Responding to Distressed People
A tool for GVSU Faculty & Staff

When help is needed most, what do you do?

Frequently Asked Questions

What happens when a crisis occurs... on a weekend? ... on a holiday? ... off campus?
No matter what time of day, if in doubt call 911 or Encompass if you are worried about someone’s safety. Whether a crisis occurs on a weekend, holiday, or off campus, continue to follow the red, yellow, and green protocol outlined on the decision map.

What if you do not know where the person of concern is?
For emergencies (red categories), call 911. The police will be able to gather information on the individual’s location.

What if the crisis is happening to a student?
If there is an immediate safety or medical risk call 9-1-1. For information on student crisis support, consult the Red Folder, which can be found online on the GVSU University Counseling Center webpage.

Will GVSU be notified of the crisis?
Per the protocol outlined in the decision map, we ask that you follow up with Human Resources after the incident. This will allow GVSU to provide appropriate resources and support.

What if I am not sure about the crisis?
Encompass offers crisis consultation for employees 24/7. If you are ever unsure about what to do, you can consult with Encompass and they will walk you through the appropriate steps.

What if I am the one who is in crisis?
On campus:
• Grand Valley Police Department: (616) 331-3255
• Encompass: 1 (800) 788-8630

For Students:
• For student support or to request QPR or Red Folder Training, contact University Counseling: (616) 331-3266 or www.gvsu.edu/counsel
• After business hours, call 911

The following are resources available locally and nationally. These resources are not vetted or endorsed by GVSU Human Resources.

**GV Resources**
- Grand Valley Police Department: (616) 331-3255
- Encompass: 1 (800) 788-8630

**Local Resources (Non-Emergency Numbers)**
- Ottawa County Mental Health: 1 (866) 512-4357
- In Grand Haven: (616) 842-4537
- In Holland: (616) 396-4357
- Kent County Mental Health: (616) 336-9309
- Muskegon City Police: (231) 724-6750
- Detroit Police: (313) 596-2200
- Traverse City (Grand Traverse Sheriff’s Office): (231) 922-4550

**National Resources**
- National Suicide Prevention Line: 1 (800) 273-TALK or 1 (800) SUICIDE
- TTY Hearing and Speech Impaired: 1 (800) 799-4114
- Crisis Text Line: Text 741741
- Veteran’s Crisis Line: 1 (800) 273-8255 and press 1, or text 838255

For any additional questions, please contact Human Resources at hro@gvsu.edu or (616) 331-2215
A person is experiencing distress.

Signs of Distress Include:
- Nervousness, agitation or irritability
- Infrequent class/work attendance
- Excessive crying, sleeping
- Changes in routine behavior
- Changes in personal or work relationships
- Deterioration of hygiene
- Undue aggressive or abrasive behavior
- Bursts of anger and blaming
- Fearfulness
- Avoidance or withdrawal
- Frequent alcohol and/or drug use, smoking
- Frequent gambling

• Directly ask your concerns. (Have you thought about hurting yourself or others? Are you feeling suicidal?)
• Directly ask about suicide and/or homicide as it relates to the displayed warning signs. Do you have a plan?

Is the person we are worried about at work?

Yes

Are you worried about the person’s safety or do you see possible warning signs?

Warning Signs Include:
- Has prolonged periods of distress/overload
- Talks about or threatens suicide
- Makes statements such as “I want this all to end” or “I can’t go on anymore”
- Exhibits significant confusion, isolation
- Shows behavior that is bizarre, alarming, and/or dangerous
- Makes statements about hurting or killing others
- Has marked change in behavior, mood, and/or hygiene
- Appears depressed (frequent crying, insomnia, oversleeping, weight loss/gain, loss of pleasure)
- Appears/reports hopelessness or helplessness
- Engages in self-harm

Yes

Are you worried that crisis is imminent?

Are you worried this person might harm themselves or others?

No

Unclear about whether imminent crisis is present

Examples
- Person makes statements suggestive of suicidal/homicidal thinking that are not overtly indicative of imminent danger (e.g., “I don’t know if I can keep going”)
- Person experiences a sudden stressful event (e.g., death, breakup, divorce) and seems emotionally unstable/inconsolable, or the person’s response appears unusual
- Person tells you they are afraid for their family’s safety at home or at the workplace
- Uncontrollable crying over a minor setback, or conversely, no reaction over a major loss

No imminent crisis is present

Examples
- You observe a person crying or furious after getting off the phone, and they report a difficult home life in recent weeks, but you see no other warning signs
- You observe a co-worker or family member who is dealing with a major illness in the family and is struggling to manage, but you see no other warning signs
- You observe any number of life difficulties happening to someone but no signs of imminent danger or failure to cope in a safe manner

Yes, imminent crisis is clearly present

Examples
- Person is found unconscious or unresponsive
- Person tells you they have ingested pills beyond the recommended dose
- Person is threatening immediate danger to themselves (e.g., threatening to hurt others, ingest pills, shoot themselves)
- Person attempts to cause physical harm to someone else (or to people in general)
- Person tells you they are afraid for their family’s safety at home or at the workplace
- Your gut tells you this is serious

Call 911; if in doubt of immediate crisis, call Encompass @ 1 (800) 788-8630

If not directly speaking to the person of concern:
- If on phone: Tell person on the phone to call 911
- You also call 911 to report the situation

If directly speaking to the person of concern:
- Stay on the line and stay with the person
- Get help from a co-worker to call 911

After 911 has been contacted, follow up with Encompass @ 1 (800) 788-8630.

Someone from Department of Public Safety will show up if on Allendale or GR Campuses. Security may show up if during the evening/weekend.

What to include in follow-up information:
- Who’s reporting the incident:
- Phone Number:
- Current Location of Person of Concern if known:
- Department:
- First name/Last name of person of concern:
- What makes you concerned/worried