

EAP & PAP Newsletter

September 2026

Suicide Prevention Awareness Month



Never a favorite topic but definitely extremely important. September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, and it's a good reminder that a five-minute conversation can matter more than we think. It's hard to talk about, hard to ask someone if they are okay, but ignoring it is much worse!

This applies to everyone since no one is exempt from noticing when a coworker is having a crisis. And no one is immune from ignoring their own need for support.

A Few Warning Signs to Know

Not every sign means someone is in crisis, but a cluster of sudden or surprising changes is worth paying attention to:

- Withdrawing from coworkers, friends, or activities they used to enjoy
- Talking about feeling hopeless, trapped, or like a burden to others
- Noticeable changes in mood, energy, or work performance
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Giving away possessions or tying up loose ends
- Talking about death or suicide, even indirectly or "jokingly"



If You Notice Something

You don't have to be a mental health expert to help. Just be willing to ask. It may feel scary to ask, but the alternative is much more frightening.

- "I've noticed you don't seem like yourself. Are you okay?" This won't plant an idea that isn't already there. It's more likely to be relief.
- Listen without trying to fix it. You don't need the right words. You need to just show up for someone.
- Point them to help. That's what the EAP is for. It's free, confidential, and available to every employee and their household members. If you're worried you can call the EAP as well!
- Follow up. A single check-in tells someone they weren't forgotten.

A Reminder for Supervisors and HR

If a supervisor has a concern about an employee—a change in behavior, attendance, or affect that impacts performance—a Supervisor Referral to the EAP can be made. September is a good time to review protocols for supervisor referrals and resources. And you can call for a free and confidential management consultation anytime.

Closer to Home

Hawaii's legislature noted that, on average, one person in the state dies by suicide every two days, accounting for a quarter of all fatal injuries statewide. And it's the leading cause of death for young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four. (According to the Department of Health, the percentage of teenagers in Hawaii who consider or attempt suicide are among the highest in the nation.) We don't talk about it much, because suicide is harsh. And yet it's a fair reason to take this month seriously here at home, not just as a national observance.

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Counselors are available across Hawaii.
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Suicide Prevention: If You're the one Struggling

Everything on the first page works both ways. It's easy to focus on watching out for others and forget to ask the same question of ourselves: [Am I okay?](#)

You don't have to wait for a crisis to reach out if you've been feeling hopeless, overwhelmed, or like things won't get better. You don't need a diagnosis, a specific reason, or things to be "bad enough" to justify calling. Feeling like you can't keep carrying it is reason enough.

A lot of us here were raised to push through, to handle it ourselves, to not want to be a burden. But needing support isn't a character flaw. It's part of being human. The people who ask for help aren't weaker for it; they're just further along in figuring out that carrying everything alone isn't actually strength.

[Reaching out doesn't have to mean a dramatic step.](#) It can be one phone call, one conversation, one honest text. From there, someone else helps carry the next part.

Help is confidential, and it's already available to you:

- Your EAP: (808) 597-8222 — Free, confidential, and available to you and your household members, for anything from a hard week to a genuine crisis
- 988 — Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, call or text, 24/7
- Hawai'i CARES: (808) 832-3100 on O'ahu, 1-800-753-6879 on the Neighbor Islands
- Crisis Text Line: text ALOHA to 741741
- Ohana and community connectedness are always important resources

You don't need to have the right words.

You just need to make the call.

And let someone else help you find the rest.



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Articles On Our Website

Did you know about all the resources available to you from your EAP's website?

Here are a few examples:



(If this is a pdf you may be able to click the links to each article above!)

Check out your EAP's website at

www.EAPacific.com

Or your PAP website at www.HawaiiPAP.com

Please note that work/life services (legal, financial, eldercare, ID theft, mediation) are available to most, but not all, EAP customers. Call us if you have a question.

EAP and PAP provide free short-term confidential counseling and work/life services, provided to you by your employer, that can assist in identifying and resolving issues that may be interfering with your job or personal life. Access to our experienced counselors and work/life services is available across the Islands and can be contacted by phoning or emailing our Honolulu office.



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