



## *Ohio Assist Program Overview*

- Ohio ASSIST is a partnership between the Ohio State Highway Patrol and OhioMHAS
- Ohio ASSIST is a three-day Post Critical Incident Seminar (PCIS) for Ohio First Responders (Law enforcement, fire / EMS, dispatch and local corrections) at no cost to the agency or the individual.
- **PCIS is best described as participant driven, peer facilitated, and clinician supported.**
- Ohio has held 11 PCIS with 297 first responders and support persons having attended since 2017.
- Ohio ASSIST partners with 10 other states, sharing peers and resources for PCIS in these states.
- PCIS gives participants the chance to talk about their trauma and the effects it has had on them, their families, their agency and their communities.
- Participants are given the opportunity to meet with clinicians, familiar with public safety in a one-on-one environment to discuss any issues or concerns they have.
- Participants meet in small groups to have conversations with other first responders who have been involved in similar incidents. This allows them to see that they are not alone in their issues and concerns and that they are having a normal reaction to an abnormal circumstance for them, right then.
- Issues such as suicide, addiction, physiological effects of stress, relationship and communication issues, faith, fear and coping are discussed as lectures and in small groups.
- Peers, who have received training from the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) and have also been participants themselves, are utilized to support the participants.
- Peers come from agencies all over the state including state, county and municipal public safety as well as spouses and professional staff.
- A licensed and certified clinician serves as the clinical director to oversee the mental health aspects of the program.