

# Alameda County <sup>ac</sup> <sub>bh</sub> 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**.



Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services

A Department of Alameda County  
Health Care Service Agency