

## Alliance Members: Frequently Asked Questions

### About the Alliance

Established by the Construction Financial Management Association (CFMA) in 2016, the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention (the Alliance) is a group of key industry organizations who have recognized and are committed to promoting the safety and well-being of construction's most important asset – its human capital.

### What compelled CFMA to begin this effort?

A July 2016 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that construction is one of the most at-risk industries for suicide. The study, which examined suicide risk by profession, found that of about 12,300 suicides in the 17 states studied, 1,324 people worked in construction and extraction (10.8%) and 1,049 (8.5%) worked in management, a category that includes top executives as well as others in management positions. Construction industry risk factors include a competitive, high-pressure environment, a relatively higher prevalence of alcohol and substance abuse, furloughs, end-of-season layoffs, and separation from family are just some of the actors that can challenge mental stability.

The devastating truth is that all too often, people who experience mental health conditions – which can lead to suicidal despair – suffer in silence. Despite dramatic advances in awareness, prevention, intervention, and treatment, mental health conditions and suicide prevention are still taboo topics of conversation.

As such, it is an industry imperative to shatter the mental health stigma and provide resources to assist construction companies so that they may address this issue which has long been ignored. There is a need for more proactive prevention-based strategies, solutions, and services to help the construction industry address mental health and suicide prevention.

### What is the Alliance's mission?

The Alliance's mission is simple, but profound: To provide and disseminate information and resources for suicide prevention and mental health promotion in construction with the goal of creating a zero-suicide industry. The current [Alliance partners](#) are available on the web page.

### What efforts have taken place in the fight against suicide in construction?

CFMA's journey to promote awareness of mental health and suicide prevention has covered much ground since CFMA's 2015 Annual Conference, thanks to the tireless efforts of Cal Beyer and Sally Spencer-Thomas. They have published nearly a dozen articles, the first of which appeared in the Nov/Dec 2015 issue of *CFMA Building Profits*, and spearheaded just as many presentations throughout the construction industry. April 2016 saw CFMA's Valley of the Sun Chapter hosting the first regional [Suicide Prevention Summit](#) on the topic, spurring on other CFMA Chapters to undertake similar initiatives. Additional Summits have been presented across the country since that time, with more currently being planned.

To help focus these efforts, CFMA has established the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention, with the goal of providing and disseminating information and resources for suicide prevention and mental health promotion in construction.

### What are the expectations of Alliance members?

Members of the Alliance agree to assist with the dissemination of suicide prevention resources to their membership/constituencies on at least a quarterly basis. The goal is to break the wall of silence around mental health and suicide and educate the construction industry on how to promote mental health as part of their companies' overall wellness initiatives.

The information and resources can be shared through a variety of means at the partner’s disposal including, but not limited to:

- Publishing PSA-type ads on their websites or in publications (magazines, e-newsletters, etc.).
- Distributing articles, videos, and other resources to their membership via email, blogs, discussion boards, etc.
- Hosting webinars or education summits featuring mental health and suicide prevention information.
- Publishing new articles, or reprinting existing content, in Association digital and print publications.
- Directing their members to the host of [resources available on the Alliance’s webpage](#).
- Promoting their membership in the Alliance.

CFMA plans to produce a regular communication to Alliance member organizations to keep you up to date with the latest resources, activities, and information available to you and your members in the fight against suicide.

**What resources are available for Alliance members?**

CFMA has compiled various resources to help Alliance members in the construction industry create awareness of the problem, cultivate a culture of caring, and start the conversation in the workplace.

See the [Alliance’s website](#) for a full list of resources ranging from published articles, “blueprints” for companies, posters in English and Spanish for display in the workplace, to information and tips on how to plan an education session or suicide prevention summit, and much more.

**What is the best way to get started in our own organization?**

We have created four chronological sample e-mails for your use in communicating the information with your members. A copy of the sample e-mails is attached. Feel free to edit these messages in a way that you think will “speak” to your members. We also encourage you to appoint an internal “point person” for inquiries from your members, and include this in your communications.

**How can our organization get involved with local suicide prevention summits already being planned? Can we plan our own?**

The CIASP task force has a subgroup assigned to assist with local suicide prevention summits and other events. There is a “how-to” [toolkit for summit preparation](#) and other information readily available.

As we provide you with the updated lists of local [suicide prevention summits and other events planned](#), we hope that you will share these with your local chapters/members and encourage them to actively participate in these local endeavors.

**What is the role of the CIASP Task Force?**

In alignment with CFMA’s Strategic Plan and Mission, the Task Force will provide input, advice, guidance, and review in successfully positioning the Alliance as the resource for suicide prevention and mental health promotion in construction.

**Who do I contact with questions about the Alliance?**

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