



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

SEP 26 2019

Dear Military Leaders and Community Members:

The Department is resolute in its commitment to the prevention of suicide amongst our Service members and their families. Any death by suicide is a tragedy! The health, safety, and well-being of our military community is essential to the readiness of the total force.

This is the first year the Department is publishing the Annual Suicide Report (ASR). The Calendar Year (CY) 2018 ASR serves as the official release authority for annual suicide counts and rates for the Department. This is also the first time the Department is reporting on military family suicide deaths, publishing the most current data available – CY 2017. The ASR provides a mechanism for a more timely release of the official annual DoD suicide counts and rates. It also describes current and future Departmental initiatives, which are aligned with the public health approach to suicide prevention to combat suicide among Service members and their families.

Inputs for this report were obtained from many sources, including the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System, the Military Services, the Psychological Health Center of Excellence, data from the DoD Suicide Event Report, the Defense Manpower Data Center, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

I encourage you to read the CY 2018 ASR and study its findings. Based on the results of the 2018 ASR, the Department will focus on helping our young and enlisted Service members develop and enhance skills to deal with life stressors. We will also support our military families in understanding risk factors for suicide, identifying potential “red flags,” and how to intervene in a crisis.

The Department remains committed in its efforts to prevent suicide. Each of us has a role in this most fundamental mission to help stop suicide and end this tragedy. Thank you for your continued support of our Service members and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James N. Stewart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James N. Stewart
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower
and Reserve Affairs, Performing the Duties
of the Under Secretary of Defense for
Personnel and Readiness