

Suicide Ideation Protocol

2026 Homeless Count- Demographic Survey

If a surveyor encounters a participant who mentions contemplating suicide, you should respond with empathy, care, and appropriate action while maintaining professional boundaries. Here's how you can support the participant effectively:

1. Stay Calm and Listen Attentively

- Speak in a calm and compassionate tone.
- Allow the participant to share their feelings without interrupting.
- Show understanding by saying things like:
 - *"I'm really sorry you're feeling this way. You're not alone, and your feelings matter."*
 - *"Thank you for sharing this with me. I'm here to listen."*

2. Assess Immediate Risk

Without probing too deeply, ask gentle, open-ended questions to gauge urgency:

- *"Are you thinking about hurting yourself right now?"*
- *"Do you have a plan to harm yourself?"*

If they indicate an immediate risk, **stay with them and seek help immediately** (see Step 3).

3. Connect to Professional Help

- Provide crisis support information:
 - **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** (Call or Text 988)
 - **LA County Department of Mental Health 24/7 Help Line:** (800) 854-7771

4. Inform Project Admins

If you feel like you need to stay with the participant longer than 20 mins for support, use your phone for contact with above resources. Amy Stein or Camila Catignas,

The goal is not to act as a counselor but to listen, validate, and connect the individual to professional resources if needed.