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RESPONDING TO SUICIDAL CITY EMPLOYEES

Suicide is preventable!
Below are some warning signs, ways to respond to City Employees who may be suicidal, and resources available.

Warning Signs

- ◆ Changes in behavior/appearance (e.g., personal hygiene, weight gain/loss, etc.)
- ◆ Depressed mood
- ◆ Impulse/reckless behavior
- ◆ Increased substance use
- ◆ References to suicide or death
- ◆ Talking about being a burden to others
- ◆ Expressing hopelessness or helplessness
- ◆ Suicidal and/or homicidal threats

Statements you may hear

- ◆ "I can't do this anymore"
- ◆ "Things would be better if I wasn't around"
- ◆ "They will be sorry that I am gone"
- ◆ "I am a burden to everyone"
- ◆ "What's the point of living"

Ways to Respond

Tips:

- ◆ You can be direct and openly talk about suicide.
 - ◇ Research has shown that talking about suicide will never lead someone to commit or consider suicide. On the contrary giving someone the opportunity to talk can relieve some pain.
- ◆ Listen without judgment. Be present in the moment.
 - ◇ Avoid lecturing or minimizing their problems. Acknowledge what they are saying. You don't have to agree or disagree.
- ◆ Offer hope.
 - ◇ Reassure the individual that help is available. Suggest chatrooms, hotlines, etc. Help connect them to EAP or a resource in the community.

Things to Say and Do	Things Not to Say or Do
<i>Have you been thinking about suicide?</i>	It's all in your head, you'll be fine.
<i>Are you thinking about hurting/killing yourself?</i> If yes, then ask <i>have you given any thought to how you would hurt yourself?</i> If there is a plan or you feel like the person is a harm to themselves, <u>please call 911 in order for the person to be assessed by a mental health provider.</u>	We all go through difficult times.
Be empathetic to their situation. Look for positives in their conversation and repeat back the positives they have shared with you.	Don't lecture on the value of life or whether suicide is right.
<i>Have you thought about getting help?</i> Give them one or two resources.	You have so much to live for, why would you want to die?
<i>You may not believe it now, but the way you are feeling will change.</i>	Look at the bright side...
Express support and concern.	Don't act shocked.
<i>You are not alone in this, there are professionals that can help.</i>	My advice is...

Resources You Can Refer To

- ◆ EAP: 608-261-6561 or eap@cityofmadison.com
- ◆ Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988
- ◆ Dane County Crisis Line: 608-280-2600
- ◆ Crisis Text Line: Text or use WhatsApp to message HOME to 741741
- ◆ Emergency Number: 911