



**New York State Correctional Officers  
& Police Benevolent Association, Inc.**

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***“Keeping New York Safe”***

**NYSCOPBA Raises Money for Suicide Awareness**

*Union Holds Motorcycle Ride in the Hudson Valley to Raise Awareness of Mental Health*

**June 21, 2021**

**Bedford Hills, NY** – Union officials from NYSCOPBA’s Southern Region, recently hosted their inaugural Suicide Awareness Ride to shine a light on mental health issues, in particular within the law enforcement community.

The event, held Saturday June 12<sup>th</sup> at Bedford Hills Correctional Facilities, drew dozens of participants from across numerous prison facilities in the Hudson Valley. Riders representing Bedford Hills, Sing Sing, Taconic, Queensboro, Edgecombe, Woodbourne, Sullivan and Fishkill, each rode over 150 miles with a New York State Police escort, through rainy conditions, to raise awareness to the dangers members of the law enforcement community face with regards to suicide. While gathering suicide-related data specific to law enforcement lacks on the national level, research shows that the law enforcement community is at an elevated risk to suffering from mental health-related illnesses.

Additionally, NYSCOPBA members from Bedford Hills Correctional Facility hosted a BBQ for riders and their families, with raffle baskets, giveaways, music and ice cream.

All told, the event raised \$4,000 for the Hudson Valley/Westchester Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP).

New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association Vice President of the Southern Region Dave Luther said, “One’s own mental health is a difficult subject to talk about because it can be viewed as a perceived weakness, especially in the law enforcement community which is built on the ideals of strength and bravery. Thankfully though, as a society we’re becoming more self-aware of our mental health and events like this only help those who may be struggling realize they are not alone. I’m proud to partner with the AFSP Hudson Valley/Westchester to bring attention to something that deeply impacts our members of the law enforcement community.”