, or need to schedule a training can call our 24-hour hotline at 888-784-6634 or visit mnfireinitiative.com/hhap.

Claim Reminders

- MAP providers will receive a premium reimbursement rate for eligible services.
- Optum pays providers directly – no patient financial responsibility.
- All MAP claims must include an HJ modifier.
- Claims must also include the 9-digit member ID and authorization number.
- Claims can be submitted at providerexpress.com.
- Providers participating in the MAP network will be reimbursed premium rates for the service codes below *only if* the Minnesota firefighters and their families are *offered an appointment within five business days of request*.

SERVICE CODE	SERVICE TITLE/ DESCRIPTION	FEE: PHD	FEE: MA
90832HJ	30-37 min individual therapy	\$150	\$150
90834HJ	38-52 min individual therapy	\$150	\$150
90846HJ	Family therapy without patient in attendance	\$150	\$150
90847HJ	Family therapy with the patient in attendance	\$150	\$150
90853HJ	Group therapy other than family	\$150	\$150

** Please note that extended therapy visits code (90837) and formal diagnostic assessments code (90791) are not covered for MAP.

Helpful Authorization Tips

- Authorization letters are sent to the individual via email or USPS mail. Ask the member for this information.
- Verify authorization details via our Authorization Inquiry tool at providerexpress.com.
- Call Optum MAP for assistance (1-866-694-9662).

[Quick Reference Guide](#)

Important Contacts

MnFIRE Hotline: 1-888-784-6634

1 - 24/7 Live Counselor

2 - Peer Support

3 - File a Critical Illness claim

4 - Questions regarding the HHAP or assistance filing a claim

5 - Provider Authorization Hotline (Note: this option is not announced on the greeting)

Authorization Hotline: 1-866-694-9662

Provider Questions: emily.schumacher@optum.com



MnFIRE is a nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to providing education and support for firefighters and their families with regard to cardiac, emotional trauma and cancer, achieving better health outcomes. For more information, visit mnfireinitiative.com.

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