

**Additional Help****How safe is your workplace?**

From OSHA to workplace violence, we'll help you keep your staff safe and healthy.

**Need good people?**

Our recruiting services can help you find and keep the best talent.

**Want to learn more?**

MRA offers 1,200 training classes for all your employees.

Responding to Suicidal Comments in the Workplace

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States and the suicide rate has increased annually for the last ten years.

Sometimes HR professionals are faced with assisting employees who are dealing with very difficult situations. One of the most challenging is an employee who has demonstrated suicidal ideations at work. The signs can present themselves as comments, behaviors, or mood changes.

Whether a report is made by another employee or an employee comes to you directly or there is a noticeable change in an employee's behavior following a loss or painful situation, consider the following actions:

1. If you believe the individual is in immediate danger, call 911 or the appropriate emergency medical treatment line in your area.
2. If you do not believe the person is in immediate danger, let the employee know that you care about him/her and his/her wellbeing and safety. Emphasize that you are not qualified to provide the medical attention that he/she needs. Urge the employee to allow you to facilitate immediate medical attention; perhaps through an emergency room or an immediate appointment with his/her health care provider.
3. Try to maintain the employee's privacy and confidentiality as best as possible. Remain calm and remove distractions if possible.
4. If the employee refuses immediate intervention, insist that he/she allows you to contact a friend or family member to accompany the employee home. Do not leave the employee alone.
5. Offer resources, such as your organization's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that can offer immediate counseling and support. The 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available with a phone call or text at [988](tel:988) or 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

6. Once the employee is safe, follow up to determine whether other benefits, such as leaves, may be needed. Per the National Institute of Mental Health, risk factors for suicide include depression, other mental disorders, and substance abuse disorders. These conditions may trigger protection under FMLA, ADA, or both.
7. Depending on your company policy, you may need to ask for a fitness for duty form to be completed and submitted before the employee returns to work.

Helping employees through these difficult situations can be stressful. Keep in mind that the organization's EAP is also a benefit to you and others who have been involved in assisting the employee with suicidal ideations. To learn more about suicide and prevention, the [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#), the [CDC](#), and [OSHA](#) have helpful resources.

Need help with safety in your organization? MRA's [HR Advisors](#) can help you!

About MRA

We help businesses thrive by creating powerful teams and safe, successful workplaces.

Founded in 1901, MRA is one of the largest employer associations and serves 3,000 employers. Our members range in size from small entrepreneurs to Fortune 50 companies and reflect the diversity of industries in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Member organizations have access to expert guidance, best practices, essential tools, and dozens of services in human resources, learning and development, and productivity improvement. Member services include a 24/7 Hotline, HR resource center, affirmative action, recruiting, employee retention, reference and background investigations, organization development, roundtables, business skills, and management and leadership training.

Learn how MRA can help you develop and retain a powerful workforce. Call 800.488.4845 or visit mranet.org.

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