



FAQs for Navigating Mental Health Crises in the Community

What is a mental health crisis?

- A mental health crisis is a non-life threatening situation in which an individual is exhibiting extreme emotional disturbance or behavioral distress; considering harm to self or others; disoriented or out of touch with reality; has a compromised ability to function; or is agitated and unable to be calmed.

Evidence that a person is experiencing a mental health crisis may include:

- Talking about suicide; talking about threatening behavior; self-injury that does not need immediate medical attention; alcohol or substance abuse; highly erratic or unusual behavior; eating disorders; not taking prescribed psychiatric medications; being emotionally distraught, very depressed, angry, anxious, irritable; paranoid thinking or not taking care of basic needs (i.e. not eating, not showering, not sleeping, refusing to get out of bed, etc.)

Who can I call in a crisis?

911

- Direct connection to emergency services; first responders (police and EMS) will respond to the call

What to say when calling 911?

- Identify that the family member is experiencing a mental health crisis and be able to describe the crisis
- You may request a CIT trained officer but know there may not always be one available.
- As much as you are able to, be ready to provide information about diagnosis, treatment, medications, etc.
- Let call taker know if the person has any known weapons i.e. gun, knives or edged weapons, screwdrivers or any object that can cause serious injury.

211 or the Action Line

- 1-800-HOPE-135 (1-800-467-3135)
- For adults (over 18) in distress
- This a centralized phone number answered by 2-1-1 staff trained to offer an array of supports and options to individuals in distress, including: telephone support, referrals and information about community resources and services; warm-transfer to the Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) of their area; and when necessary, direct connection to 911.
- The ACTION line is free and operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year (24/7/365) with the availability of multilingual staff or interpreters as needed. The centralized line is available to provide after-hours coverage for mobile crisis providers throughout the state.

Mobile Crisis/CIT

- Each LMHA (Local Mental Health Authority) has their own regional crisis line number (can also call 211 to be connected to your local crisis line)
- You can directly find which region covers your area on the DMHAS website:
<https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Programs-and-Services/Finding-Services/Crisis-Services>

988

- Formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
- 24/7 access to trained crisis counselor
- Provide referral to resources and a warm hand off to mobile crisis and/or emergency service as needed

Types of mobile crisis calls:

Wellness Checks: aka “check up”

- Individual has been difficult to get in contact with; no history of risk behaviors (suicide, aggressiveness, weapons)
- No indication the individual needs to go to the hospital

Mobile Crisis without police

- Individual is experiencing an increase in symptoms; wants help but symptoms impair ability to leave home; Individual is receptive to assessment and willing to actively engage in evaluation
- No to little history of risk behaviors

Mobile Crisis with police

- Individual is experiencing significant increase in symptoms, may be increasingly agitated (verbally and/or physically); has moderate safety risks (suicide history, violent or aggressive, access to weapons)
- High likelihood individual will need to be transported to hospital, but unwilling to go

What might be the results of a mobile crisis? (e.g., Emergency Certificate, PREE)

Emergency Certificate (utilized by LCSW/APRN)

- A legal document that allows emergency responders to take an individual, without their consent, to a local emergency department for further evaluation. The certificate requires the individual to be evaluated within 24 hours, and released within 72 hours if not committed to the hospital
- This document solely used for an individual who is of grave danger to themselves, or other people

PREE (Police Request for Emergency Evaluation)

- Similarly to the above mentioned Emergency Certificate, this document also legally gives police the ability to transport an individual against their will to a local emergency department for further evaluation; the same 24 hour/72 hour rules apply

What is the 'Red Flag' law?

- The current "Red Flag Law" that allows police officers to remove a gun and ammunition from a household when it is determined the owner of the weapon may be a danger to self or others; family members or medical professionals can petition the court for a risk assessment
- The new law went into effect June 30, 2022; expanded to apply to all weapons, not just guns & ammunition
- Please visit link to learn more about the law:
<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2021/sum/pdf/2021SUM00067-R02HB-06355-SUM.pdf>

What is CIT?

- A specialized law enforcement response to individuals in a serious mental health crisis.
- CIT Officers are specially trained police officers to respond to reported incidents where mental illness is a potential factor.

What is CABLE?

- The **C**onnecticut **A**lliance to **B**enefit **L**aw **E**nforcement is a non-profit organization that promotes police-community partnerships and provides specialized training to law enforcement professionals on issues related to mental health; CABLE's Board consists of family and persons with lived experience of mental illness, law enforcement and mental health professionals who are passionate about CABLE's mission.

Helpful Links:

- **Adult Mobile Crisis - Connecticut:** <https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Programs-and-Services/Finding-Services/Crisis-Services>
- **Child Mobile Crisis - Connecticut:** <https://www.mobilecrisisempst.org/about/>
- **CABLE:** <https://www.cablect.com/>