

SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES IN DISTRESS MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCIES



Start here. A situation, observation or instinct tells you to be concerned about a colleague. Maybe you're unsure what to do, where to start or worry that you'll make things worse. Don't let that stop you from taking action. Use this decision tree to determine the next steps, and never hesitate to contact emergency services if unsure.

Is the employee experiencing:

Thoughts of suicide, medical emergency, severe effects of substance use, a severe psychotic state, or are they a danger to themselves, to others, or in need of immediate support?

	ACTION	CONTACT INFORMATION	FOLLOW-UP
Yes	Call UDPD or 911	911 302-831-2222 LiveSafe App or Blue Light Phone	After calling 911, 988 or EAP, contact your HR Partner directly or call 302-831-2171 to hand-off follow-up to Human Resources
Not Sure	Call 911 or connect with 988, the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline	911 988: Call, Text or chat via 988 lifeline.org	
No	Encourage your colleague to connect with help via 988 or UD's Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	988: Call, Text or chat via 988 lifeline.org EAP: 877-240-6863	

What happens when I call 911 or UDPD?

A dispatcher will collect your information, assess if emergency response is required, and if so, dispatch a medical team or law enforcement to the person in distress. Law enforcement agencies, including UDPD, may utilize specially trained Crisis Intervention Training officers to de-escalate mental health emergencies.

What happens when I call 988?

988 is the new number for the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Like 911, it can be dialed from any phone for access to emergency care. Your call will be routed to a local crisis center where a trained crisis counselor will listen, provide support and share resources if needed. While some safety and health issues may warrant a response from law enforcement and/or emergency medical, 98% of calls are resolved over the phone. Options for veterans and Spanish language are available.

What happens when I call UD's Employee Assistance Program provider?

When you call, you will speak with a master's or PhD-level counselor who will collect some general information about you and discuss your needs. The Health Advocate will provide the name of a counselor who can assist you. You can then set up an appointment to speak with the counselor over the phone or schedule a face-to-face visit.

Warning Signs of Suicide

- Giving away personal possessions
- Talking as if they're saying goodbye or going away forever
- Taking steps to tie up loose ends, like organizing personal papers or paying off debts
 - Making or changing a will
- Stockpiling pills or obtaining a weapon
 - Preoccupation with death
- Sudden cheerfulness or calm after a period of despondency
- Dramatic changes in personality, mood and/or behavior
 - Increased drug or alcohol use
- Saying things like "Nothing matters anymore," "You'll be better off without me," or "Life isn't worth living"
- Withdrawal from friends, family and normal activities
 - Failed romantic relationship
- Sense of utter hopelessness and helplessness
- History of suicide attempts or other self-harming behaviors

Warning Signs of Mental Health Crisis

- Inability to perform daily tasks
- Rapid mood swings
- Increased agitation or out of control behavior
- Abusive behavior to self or others
- Isolation from work, family or friends
- Loss of touch with reality
- Paranoia

What To Do If You Suspect Someone is Thinking About Suicide

If you notice any of the above suicide warning signs or if you're concerned someone is thinking about suicide, don't be afraid to talk to them about it.

Start the conversation.

Open the conversation by sharing specific signs you've noticed, like:
"I've noticed lately that you [have been down] ..."

Then say something like:

- ✓ "Are you thinking about suicide?"
- ✓ "Do you have a plan? Do you know how you would do it?"
- ✓ "When was the last time you thought about suicide?"

If the answer is "Yes" or if you think they might be at risk of suicide, you need to seek help immediately.

More Information



[Mental Health Resources for UD Employees](#)

One-page guide to University of Delaware Mental Health benefits and tools



[NAMI: Navigating a Mental Health Crisis](#)

Comprehensive tool-kit for people experiencing a mental health emergency

(National Alliance on Mental Illness)