

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor Bullock Announces New Crisis Counseling Hotline Funded by \$1.6 Million Federal Grant

Montana Crisis Recovery line is now available at 1-877-503-0833

MONTANA - Governor Steve Bullock today announced a new crisis counseling hotline funded by a \$1.6 million federal grant is now available to aid Montanans struggling with their mental health due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The Montana Crisis Recovery hotline is funded and available for at least the next nine months. Montanans in need of crisis counseling can call 1-877-503-0833 to receive free and confidential counseling services from trained crisis counselors Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The free service is meant to help people navigate feelings of isolation, loss, fear, uncertainty, depression, and anxiety they are experiencing during this time. The new service is available to all Montanans, with target populations identified as healthcare workers and first responders, *school officials*, veterans, elderly individuals, Native Americans, and farmers and ranchers.

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) partnered with Disaster and Emergency Services to pursue the grant to address the growing need for mental health services.

Counselors on the other end of the line will be there to listen without judgement, offer emotional support, comfort, console, offer information and education on stress and coping, and direct callers to additional support and community resources. DPHHS is contracting with Mental Health America of Montana to manage the hotline. The phone line, when fully staffed, will include 12 trained crisis counselors. Efforts are currently under way to recruit and hire two counselors who are Tribal members.

Other mental health resources that are already available to Montanans include the Montana Crisis Text Line, Montana Suicide Prevention Lifeline, Montana Warmline and Thrive by Waypoint Health.

The Crisis Text Line is available 24/7 by texting MT to 741 741; the Montana Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available 24/7 at 800-273-TALK (8255); the Warmline is available Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday noon to 9 p.m. at 877-688-3377; and information about Thrive by Waypoint Health, an online cognitive behavioral therapy for those actively working to manage anxiety and stress, is available at <https://thriveformontana.com/>.