Answering the Call:



If you have a phone, you can help a Veteran in crisis

Everyone has a role to play in Veteran suicide prevention, and you don't have to be an expert to talk to a Veteran facing challenges.

A simple phone call can help a Veteran in crisis, whose emotional struggles and health challenges may lead to thoughts of suicide. Talking with a Veteran in crisis may seem daunting, but your conversation can mean the difference between a tragic outcome and a life saved.

When talking to a Veteran in crisis, remain calm and listen for signs of distress or other clues that might indicate they need immediate help. Examples include:

- · Crying, yelling, rage, or anger
- · Making concerning statements, such as:
 - "My family would be better off if I wasn't here."
 - "I can't go on like this."
 - "No one can help me."



Ask directly in a nonjudgmental tone: "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" or "Are you having thoughts of suicide?"

If the response is "NO" (NOT suicidal) and they do not appear to be in crisis

If the response is "YES" (individual confirms they're thinking about suicide)

Route the Veteran to appropriate local resources. You can find resources in your area, including local suicide prevention coordinators and crisis centers, using our Resource Locator (VeteransCrisisLine.net/LocalResources).

Validate the Veteran's experience. Let them know there is help and you would like to connect them with the Veterans Crisis Line.

Follow the below steps to help keep the Veteran safe.

- 1. Try to find out where the Veteran is located and whether anyone else is nearby.
- 2. Verify the Veteran's phone number and, if possible, any other important identifying information.
- 3. Explain that you'll add the Veterans Crisis Line (**Dial 988 then Press 1**) into the call.
- 4. Complete a warm transfer. When the Veterans Crisis Line responder answers, identify yourself, explain what's going on, and provide the Veteran's information.
- 5. Before disconnecting, make sure the Veteran is on the line with the Veterans Crisis Line responder before hanging up.



For more information about the Veterans Crisis Line, visit **VeteransCrisisLine.net**.

For more information about VA's suicide prevention resources, visit MentalHealth.VA.gov/Suicide Prevention.