



NEWS RELEASE

TRAVIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

P.O. Box 1748, Austin, Texas 78767

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 15, 2008

Sheriff's Office Announces A Soldier Reintegration Program For Employees

What started out as a discussion between Sheriff's Office staff has turned into a one of a kind policy/program that addresses the needs of the civilian soldier who is called to active duty in the United States Military.

The Travis County Sheriff's Office has a long history of supporting employees who are called to active duty through Operation S.O.S. (Support our Service Members). The goal of Operation SOS was to show support for employees called to active duty by sending letters from fellow employees and gift cards for telephone calls and personal items. This was done through informal fundraisers like lunch and bake sales.

Realizing that military deployment can be a stressful time, not only for the service member, but for family members as well, the Sheriff's Office has developed a Reintegration Program. The program is run through the Critical Incident Stress Management Team and assists both the employee and his or her family pre-deployment, throughout the deployment and through the reintegration process. Once the Personnel Office is advised of such an employee, the CISM team will be notified and will then contact him or her. This program is a first of its kind and has been submitted to the International Association of Chiefs of Police and other agencies who are anxious to adopt it for themselves.

Currently the Sheriff's Office has 11 officers and civilians who are serving active duty in all branches of the military.

The contact for this program is Kelly Hibbs, at kelly.hibbs@co.travis.tx.us or at 512-854-4334.

MEDIA: Operation SOS will hold a hot dog lunch fund raiser at the Sheriff's Office, at 5555 Airport Blvd. on Armed Forces Day; Friday, May 16, 2008 from 11 am to 1 pm and all funds raised will go to gift cards. Kelly will be on hand for interviews from 11am to 12 noon.

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Submitted By: Roger Wade, Public Information Officer, (512) 854-4986