



Calling Police for a Mental Health Crisis

If you have a loved one with a serious mental health condition, there may be times when they become a danger to themselves or to others. Though it can be a difficult decision for you, Police intervention may become necessary for the safety of all involved.

Jacksonville Public Safety's ultimate goal is to serve and protect the entire community. Our officers and fire personnel have been trained to properly respond to mental health incidents and are able to provide you with support throughout the event as well as after.

Guidelines for Calling 9-1-1 During a Crisis

Keep Yourself Safe:

You have the right to be safe, and you have the right to ask for help. When possible, leave the room your loved one is in, maintain a safe distance, then call 9-1-1. Ask police to respond with no lights and sirens, and they will follow protocol.

Stay Calm:

Although you may be stressed and fearful during the crisis, it is important to provide Dispatchers information in a calm manner. Dispatch will provide an initial assessment of danger to the officers based on your demeanor and information, and officers will respond accordingly. Should you relay information in a manner that suggests there is an active threat towards you or someone else, Officers will respond in an escalated manner in preparation to the perceived threat. Speaking in a calm manner will result in Officers responding with a calmer approach.

Provide Important Information to Dispatch:

The more information you can provide officers, the more likely our officers and your loved one will experience a positive and peaceful resolution.

- Identify who you are and your relationship with your loved one.
- The history of mental health concern (Is this the first experience or have they had several similar experiences?)
- Do they have an active counselor or case manager?
- Are they taking medication?
- Are there weapons in the home?
- Describe any behavior or statements which are concerning to you. Are they displaying an inability or unwillingness to provide for their basic needs, such as not bathing, not eating, speaking of suicide or showing homicidal tendencies?
- Is this behavior normal for them?
- Have they recently experienced stress that has become too overwhelming for them to handle?

If Dispatch asks you to stay on the line, this will not delay responding Officers. Circumstances during an event like this can change rapidly (either escalating or calming down), and Dispatch needs to be aware of any changes so they can update responding Officers.

When Law Enforcement Arrives:

Your loved one may become fearful or feel as if you have betrayed them when Officers arrive on the scene. It is important to remember you called 9-1-1 because you care about them and want to help. Responding Officers will assess the danger of the situation and will use only the most necessary and reasonable level of force required to contain the threat and ensure the safety of the community.

Jacksonville Public Safety Officers have been trained to interact with individuals suffering from mental illness, often working in partnership with Mobile Crisis Services. Officers may request a member of the Mobile Crisis Team to respond to provide further assistance in the evaluation process and to provide resources for both your loved one and you as a caregiver. This team approach is vital to ensure a well-rounded continuum of care for your loved one.



Scripts to Help Relay Information During Stressful Situations

Suicide or Overdose

1. My name is (name).
2. I am calling from (location).
3. My family member or loved one is (name, age, and address).
4. He or She has attempted suicide:

Using Pills	Using a Weapon
He or She took (type of pill, amount, time).	He or She has a (type of weapon) Do they still have the weapon? He or She is threatening harm to (self or others).

5. He or She has a mental health condition (diagnosis).
6. Last I talked to (name) was (time and date), (by phone or in person).
7. They live (alone or with who).
8. He or She has had (no or previous attempts).
9. He or She has (no or other) health related issues.
10. He or She may be on (drugs or alcohol).
11. He or She (does or doesn't) take medication.

Weapon: Threat to Others

1. My name is (name).
2. I am calling from (location).
3. My family member or loved one has a mental health condition (diagnosis).
4. He or She has a (weapon) and is threatening others by (specific behavior or verbal statement).
5. He or She has been (on or off) medication for (number of months).
6. He or She may be on (drugs or alcohol) and has a history of using (specific drug or alcohol).
7. He or She (has a or has no) history of violence.

No Weapon: Threat of Violence

1. My name is (name).
2. I am calling from (location).
3. My family member or loved one has a mental health condition (diagnosis).
4. He or She does not have a weapon but is threatening others by (specific behavior or verbal statement).
5. He or She has been (on or off) medication for (number of months).
6. He or She may be on (drugs or alcohol) and has a history of using (specific drug or alcohol).
7. He or She (has a or has no) history of violence.

No Weapon: Decompensating

1. My name is (name).
2. I am calling from (location).
3. My family member or loved one has a mental health condition (diagnosis).
4. He or She does not have a weapon and is not threatening others, but there is something wrong because (specific behavior).
5. He or She has been (on or off) medication for (number of months).
6. He or She may be on (drugs or alcohol) and has a history of using (specific drug or alcohol).
7. He or She (has a or has no) history of violence.

Always follow Dispatch directions. They may ask that you stay on the line or they may tell you to leave the residence.