

Alameda County ^{ac} ^{bh} Behavioral Health Care Services

MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

Managing emotional health during uncertain times

Alameda County Behavioral Health (ACBH) continues to actively engage in our Health Care Services Agency planning for impacts and uncertainties associated with COVID-19, and what these actions may mean for ourselves, families and communities. ACBH has developed the following guidance for engaging with individuals who might be impacted from a behavioral health perspective.

Information sharing

- ❖ It is important to share factual data or updates; particularly related to approved universal health precautions already identified by the CDC such as frequent hand washing, use of hand sanitizers, using your elbow while coughing/sneezing, seeking medical care as needed.
- ❖ Making statements regarding potential case scenarios or possible catastrophic impacts to the community are not helpful and actually increase stress and anxiety.
- ❖ Everyone who sees or experiences an emergency is affected by it in some way. Normalizing this experience can be both affirming and helpful to an individual.
- ❖ Remind individuals to write down and share approved universal health precautions so they may be accessible (and easily shared with others).

Self-care strategies for professionals, caregivers, or community members

To ease emergency related stress:

- ❖ Talk with someone about your feelings - anger, sorrow, and other emotions - even though it may be difficult.
- ❖ Do not hold yourself responsible for the event or be frustrated because you feel you cannot help directly in the work.
- ❖ Take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing by healthy eating, rest, exercise, relaxation, and meditation.
- ❖ Use existing support groups of family, friends, and religious institutions.

For Crisis Support in an emergency there is help available:

- ❖ For mental health or substance use help, call ACCESS at **1-800-491-9099**. ACCESS is a multilingual, culturally responsive call center that provides information, screening and referrals for mental health and substance use disorder treatment for Alameda County residents.
- ❖ Crisis Support of Alameda County provides a 24-hour Suicide Prevention Line at **1-800-309-2131**.
- ❖ Crisis Line provides crucial intervention services for people in crisis at the time of their greatest need. 24-Hour Crisis Line **1-800-273-8255**.



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A Department of Alameda County
Health Care Service Agency