



Suicide Concerns: A Guide for Managers

If a member of your team has expressed suicidal thoughts, it is important to take immediate action. The following steps will help to maintain the person's safety:

- 1. Ask to speak privately with the person.** Express your concerns about their statements or behavior. Stay away from medical terms like “depression” or “mental illness,” as these could have legal implications for your organization.

Sample language: “You mentioned that you’ve been thinking about harming yourself. I’m concerned about you.”
- 2. Listen to the response.** Ask open-ended questions. Let the person know that you want to connect them with helpful resources.

Sample language: “Your safety is my first priority. I want to connect you with someone who can help.”
- 3. Keep the person with you.** Ask them to stay with you or another manager while you consult with the appropriate resources. If the person is working remotely, ask them to stay on the phone or video call.
- 4. Consult with HR and LifeMatters.** Involve your organization’s medical department (if available). Seek consultation regardless of

what the person says about their wellbeing or state of mind.

- 5. Coordinate with appropriate resources.** HR will guide you through next steps. Possible actions may include referring the person to LifeMatters, reaching out to their emergency contact, contacting company security or medical, or calling 911.
- 6. Make a referral to LifeMatters.** If possible, facilitate this call. If the person is working remotely, set up a three-way call.

Sample language: “LifeMatters is available to help. I’m going to get a counselor on the line to talk with you.”
- 7. Offer ongoing support.** If the person refuses to speak with LifeMatters, talk to HR about calling the police for a welfare check. Offer the person the LifeMatters phone number as well.
- 8. Follow up.** Periodically check in to ask how the person is doing. Help them coordinate time off should it be necessary. Remind the person about any helpful resources your organization may provide.

Helping someone who has been talking about suicide can be stressful and emotionally draining. The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service can offer both personal and professional support. Call 24/7/365.

1-800-634-6433

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