



**STAND BY THEM
WE'LL STAND BY YOU**

**Confidential help for
Veterans and their families**

VA offers a network of support for all our Nation's Veterans and their families and friends. Veterans in emotional crisis and their loved ones 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 counselor 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.

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

• • • Confidential chat at **VeteransCrisisLine.net** or text to **838255** • • •



KNOW THE SIGNS

The Veterans Crisis Line is always available for our 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 use, weapons, etc.

“Right after I got out of active duty I was adjusting to civilian life and going through some hard times. I had a lot of family issues. **I called the Veterans Crisis Line and I got help.** Treatment works. I know.”

TREATMENT WORKS

Marc Soper,
U.S. Army, 1983-2005



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 that 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.
- 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 and text numbers and online chat link to your 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 our Veterans by making sure they get the support they deserve.



“VA is leading the way in recognizing and treating Veterans with post-traumatic stress, thoughts of suicide, and other emotional and behavioral health issues. Veterans and their families need to know that VA has developed new treatments and that the treatments work. Let’s all support VA’s efforts to get our Veterans the care and support they’ve earned.”



Former U.S. Surgeon General
Regina M. Benjamin, M.D.

“THIS IS A PROGRAM THAT WORKS, AND IT WILL WORK FOR YOU.”



Chick Ciccolella,
U.S. Army, 1968-1996

SUPPORTING OUR VETERANS




Since its launch in 2007, the Veterans Crisis Line has answered more than 1.25 million calls and made more than 39,000 lifesaving rescues. In 2009, the Veterans Crisis Line added an anonymous online chat service and has engaged in more than 175,000 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 24,000 texts.

Veterans and their friends and family members who call or text the Veterans Crisis Line or access the online chat 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 that 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 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (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 resources and behavioral health resources.

VA has established two centers that focus solely on suicide research. VISN 19 Mental Illness Research Education and Clinical Center in Denver, and VA's Center of Excellence at Canandaigua, New York, which houses the Veterans Crisis Line and online chat, both study factors that may contribute to suicidality and develop and test public health intervention strategies for suicide prevention.





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**Veterans
Crisis Line**

1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

**Confidential help
for Veterans
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U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

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