

Crisis Lines and Support Lines: Organized by Least Likely to Call the Police to Most Likely to Call the Police

Last updated: January 2024 - improved Screen reader access! Details about who created this guide are under Creators and Contributors to this Document. We hope to empower people with informed consent (in other words, people deserve to know the risks and benefits of calling phone lines for support or in a crisis).

Introduction

This document highlights organizations that people can contact in a crisis or for general support if you just need someone to talk to. This document is an example of disability justice that can be used by anyone, even if they are not disabled. There is an international section but this document focuses on organizations in the USA. **Please share this document with anyone!**

This document highlights organizations that support multi-marginalized people without calling the police (Veterans, BIPoC, LGBTQIA+, immigrants, disabled, transgender and gender diverse people, women, non-christian religions, ethnicities, ect.)

How to use this Document

Use the headings to navigate. Go to VIEW and select "Show Outline" if you don't see the headings on the left side of the screen.

Overwhelmed? Click on the heading called **Overwhelmed by All the Words in This Document** for a quick overview of what to do.

The bottom of the document (When Someone Else Needs Help) has tips for people who want to call a crisis line because someone else is in danger of committing suicide or hurting themselves.

Why Create This Document?

Too many people call a crisis hotline for help and are surprised when a police officer shows up; This happens because of mandated reporter laws. This document aims to explain what terms like *mandated reporter* mean while informing people about the existence of organizations that have been proving that support for anyone in a crisis is doable without police involvement.

If you have ever been forcefully hospitalized by the police, government, or by your family, you deserve support without fear of it happening again. If you are afraid or uncertain of police, you deserve access to community support that validates your experiences.

Overwhelmed by All the Words in This Document?

1. Click on the headings to the left of the screen to skip past a lot of text.
2. Start by reading the definitions of crisis and support below, then click on Least Likely to Call the Police on the headings to the left of the screen.
3. Pick a Crisis Line or a Support Line for your needs.
4. If other phone lines are busy, call the Mandated Reporter lines and follow the advice that lists what to ask the person on the phone before talking about your crisis.

Crisis lines help with emergencies or urgent problems related to:

- Intense suicidal thoughts or actions.
- Big feelings related to life events.
- BIG mental health/disability issues that are out of control.
- Being stranded somewhere without any money.
- Knowing you need to call the police but you want support while doing it.
- Fear for your safety or safety of others, and more.

Support lines help people in everyday situations or tough (non-urgent) life events by listening and recommending resources. Call a support line if:

- You feel lonely and isolated or just want to talk to someone.
- You might need a therapist but can't afford one or want help finding a therapist.
- You want to talk about your problems without worrying your friends or family.
- You want to vent about something you are dealing with and don't want advice.
- Mental health or disability related support.
- You want to hear some reasons why people think life is worth living

Three Types of Resources

1. Crisis and support hotlines that do not call the police.
2. Warm hotlines that are less likely to call the police.
3. Crisis and support hotlines that are mandated reporters (most likely to call the police).

Who is a Mandated Reporter and What do They Report?

- Mandated reporters are people who work certain jobs that are required by law to report suspected abuse, neglect, and threats of harm against oneself or others to police.
- Mandated reporters include doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, social workers, counselors, psychologists, teachers, parole officers, religious leaders, firefighters, and more.
- Mandated reporters report threats of harm (past and present) against children and vulnerable populations, which includes disabled people of all ages, pregnant people, and elderly adults.

- You can ask any person you speak to on a crisis or support line if they are a mandated reporter and what they have to report. It is not a secret!
- Something you can say: "Hello, before I talk about myself, I would like to know if you are a mandated reporter and what you have to report to the police."

Why do Some People Avoid Mandated Reporters?

- **Autonomy**
 - Because people want help without being forced to go to the hospital against their will.
- **Cost**
 - Because uninsured and underinsured callers may be forced to pay costly medical bills from ambulance transport, emergency room visits, psychiatric holds, medications, and counseling — often court-mandated in involuntary hospitalizations.
- **Informed Consent**
 - Because most policies at crisis lines staffed by mandated reporters are not allowed to inform callers if the police have been contacted in response. They also do not explain what will happen during these police interventions to a caller.
- **Dislike or Distrust of Police**
 - Because someone doesn't trust or has had bad experiences with police.
- **Criminal History**
 - Because someone is on parole and does not want their current crisis to be known to their parole officer.
- **Dislike or Distrust in the Current Legal System**
 - Because abuse cases can be difficult to prove in our current legal system. Mandated reporters are required to work in the system as it currently is, even if police or courtroom intervention is unlikely to be helpful
- **Dislike or Distrust of the Government**
 - Because someone distrusts the government or systems like the Veterans Affairs Department
- **Privacy**
 - Because mandated reporters are required to track phone information in case a situation becomes necessary to report. In these cases, phone calls or texts are not truly anonymous.
- **LGBTQIA+ Identity**
 - When a crisis line calls the police it risks outing that person as LGBTQIA+ which is especially dangerous for minors or people who live in unsupportive housing.
- **Transgender Identity**
 - Because transgender people lack necessary legislation in all states, additional risks include being assigned to the wrong binary gender unit in prisons or hospitals, gender-affirming care being withheld, and more.
- **Abuse**

- Because someone in an abusive situation may need time to leave the abusive situation on their own terms. Unfortunately, a crisis line may hear about the abuse and call the police without the abuse victim's consent. This can be dangerous for abuse victims who do not have enough evidence of the abuse, have an abuser in law enforcement, or are worried about child custody.
- Tribal Status
 - Because police and crisis lines are known for treating citizens of tribal nations (Native Americans) as if they are solely under US citizen laws which leads to issues with insurance coverage, cultural competency, and more.
- Immigration Status
 - Because undocumented people are put at extra risk if police are called and could even risk deportation.
- Past Negative Experiences
 - People who have had negative experiences with Mandated Reporters may avoid seeking help again due to police being called on them without their consent.
- [Crisis Callers Bill of Rights \(Trans Lifeline\)](#)
 - This page explains how all callers deserve safety, transparency, and agency. Unfortunately, Mandated reporter lines legally cannot abide by some of these rights. Many Mandated Reporter lines choose not to abide by some of these rights.

Why do Some People Use Mandated Reporter Lines?

- Short Wait Times
 - Many mandated reporting lines are funded by the US government and are able to connect people to support in seconds.
- Recommended by medical professionals
 - Most doctors' offices, hospitals, and pharmacies have pamphlets or crisis phone numbers of mandated reporters printed on everything from bags for prescriptions to the printed after-visit summaries.
- Used by Many People
 - Many mandated reporting lines are used by large numbers of people which many hope means that they are more effective at care or responding to crisis situations.
- Local Support
 - Many mandated reporter lines (including some warmlines) are connected to a city or state, making them experts on local resources.
- Past Positive Experiences
 - Many people have had positive experiences with mandated reporting phone lines and text services, including multi-marginalized people.
- Uncertainty of Who to Call
 - When people don't know who to call to get the help they need, mandated reporter lines can be great at connecting people to other lines that specialize in their situation.
- Decent Healthcare

- People who have decent healthcare coverage and are considering hospitalization for feeling suicidal may find calling a Mandated Reporter helpful.
- Not at risk
 - Many people using mandated reporter lines are not marginalized in ways that would require a mandated reporter to report them.
- Non-Immigrants Without Negative Police Interactions.
 - Some people are not at risk of deportation, often due to ethnicity and either trust police or believe that police would only be dispatched if it truly helps them.
- Calling about Others
 - Plenty of people who call mandated reporter lines are calling on behalf of someone else, not their own situation. These people may not even be aware of the risks involved in calling crisis lines with mandated reporters.
- Lack of Informed Consent or Information.
 - Many people don't know the risks involved with calling or texting Mandated Reporters. While websites detail reasons Mandated Reporters involve police, that information is not transparently given to callers.

Who Should I Call?

- This document is meant to help people decide using informed consent (enabling people to use information to pick the best choice). In other words, it depends!
- If you're unsure, I would start with resources that are Least Likely to Call the Police and then choose Crisis (emergency or life threatening) or Support (everything else) lines. If you call the wrong place, ask people on the phone for help or refer to this document.
- Plenty of people use all 3 types of lines at different times or for different reasons.
- You are in charge of how much information you choose to disclose on a call or chat. Even if you are in a situation which would require mandated reporting, if you do not tell the mandated reporter about those details, they won't be able to report you.
- If you are calling about someone else's situation, try to call a resource that does not contact police or a warmline because you risk stripping a person of their autonomy and increasing their risk of suicide- see the FAQ at the bottom of this document for details.
- Sometimes different lines will be busy or have limited hours. **Please call or text multiple lines if one is busy or unavailable! You deserve to get support!**

No Matter Which Line You Call or Text, Ask:

1. "Are you a mandated reporter? Can you define what that means for me?"
2. "What kind of information do you collect during this call?"
3. "How anonymous am I? How do you know my location or relative location?"
4. "What information are you required by law to report?"
5. "Who do you report that information to?"
6. "What optional information might be reported or recorded? Who do you share it with?"

7. "Do you or this organization ever dispatch the police or send medical professionals to someone's location without their explicit consent?"
8. "Can you specifically tell me how and when you decide to call the police?"

Resources for Anywhere in the World

CAUTION: INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES ARE NOT VETTED

- We do not know enough about international law to verify anyone's safety but these resources do look promising!
- **When in doubt of your safety:**
 - Talk in hypotheticals
(if you're suicidal, say: "my friend is feeling suicidal, how can I support him?")
 - Ask for help with the specific emotion that is overwhelming you (sadness, fear, emptiness, anger, hopelessness)
 - Ask for medical resources (like therapists or doctors) for the nearest 3 or 4 cities to your home. Ideally, make this call after traveling for at least 30 minutes away from your home. **we cannot guarantee you won't be tracked!**
 - Chat online using a VPN (Virtual Private Network) set to a different country.
 - Look for online Discord support groups via [Disboard search](#) in your country- someone in those servers might know more about crisis or support lines.
- Mandated reporters have a different name in other languages and countries.
- *Assume that any illegal activities in your country may be reported to law enforcement unless the website for the organization IS TRUSTWORTHY and specifically EXPLAINS when and why they contact police.*
- Certain countries treat abortions or miscarriages, LGBTQIA+ identities, people with disabilities, certain ethnicities and certain religions as something to report to police. We recommend you research an organization in detail before disclosing that information.
- If part of your identity (like being LGBTQIA+) is dangerous in your home country, some people have bought USA phone plans and use a VPN to change their Internet's IP address. This document will not detail how to do this as it varies per country.

Questions to Ask Before Disclosing Personal Information (translate to your language):

1. "Can you track my location or relative location during this phone call?"
2. "What information do you report to the government, police officers, or medical professionals?"
3. "Is this call being recorded or summarized?"
4. "When does this organization call the police on someone who calls to ask for help?"
5. "Do you or this organization ever call the police or send medical professionals to a caller's location without their explicit consent?"

[Befrienders.org](#) - a searchable directory of peer-to-peer support (including warmlines)

- Organized by country and language.

- Crisis and support lines
- Some countries focus on suicide prevention and support
- Some lines have mandated reporters but this website prioritizes organizations that avoid calling the police. Each organization will have different reasons that they call the police.
- Open at various hours.

Befrienders Seafarers - Global suicide prevention

- Crisis line that uses some mandated reporters.
- This organization uses multiple countries and legal systems- ***we do not know how much information is tracked or if authorities like the police are notified.***
- “Please say that you’re a **SEAFARER** and are contacting via **IN TOUCH’s Befrienders Worldwide Seafarers** page. Calls are confidential and can be anonymous. You may provide an alias or choose not to give a name.”
- Check to see which of the four locations are open:
Spain, Gibraltar, China/Hong Kong, or The Philippines
- NOTE: may not be toll-free. Spain uses a “US toll-free number”
- Always open (one of the four locations is open at all times).

Least Likely to Call the Police. Includes Crisis Lines and Support Lines

- All of these lines do not call the police on callers experiencing suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts that only involve themselves (no threats of harm towards others).
- Hotlines that file reports to police under other circumstances are noted.
- Many lines reserve the right to file police reports on credible threats of violence, suspected child abuse or disabled adult abuse, elder abuse, or neglect.

What Rules Does This Organization Follow? Ask:

1. “Do you ever operate as a mandated reporter?”
2. “What kind of information do you collect during this call?”
3. “How anonymous am I? How do you know my location or relative location?”
4. “What information are you required by law to report?”
5. “Who do you report that information to?”
6. “What optional information might be reported or recorded? Who do you share it with?”
7. “Do you or this organization ever dispatch the police or send medical professionals to someone’s location without their explicit consent?”
8. “Can you specifically tell me how you decide to call the police?”
9. *Don’t know what any of the terms in these questions mean? Ask them! A good hotline will be able to explain!*

National (All USA)

Thrive Lifeline - staffed primarily by LGBTQIA+, disabled, and/or BIPOC people.

They have a strict policy against non-consensual active rescue. In other words, they will not call the police without your knowledge and consent.

- NOTE: Thrive states that they may report suspected child or adult abuse, credible threats of violence to others, or neglect to police.
- For anyone! Thrive focuses on people who are multi-marginalized in terms of disability status, gender identity and gender attraction (LGBTQIA+), race, ethnicity, religion, ect.
- Crisis and Support Texts
- Text THRIVE to 1-313-662-8209
- Always open.

Trans Lifeline - A transgender led support line.

They vow to never involve any outside resources or engage a caller in any activity without their fully informed and consensual request. View their [Crisis Callers' Bill of Rights](#)

- Crisis and Support Calls
- Only for transgender people, nonbinary people, and anyone questioning their gender.
- Available in English and Spanish
- Call 877-565-8860
- Monday through Friday (as of 01-01-2024) see website for timezone specific hours.

Less Likely to Call the Police (Warm Lines)

- Most warm lines are staffed by people who are not mandated reporters, hence they are called “peer-to-peer” lines. While they are not required to call the police, most warm lines have policies for calling the police or medical professionals.
- You can always ask the person who answers your call how long they have been trained or ask to be transferred to another person at the same warm-line (usually requires waiting).
- NOTE: **A support-focused hotline might direct your call to a mandated reporter line for a crisis without informing you that this new hotline is a mandated reporter.** Instead of letting someone redirect your call, ask the person for the new phone number. Google this new phone number and see if it is an organization listed in this document under Mandated Reporters.
- Warm lines often have limited hours of operation (not open 24/7).
- Always call resources connected to your state and county when possible. If you do not want a hotline to know what state you live in, use the warmlines that accept calls or texts from anywhere in the US. Alternatively, use a VPN (Virtual Private Network).
- Many support-based warm lines have a limit on how long someone can talk to you in order to ensure that anyone calling can be heard.

- NOTE: These lines are more likely to call the police than the resources above. They are less likely to call the police than mandated reporters.

What Rules Does This Organization Follow? Ask:

1. "Are you a mandated reporter?"
2. "What kind of information do you collect during this call?"
3. "How anonymous am I? How do you know my location or relative location?"
4. "What information are you required by law to report?"
5. "Who do you report that information to?"
6. "What optional information might be reported or recorded? Who do you share it with?"
7. "Do you or this organization ever dispatch the police or send medical professionals to someone's location without their explicit consent?"
8. "Can you specifically tell me how you decide to call the police?"
9. *Don't know what any of the terms in these questions mean? Ask them! A good hotline will be able to explain all of this.*

Blackline is created by and for Black, Indigenous, and all People of Color.

They focus on crisis and support related to police and vigilante interactions. This warmline also operates as witness listeners during interactions with police or vigilantes in any setting.

- Prioritizes Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
- Crisis and Support calls and texts.
- Call 1-800-604-5841
- Text 1-800-604-5841
- Hours are not listed on the website
- NOTE: Blackline states that if someone is in extreme distress and a harm to themselves and others, the listener will "gather as much information as possible to forward to the appropriate authorities" However: "All calls remain private and will never be shared with law enforcement or state agencies of any kind."
- NOTE: Website uses the terms "Differing ability (Mental and physical)" and "female identifying and male identifying" - this could mean they lack experience supporting disabled people, 2 Spirit people, and gender diverse people. It could also be a reflection of how racialized people have a history of medical abuse and the mistreatment of people designated female at birth.

The Samaritans - a completely confidential 24 hour hotline

Every call is started by asking how suicidal someone is feeling, this is their procedure.

- Crisis and Support Calls
- Call 212-673-3000
- For anyone! Located in New York but calls are accepted from anywhere in the USA.
- Always open.
- Better than many, but they have done non-consensual interventions

General Directories for Warm Lines in the United States

[Warmline directory is a browsable document that lists warmlines by state.](#)

- These warmlines are typically used for support calls and support texts.
- NOTE: Some warmlines only accept calls from certain counties within certain states. This is usually related to phone location data, not your phone number's area code.
- NOTE: Format is not screen reader friendly due to being organized in a table and relying on vision to determine what warmlines accept out-of-state calls.
- NOTE: Warmlines are a mix of mandated reports and non-mandated reporters.

[NAMI warmline directory is a browsable document that lists warmlines in alphabetical order by state.](#)

- Crisis and support calls, texts, or online instant messaging.
- NOTE: Some warmlines only accept calls from certain counties within certain states.
- NOTE: Format may not be screen reader friendly because it is organized in a table that uses background colors to show the warmlines that accept out-of-state calls.
- NOTE: Warmlines are a mix of mandated reporters and non-mandated reporters.
- Support calls and texts

Most Likely to Call the Police: Mandated Reporters Who May or May Not Call the Police

- NOTE: Undocumented Immigrants may be at risk of deportation when using mandated reporter lines. This risk occurs when police officers respond to a call. Suicide attempts have also resulted in deportations by police ([source](#)). Thankfully, once someone is in the hospital this risk is greatly reduced because of HIPPA protection laws. If you are feeling suicidal, taking yourself to the hospital and checking in for a voluntary stay related to suicidal ideation can greatly reduce the chance of deportation for yourself or family members.
- These lines are known for calling the police, even if the percentage of calls directed to the police is low, that often disproportionately impacts people who are suicidal and disabled people. This is because all suicidal people may be treated as dangerous and the fact that mandated reporting practices consider disabled people vulnerable adults.
- NOTE: If you live on federal disability your risk of being forcefully institutionalized increases due to mandated reporting rules or conservatorships that prioritize the perspective of the caretaker for the disabled adult.

- Mandated reporters are more likely to be licensed medical professionals. Many people who answer these phone lines are not licensed and have gone through training that is similar to the other types of crisis phone lines (those that are less likely to call police).
- Lines that use mandated reporters may have shorter wait times and more available people to help assist others going through a crisis.

[Don't Call the Police: Community-Based Alternative to Police in Your City.](#)

NOTE: the name isn't accurate. A decent number of sources listed lack privacy protections and operate with mandated reporters that do call the police without informed consent.

- NOTE: "Don't Call the Police" lists mandated reporter resources and non-mandated reporter resources without clear distinction.
- NOTE: "Don't Call the Police" only mentions likelihood of police involvement if it goes beyond what is required by law, which means they DO involve police in states that require reporting for suicidal thoughts, Immigration status, and more.
- NOTE: Mandated Reporters
- Crisis and Support calls and texts

[Crisis Text Line](#)

- NOTE: Directly affiliated with the US Government
- NOTE: Mandated Reporters
- Crisis text line and Crisis online chat
- Text HOME to 741-741
- Chat online or chat on WhatsApp

[988 Suicide and Crisis Call Line](#)

- NOTE: Directly affiliated with the US Government
- NOTE: Mandated Reporters
- NOTE: 988 calls the police when harm to self or others is imminent or in progress and when a less invasive plan for the caller/texter's safety cannot be collaborated on with the individual
- NOTE: 988 claims that less than 2% of calls involve police, which would mean 100,000 calls involved police just from July 2022-July 2023 [Source](#)
- NOTE: Only around 50% of calls to police occur with caller's consent and knowledge, which would mean 50,000 calls just from July 2022-July 2023 were dispatched without caller's consent or knowledge.
- Crisis call line
- Call 988 or 1-800-suicide
- Available in English, Spanish, and over 200 languages through interpreters

988 Suicide and Crisis Text Line

- NOTE: Directly affiliated with the US Government
- NOTE: Mandated Reporters
- NOTE: 988 calls the police when harm to self or others is imminent or in progress and when a less invasive plan for the caller/texter's safety cannot be collaborated on with the individual
- NOTE: 988 claims that less than 2% of calls involve police, which would mean 100,000 calls involved police just from July 2022-July 2023 [Source](#)
- NOTE: Only around 50% of calls to police occur with caller's consent and knowledge, which would mean 50,000 calls just from July 2022-July 2023 were dispatched without the texter's consent or knowledge.
- Crisis text line
- Text 988
- Text AYUDA to 988

Veteran Crisis Line is a veteran specific line connected to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Line

- NOTE: Mandated Reporters
- NOTE: Directly affiliated with the US Government.
- NOTE: Veteran crisis line states: If you're in imminent danger or at risk of harming others, the responder will coordinate a dispatch of emergency services with local officials.
- Crisis call and text line
- Call 988 then press 1
- Text 838255
- Can chat online

Sources for this Document

- [Fact Sheet: Crisis Hotlines and Transgender Callers](#) From Trans Lifeline.
- ['Warmlines': A Place to Call for Connection and Support](#) From Social Work License Map.
- [What is a Mandated Reporter?](#) From The National Association of Mandated Reporters.
- [34 U.S. Code § 20341 - Child abuse reporting](#) Via Cornell Law School.
- [Taking a Look at 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Implementation One Year After Launch](#) From KFF (Kaiser Family Foundation).
- [When Should I Call a Depression Hotline?](#) By Julia Childs Heyl, MSW and Sabrina Romanoff, PsyD.
- [A Deported Central American Family Can Now Return to the US to Seek Asylum: Honduran teen mom Lilian Oliva and her child had been deported after she tried to kill herself in desperation, but now the government is letting them come back to seek asylum as persecuted refugees](#) By Meredith Hoffman at Vice News.
- [Crisis Callers' Bill of Rights](#) by Trans Lifeline

FAQ:

When Someone Else Needs Help:

- **If you genuinely want to help a stranger or a friend:**
 - You can either:
 1. call a crisis line and have the professionals give you advice that helps you support your friend and take care of yourself (this is stressful!)
 2. Simply give this person resources, direct them to the nearest phone line or internet access point, and tell them that you are happy they are alive and living.
 - By giving a suicidal person resources they can choose who they call (or text) you also give them autonomy. You are responding to their request for help with people who are more capable and experienced with helping.
 - Involving yourself in someone's mental health crisis without permission (if their threat of suicide only hurts themselves and not others) is taking away the person's control of the situation which can make everything worse.
 - in part because calling the police on someone (or a mandated reporting line who calls the police on them) does not guarantee that they will live. Forced hospitalization of someone who is suicidal only keeps them alive while they are in that hospital- most people do not stay long and may choose to commit suicide upon leaving.
- If you are not calling the police, you shouldn't be calling a mandated reporter line. While these lines only call the police on a small percentage of people in crisis, that small percentage is a lot of people, like 100,000 people a year.
 - For example: 988 claims that ~2% of calls involved police, meaning 100,000 calls involved police between July 2022 and July 2023. [Source](#)
 - (see the top of this document for Why do Some People Avoid Mandated Reporters)
- Understand that calling a Mandated Reporter line can put someone's life at risk if:
 - They are an immigrant (I.C.E. will be called by police even if the person is in a mental health crisis)
 - They are LGBTQIA+ and might not have told people they live with
 - They are struggling with substance addiction
 - They are on parole or have a criminal record
 - They are Black, darker skinned, or Indigenous (increased rates of police murder).
 - The loss of autonomy and choice by being forced into a hospital stay may make them swear off medical care or mental health care for years. Many Veterans who avoid medical care cite this as a reason.
 - They have unstable or no health insurance. Even if police force someone to take an ambulance ride, that person has to pay the bill. These average around \$500 even with insurance. Likewise, even if someone is forced to stay in a mental

health hospital, they still have to pay the bill for their entire stay. For someone struggling financially, this bill might fuel their desire to commit suicide immediately after leaving a forced hospital stay or weeks later when the bill arrives.

- Instead of calling a Mandated Reporter line, remember that:
 - [The Crisis Callers' Bill of Rights](#) is unfortunately not reflected in most mandated reporter based crisis lines.
 - If someone is suicidal, mandated reporting lines can do more harm than good. Unless someone is mid-suicide attempt or about to die because they went through with an attempt, call the crisis hotlines without mandated reporters.
 - If you don't know this person and don't want to be involved- giving that person a list of resources (like this document) or calling a line that is the least likely to call the police can help you de-escalate the situation. You can then have the person in crisis call that hotline and they will continue to help.
 - Someone who is only at risk of harming themselves deserves autonomy in how they are helped. Calling a mandated reporter line risks that person being forced into an expensive hospital visit and may choose to commit suicide immediately after leaving due to stress or financial distress at the cost of the stay.
 - You can call a Crisis line that is unlikely to call the police and get advice on how to help this person. Plus, you can maintain trust with the person who needs help because the call did not escalate to calling the police.
 - You cannot control other people. Even if this person is rushed to the hospital and forcefully institutionalized in a mental health ward, they may hate you or refuse to speak to you again because they had no control over the situation. Worse, they may be against getting help and fight police officers because they do not value their own life anymore. Too often, this means that police shoot to kill.

Should I call a Crisis Line or a Support Line?

- Crisis lines are URGENT: they help people in life or death situations or people who need help ASAP. Calling a crisis line is like calling the fire department to put out a fire, but that fire is a metaphor for mental health or life-changing events. (see below for more details)
- Support lines are for non-life threatening issues. They don't require insurance, prioritize listening, help people find resources, help people find like-minded communities, or offer support for ongoing issues. (see below for more details)

Crisis Lines in Detail:

Crisis Lines are Focused on:

- Keeping people safe from themselves (suicidal thoughts) and others
- Advocating for a person who is overwhelmed but needs help from the police.

- Verifying that a police car or government official is who they say they are (not a scam).
- Coping with emergencies or scary events that have just happened
- Creating short term care plans: Crisis lines often help a person create a safety plan for the next 24 to 72 hours.
- Helping people manage BIG emotions like wanting to commit suicide, being unable to determine what is real (unreality), and being afraid for your life or the life of someone you live with/ are a caretaker for.
- Keeping someone alive and safe. For Mandated Reporter lines, this may mean calling the police if the hotline believes someone will hurt themselves, attempt suicide, or put others in danger.
- Giving you a referral to resources (requires disclosing your location and sometimes requires insurance coverage)

You Should Call a Crisis line if You are Worried About Your Own Safety Due to:

1. Real world events that make you feel BIG emotions like:
 - Actively wanting to commit suicide or stop existing
 - Someone you care about wants to commit suicide or you need help coping with the body of someone who took their own life.
 - Big changes in your life (being near an active shooter, being fired, discovering cheating, losing custody of your child, being evicted, someone close to you dying, having a miscarriage, ect.)
 - Feeling in danger or processing a recent dangerous event (being followed, stalked, threatened, having a child abducted, getting lost, being stranded somewhere without any money, ect.)
 - Being contacted by the FBI, ICE, IRS, or Police and wondering if it is a scam.
2. Mental health/disabilities that are more difficult than usual to cope with
 - Increased suicidal thoughts and actions
 - Being unable to tell what is real or fake around you (unreality hallucinations)
 - Severe memory loss in an unfamiliar place
 - Feeling the urge to self harm
3. Crises related to addiction
 - A friend or stranger is passed out and might be under the influence of drugs but you do not want to call the police (DON'T CALL MANDATED REPORTING LINES)
 - Fighting the urge to use drugs again while in possession of drugs (if you have a history with illegal drug or drug use that affects your parole, immigration status or custody, DON'T CALL MANDATED REPORTING LINES)
 - Coping with a gambling loss
 - Wondering if collection calls are real or a scam
 - Fighting the urge to drink alcohol again while in possession of alcohol
 - Considering suicide via drugs or alcohol

- Breaking your sobriety and resisting the urge to use alcohol or drugs again / in excess

Creators and Contributors to this Document

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- Trans-axolotl (he/him)- inspired more research based on a Tumblr post that shared some resources.

Credibility and Messages from Creators and Contributors to this Document

- Crobatty (they/them)- I am a Library Scientist (graduate degree), Indigenous and white, 2spirit, multi-disabled person who has been doing disability justice and advocacy for over a decade.

I created this document to validate people who have had bad experiences with doctors and police. To prove that these bad experiences are not a guarantee: there are community based support networks where you can get help without being afraid of forced hospitalization, without the government tracking you, and without the risk of police involvement.

Please reach out to an organization.

The world is better with you in it. If you are a person who has made mistakes or hurt others, be brave and seek help so you can become a person to be proud of. Someone will miss you and notice that you are gone. Life is worth living, even in this capitalist hellscape. I hope this 16 page document is proof that someone cares.

Disclaimer: This Document is not Medical Advice

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