



## Promoting wellness and recovery

Mike DeWine, Governor • Lori Criss, Director • 30 E. Broad St. • Columbus, OH 43215 • (614) 466-2596 • [mha.ohio.gov](http://mha.ohio.gov)

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## Ohio Launches Toll-Free ‘COVID Careline’ to Provide Emotional Support for Ohioans Amid Coronavirus Pandemic: 1-800-720-9616

COLUMBUS –The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) today joined with Governor Mike DeWine and RecoveryOhio to launch a new, toll-free Careline to provide emotional support for Ohioans who are experiencing stress, anxiety, fear, sadness and loneliness amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Ohioans may call **1-800-720-9616** to connect with trained counselors for 24/7 support.

“Coronavirus has undoubtedly affected how Ohioans are living their lives,” said Governor Mike DeWine. “Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotional reactions in adults and children. Reaching out for help to cope with that stress will make you, the people you care about, and Ohio stronger.”

Common signs of stress during an infectious disease outbreak include:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Worsening of mental health conditions
- Increased use of [alcohol](#), [tobacco](#), or [other drugs](#)
- Difficulty coping with changes in daily routines
- Feelings of isolation and loneliness
- Financial worries

“It is completely natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during and after a disaster,” said OhioMHAS Director Lori Criss. “Taking care of your emotional health during an emergency will help you think clearly and respond in ways that help you and your family remain healthy now and in the future. Our hope is that the Careline will help thousands of Ohioans connect with resources and services they need to create wellness in these uncertain times.”

The Careline is staffed by credentialed counselors who have been trained to provide free, confidential support for a wide range of needs, including mental health concerns, substance use, problem gambling, and more. Individuals experiencing an acute crisis can still reach out to the Ohio Crisis Text Line (keyword 4HOPE to 741 741) or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255).

“As Ohio moves toward recovery from the pandemic, we encourage our citizens to reach out for help if they need someone to talk to,” said RecoveryOhio Director Alisha Nelson. “We cannot underestimate the importance of our mental health during this crisis and beyond. If you are having a difficult time, please take care of yourself and call the Careline.”

For more information about the Careline, visit: <http://mha.ohio.gov/careline>

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