

Suicide Awareness in the Workplace

Seventy percent of suicidal individuals indicate their intentions in some way, and the workplace may be the last place that they do so before acting. Death by suicide, attempts at and even thoughts of suicide are the desperate actions of a person who is feeling isolated, seriously depressed, and convinced that there is no other solution to “fix” their life. Often there are indirect signs such as talking about not being around much longer, asking someone to care for pets, taking all personal effects home from the office, or giving away possessions. There are times when the individual will openly admit to contemplating suicide, hoping that someone will take them seriously. Telling your coworker that you are concerned will *not* cause them to take that step; instead it may save their life. If you are concerned about a coworker, remember the **ACT** principle: Acknowledge your concern: take it seriously and be willing to listen; Care--take the initiative and voice your concern to your coworker or supervisor, then help your coworker obtain Treatment immediately. For more information and assistance on what to do if you are concerned about a co-worker, visit the Employee Service Program’s web page at www.michigan.gov/esp. Employee Service Program professional counselors are also available for confidential assistance to state employees and their families, free of charge, and can be contacted at 517-373-7630 or 1-800-521-1377, Monday through Friday 8:00am – 5:00pm. The National HopeLine Network is available 24 hours 7 days a week by calling 800-SUICIDE (800-784-2433), for TTY call 800-448-1833. In the event of a life-threatening emergency you should go immediately to the nearest emergency room, or contact your local police at 911.