

Sharon L'Herrou, President of 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast:

It is critically important to have all major stakeholders involved at the table for the 988 rollout and law enforcement is a critical partner. So they have to be there because there are a number of instances where they may or may not need to respond. And so we want to be able to have collaborative dialogue, discussion ahead of time. We want to make sure that we have good protocols and good relationships for appropriate handoffs and so the idea is that if all of the stakeholders are at the table in advance, we can have everything lined up for a really, really smooth response to everyone who needs help no matter what situation they might be encountering.

Fortunately, in Palm Beach County, most of the community leadership and stakeholders, we really have always had fairly close and good ties. So there are a number of avenues before 988 even came that already existed. And one of them is that Palm Beach County has a group called the Criminal Justice Commission that pulls together a variety of stakeholders, including law enforcement. They have a group called the Law Enforcement Planning Council, and the Law Enforcement Chiefs of Police. There are quite a few law enforcement partners in Palm Beach County, over 26. And so that means that a lot of coordination is required. So fortunately, some channels already existed to have these conversations and dialogues. So when the 988 rollout began to be talked about, there was a Florida-statewide 988 task force and law enforcement was represented there. And then in Palm Beach County, we included this dialogue through a number of the local channels that already existed and now have created a smaller, specific 988 task force for this region that law enforcement participates on.