

MENTAL WELLNESS of covert operatives




By the Undercover Operations Sub-committee of the Organized Crime Committee

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

The following is a list of recommendations for Canadian police services to implement to ensure the mental wellness of their covert operatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ① Applicants to the undercover program be subject to mental wellness screening prior to training to establish a baseline (Undercover Operators and Cover Members).
 - Screening to be conducted by a Registered Psychologist with appropriate security clearance, using the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI).
 - ② Regular mandatory periodic mental wellness check-ins/meetings for active Undercover Operators and Cover Members (more frequent for full-time versus part-time members).
 - These check-ins/meetings should be conducted by a psychologist who has experience working with employees involved in undercover work.
 - The psychologist conducting check-ins/meetings may also provide psychological counseling to the member's immediate family, supervisor, and coworkers.
 - If possible, these check-ins/meetings should be conducted by a different psychologist than the one responsible for applicant screening.
 - ③ Mandatory mental wellness check-ins/meetings upon exit from significant undercover and cover roles, files, and investigations.
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- ④ The Undercover Coordinator should monitor members exiting a file or investigation. Some considerations are:
 - The member's role in the file/investigation.
 - The potential impact on the member if the suspect is out on bail prior to court.
 - The stress of trial and testimony on the member due to public/media exposure in court.
 - Court considerations including the use of a pseudonym, publication ban, and/or police witness protection.
 - The potential impact on the member of the eventual release of targets from custody upon completion of their sentence.
 - Considerations for family check-ins.
 - ⑤ Specific mental wellness training for Cover Members focused on being able to better support/ assist Undercover Operators.