



Employee Service Program

Supervising an Employee with Suicidal Concerns

The Center for Disease Control estimates that suicide is the 10th leading cause of death among Americans (2017). Suicide impacts all ages, genders and backgrounds. Although there is no single cause of suicide, there are several [risk factors](#) that can increase a person's likelihood of attempting or completing suicide. Knowing the warning signs can help save lives. For managers, supervising an employee with suicidal concerns can be overwhelming. Knowing what to look for and how to appropriately respond allows employers to take an active role in preventing employee suicide.

If an employee is making concerning statements, demonstrating significant behavioral changes, or if an employee's co-workers have expressed concern about an employee, please call the Employee Service Program to consult with a counselor. The way you approach the issue can have an impact on the employee's willingness to receive assistance. Your respect and concern for the employee can contribute to the healing process.

When speaking with an employee who might be at risk, the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (2015) recommends the following:

- Ask how he or she is doing
- Listen without judging
- Mention changes you have noticed in the person's behavior and say that you are concerned about their emotional well-being
- Help them get connected to resources
- Provide on-going support

The State of Michigan Employee Service Program has professional counselors available to consult with supervisors and managers, as well as to provide individual assistance to employees. The confidential services are provided at no-cost to state employees and their family members, and can be reached at 1-800-521-1377, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at 800-273-8255.

In the event of a life-threatening emergency, utilize 911 or a hospital emergency room.