Stand by Them
We’ll Stand by You

Veterans and their families can call the free and confidential Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and press 1 or send a text message to 838255 to connect with a caring, qualified VA responder who can deal with any immediate crisis.

Veterans and people who are concerned about a Veteran can also go to VeteransCrisisLine.net to access the confidential, anonymous online chat to connect with a responder and get support.

Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can connect with responders through TTY service by calling 1-800-799-4889.

The Veterans Crisis Line, online chat, and text are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to all Veterans and their families and friends, even if they are not registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care.

Know the Signs

The Veterans Crisis Line is always available for Veterans and their families.

Sometimes, a crisis may involve thoughts of suicide. Learn to recognize these warning signs:

- Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings
- Feeling like there is no reason to live
- Rage or anger
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Increasing alcohol or drug abuse
- Withdrawing from family and friends

The presence of the following signs requires immediate attention:

- Thinking about hurting or killing yourself
- Looking for ways to kill yourself
- Talking about death, dying, or suicide
- Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse, weapons, etc.
Network of Support

When Veterans experience emotional distress or a suicidal crisis, the Veterans Crisis Line provides them with the support they've earned.

VA understands our ability to reach Veterans in crisis depends on partnerships with community-based groups and individuals who have direct contact with Veterans every day. You can help ensure all Veterans and their families and friends are aware of the Veterans Crisis Line and the vital service our specially trained staff provides.

So how can you help a Veteran?

- Make sure the Veterans you know and their families and friends are aware of the confidential Veterans Crisis Line, online chat, and text messaging service.
- Distribute Veterans Crisis Line materials to Veterans and their loved ones.
- Run an ad for the Veterans Crisis Line in your organization’s print or online publication.
- Display an online ad on your website.
- Send the Veterans Crisis Line phone number, online chat link, and text messaging number to your organization’s members, Veterans, and their families and friends.
- Host an event to promote the support and resources available for Veterans and their loved ones.

Together we can honor Veterans by making sure they get the support they deserve.

Supporting Veterans

Since its launch in 2007, the Veterans Crisis Line has answered nearly 4.4 million calls and initiated the dispatch of emergency services to callers in crisis more than 138,000 times. The Veterans Crisis Line anonymous online chat service, added in 2009, has engaged in more than 511,000 chats. In November 2011, the Veterans Crisis Line introduced a text-messaging service to provide another way for Veterans to connect with confidential, round-the-clock support and since then has responded to more than 150,000 texts.

Veterans and their family members and friends who reach out to the Veterans Crisis Line are immediately connected with a VA professional who is specially trained to handle a crisis. Many of the Veterans Crisis Line responders are Veterans themselves and understand the unique issues Veterans experience. Responders are available by phone, online chat, and text all day, every day — even on holidays.

Each VA medical center has a Suicide Prevention Coordinator or team to ensure Veterans receive appropriate services. When appropriate, calls from the Veterans Crisis Line can be referred to the coordinators, who follow up with Veterans and coordinate care for issues ranging from PTSD and depression to readjustment challenges and sleeping problems.

Suicide Prevention Coordinators and partner organizations continually engage Veterans and communities to raise awareness about the Veterans Crisis Line and VA’s broader suicide prevention and behavioral health resources.

VA has established two centers that focus solely on suicide research. Rocky Mountain Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC) for Suicide Prevention in Denver and VA’s Center of Excellence in Canandaigua, New York, both study factors that may contribute to suicidality and develop and test public health intervention strategies for suicide prevention.

Confidential crisis chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to 838255