

THE FITNESS FOR DUTY EVALUATION (IACP Guidelines, 2016)

The Fitness for Duty Evaluation (FFDE) should only be taken into consideration when an officer demonstrates psychological, behavioral, or personal problems that interfere with his or her inability to undertake and adequately perform the duties of their position and/or that render them unsafe to perform their duties.

In any case, these referrals must only be made when there is “objective and reasonable evidence of psychological impairment” according to the *International Association of Chiefs of Police Guidelines* (IACP). Interestingly enough, none of the referred officers demonstrated workplace behaviors or behavioral changes indicative of the need for an FFDE referral. This remains the case to date, more than four years subsequent to the mass shooting for those officers who remained in treatment over the long term. There were no departmental requests for FFDE referrals within the two-year post-shooting time period from any law enforcement agencies.

As the treating psychologist for all Dayton police officers referred for psychological screenings following the Oregon District Mass Shooting, as detailed above, the need for an FFDE to be conducted would have generated referrals for these officers to a board-certified forensic psychologist or one deemed qualified under IACP Guidelines. (The author does not possess board certification in forensic psychology, but does meet IACP qualifications.) Nevertheless, conducting an FFDE would have readily fallen under the category of an ethical violation. The *American Psychological Association's (APA's) Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* clearly dictates ethical violations involving multiple relationships and conflict of interest. Unquestionably, evaluating any individual with whom a previous treating relationship exists may have impaired objectivity and created a potential conflict of interest situation. It is routine practice for the author to provide two to three highly qualified forensic psychologists referrals to police departments requesting FFDEs.

Kathy Platoni, Psy.D., DAAPM, FAIS
Clinical Psychologist
COL (RET), US Army
Dayton SWAT
Member, Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame
Member, Greene County Veterans Hall of Fame
Editor, Combat Stress Magazine
Clinical Director, Southwest Ohio Critical Incident Stress Management Team