

## SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

If you have concerns, please let us know and we will help the offender.

### *Active signs:*

- ⦿ Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
- ⦿ Looking for a way to kill oneself
- ⦿ Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live

### *Subtle signs:*

- ⦿ Giving away possessions
- ⦿ Talking about feeling trapped or having unbearable pain
- ⦿ Talking about being a burden to others
- ⦿ Staying alone in the cell and not going out
- ⦿ Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- ⦿ Sleeping too little or too much
- ⦿ Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- ⦿ Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- ⦿ Displaying extreme mood swings

Please inform our staff if your loved one has shown any of these signs, or told you about any of these issues. It is also important to let DOC staff know, in advance, if you plan to give your loved one bad news (i.e. Divorce, death of a family member, loss of parental rights or other bad news) they may have a difficult time dealing with. We will assist the offender in helping them through the use of mental health services and/or pastoral services.

## DOC FACILITIES

Hartford CC	(860) 240-1800
New Haven CC	(203) 974-4111
Bridgeport CC	(203) 579-6131
Brooklyn CI	(203) 779-2600
Robinson CI	(860) 651-6100
Corrigan CI	(860) 848-5700
Ragowski CI	(860) 848-5720
Enfield CI	(860) 814-4300
Garner CI	(203) 270-2800
MacDougall CI	(860) 627-2100
Walker CI	(860) 627-2101
Manson Youth	(860) 806-2500
Northern CI	(860) 763-8600
Osborn CI	(860) 814-4600
Willard Cybulski CI	(860) 763-6100
York CI	(860) 451-3001



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## SUICIDE ELIMINATION

**How Friends & Families Can Help**



**State of Connecticut  
Department of Correction**

# **SUICIDE ELIMINATION**

## **How Friends & Family Can Help**

### ***Your help is important!***

The staff of the Connecticut Department of Correction (DOC) is fully committed to ensuring the safe, secure and humane supervision of the offenders committed to its care and custody. Of great concern to the Department is the potential for some offenders to harm themselves during their incarceration. In order to effectively protect these individuals, we need your help. We hope this pamphlet will provide you with important information about suicide so you may help us to insure their safety.

*Scott Semple, Commissioner*

### ***Who is at risk of suicide?***

A – Whether a repeat offender, or their first incarceration, people sent to jail or prison are particularly vulnerable to suicidal thoughts and actions. Adding to this potential are risk factors such as a history of mental health issues or substance abuse disorders. Other risk factors for offenders include social adjustment problems, serious medical illness, recent loss of a loved one, divorce, separation, termination of parental rights, or a personal or family history of suicide attempts.

### ***Why do offenders commit suicide?***

A – People can be overwhelmed by the impact of arrest and incarceration. Uncertainty of the future, fear of the unknown, guilt, remorse, and worry can upset inmates emotionally. The day-to-day stress

associated with incarceration; the lack of privacy; the loss of control over life decisions; the denial of an appeal or parole decision; isolation from friends and family; a divorce or similar event can all lead to depression. These factors can sometimes exceed the coping skills of vulnerable individuals and may lead an offender to attempt suicide to escape the emotional ups and downs they feel. Offenders may also feel bad about their crime or the effect it had on the victim and think suicide is a way to make amends.

### ***How does the DOC work to eliminate suicide?***

A – The DOC conducts a screening of each newly arrived offender for depression and other signs of emotional distress. We pay particular attention to those in high-risk categories; the newly incarcerated; alcohol and substance abusers; those with mental health issues; and the recently sentenced. To assist these offenders, the DOC provide medical and mental health treatment, substance abuse and HIV counseling, religious services and many other programs. Our staff also constantly monitor offenders and make referrals to our mental health services when an offender shows signs they may be at risk for suicide.

### ***How can I help?***

A – Often offenders will be more open with a friend or family member. They may confide their intentions to you or give other indications they may be considering suicide (please refer to the “Suicide Warning Signs on the last page of this brochure.) If an offender tells you something that makes you think he or she

may attempt suicide, it is important that you report it immediately to us so we can help. Please do not keep this information to yourself!

### ***What if the offender makes me promise not to tell?***

A – You must help your friend or relative by letting the DOC know so we can provide them with attention and care. Telling you is their “cry for help.”

### ***Who should I tell?***

A – Before you leave the facility, request to speak with a supervisor. Tell the supervisor what was said or done that concerned you about their welfare.

### ***What if I get the information in a letter or by telephone?***

A – You should immediately call the facility where the offender is located and ask to speak to someone in the Lieutenant’s office. Telephone numbers for each facility are on the back of this pamphlet. A supervisor will make sure the inmate is evaluated by a member of the health services department.