

Mental Health First Aid – San Diego (MHFASD)
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***Mental Health America of San Diego County and Amtrak collaborate to bring
Mental Health First Aid training to PIER Program***

San Diego, CA – On August 19th, Mental Health First Aid San Diego (MHFA-SD), a program of Mental Health America of San Diego County facilitated a training for Amtrak’s program PIER during their Southwest Division meeting in San Diego. The PIER (Prevention, Intervention, Education, Resources) Program focuses on the prevention of substance use and abuse. It uses evidence-based practices including education and resources to make drug and alcohol prevention accessible to all Amtrak employees.

PIER attendees became certified through a training on Mental Health First Aid facilitated by Mental Health America San Diego’s very own Anthony Ewing, certified MHFA instructor, military veteran, and retired law enforcement officer. Mr. Ewing’s deep understanding of the subject has given facilitators and managers the skill and tools they need to recognize mental health issues in others and have the sometimes-difficult conversations which can lead to having company employees, friends and loved ones seek the help they need.

“This course was well done, with knowledgeable trainers. The information provided was extremely helpful as a new P.I.E.R. representative. The biggest takeaway for me was the appropriate way to approach another who needs assistance,” said Peggy Beverage, a CSR from Fullerton, CA.

According to the 2021 Mental Health America Mind the Workplace report, 1 in 4 employees demonstrated extreme signs of burnout. Furthermore, the pandemic has exacerbated mental health challenges, even for those of us who were on solid footing before the pandemic. For employers, Mental Health First Aid at Work can be the cornerstone in creating a mentally healthy workplace – one in which individuals feel valued, supported, and respected.

“Mental Health First Aid in the workplace is essential! As leaders, it is now our responsibility to transform the ways we think about, talk about, and address all forms of mental health challenges,” says Dr. LaTanya Runnells, Program Manager for MHFASD. “Mental Health First Aid teaches people how to manage their own personal mental health challenges and how to support coworkers who may be facing them as well.”

Mental Health First Aid, USA is a certification training offered by Mental Health America of San Diego County as a free public education program. It is funded by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Behavioral Department. Our program introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental illnesses, helps build an understanding of their impact, and overviews common supports.

Our program has offered these trainings throughout San Diego County since 2015, and we are proud to have the most certified Mental Health First Aid responders in California. We have some of the most experienced and top-rated nationally recognized Mental Health First Aid instructors on our team. During this time, we know the importance of everyone’s mental wellness. We continue to provide various modules and now offer virtual Mental Health First Aid training. Please visit our [Events](#) page to register for one of our free trainings.

For more information on our Mental Health First Aid training, contact us at 619-543-0412. For more information on Amtrak’s P.I.E.R. Program, please contact Drew Weston-Ball, Prevention Specialist at 202-604-1847.

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