



How to help someone who needs mental healthcare



in collaboration with:



In New York City, everyone has guaranteed access to healthcare including mental healthcare.

Get Help Now



Mental health needs can take many forms. Use this guide to find the right kind of help.

Low or no-cost services are available in many languages, in neighborhoods across New York City— regardless of insurance coverage, age, immigration status, or ability to pay.

For more information about mental health services in NYC, visit the Mayor’s Office of Community Mental Health (<https://mentalhealth.cityofnewyork.us/>)

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Speak to a mental health counselor for free

NYC 988 is your connection to free, confidential, mental health support. Speak to a counselor via phone, text, or chat and get access to mental health and substance use services 24/7/365.

Counselors can provide:

- Immediate support for problems like stress, depression, anxiety, or drug and alcohol use
- Crisis counseling and suicide prevention counseling
- Connection to Peer Specialists, who have personal experience with mental health or substance use challenges
- Support for LGBTQI + Youth and Young Adults

New Yorkers can reach out to NYC 988 on behalf of themselves or someone else. Young people can call on behalf of their parents or caregivers, and anyone can call NYC 988 on behalf of a child. Support is available for people of all ages and in over 200 languages.

- [Call or Text 988](#)
- [Chat Now](#) at 988lifeline.org/chat/
- [Find Services](#) at nyc.gov/988
- Español: 988, Aprete 2
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing? Use your preferred relay service or dial 711 then 988. NYC 988 Counselors are trained to accept calls from deaf and hard of hearing individuals using video relay services
- Veteran’s Crisis Line: Dial 988, press 1
- LGBTQI+ Youth & Young Adults: Dial 988, press 3

Get Help Now

In-person help for an urgent behavioral health crisis

If you are concerned for yourself, a parent or other family member, friend, or acquaintance who is experiencing (or at risk of) a behavioral health crisis, you can call NYC 988 and request a Mobile Crisis Team. A mobile crisis team will provide an in-person response to the home or location of the person in need usually within a few hours

Mobile Crisis Teams:

- Consist of mental health clinicians and peers
- Serve both children and adults in their homes
- Provide crisis intervention, de-escalation, assessment and linkage to ongoing mental health and substance use treatment and support

Only NYC 988 can connect you to a Mobile Crisis Team. If you are calling from an area code outside of NYC (212, 332, 646, 917, 347, 718, 917, 929) and you want a Mobile Crisis Team, request to be transferred to NYC 988.

If you are a provider looking to make a referral to a Mobile Crisis Team please refer to the provider page nyc.gov/988 or call 988.

Urgent mental health help for someone you think may be homeless

To get help for someone experiencing homelessness call 311 and request a street outreach team or submit an [online Service Request](#).

Outreach teams offer immediate assistance, transportation to shelter, ongoing case management, and assessment for medical or mental health crises that may require emergency response.

Emergency mental health help

Where appropriate, police officers and Emergency Medical Services personnel will respond and may transport someone to a hospital in an ambulance.

If someone is in imminent danger to themselves or others, or needs immediate medical attention, call 911

If you reach out for services on behalf of someone else, provide as much detail as possible about why you think help is needed. Be prepared to describe:

- Symptoms or behaviors of concern
- Where the person can be located
- How they can be contacted
- How long you have been noticing the need for help

These details can help providers respond with the right kind of support.

Find A Mental Health Provider

In an emergency dial 911

If you are looking for mental health services, 988 can help you find a provider, regardless of your insurance coverage.

Explore the provider data base by accessing nyc.gov/988, click “**Find Services**”. Or, you can call or text 988 and ask a counselor for a referral for mental health services in NYC. New Yorkers with health insurance can also access mental health providers by contacting their insurance company.

For more information on finding a health care provider go to the [Understanding and Accessing Behavioral Healthcare](#) page on our website.

For New Yorkers who do not have health insurance, the [NYC Care: Health Care Access Program](#) guarantees low-cost and no-cost physical and behavioral health services to New Yorkers. All services are provided through NYC Health + Hospitals.

- To enroll: Call **1-646-NYC-CARE (1-646-692-2273)**

If the services or medications you need are being denied by your health insurance plan, or you believe you are being required to pay unexpected out-of-pocket costs unjustly, you can contact the New York State’s health insurance advocacy program for mental health or substance use disorder care called the [Community Health Access to Addiction & Mental Healthcare Project](#) (CHAMP). CHAMP is designed to help individuals and their families resolve issues in accessing substance use disorder and mental health services.

- Call the free and confidential helpline **888-614-5400**

Get help for students and families

Mental health support and resources are available for all students and families. Ask your school’s Parent Coordinator, School Social Worker, or Guidance Counselor for more information, or visit [NYC Public Schools](#) to learn how to access mental health services in the City’s public schools.

NYC Teenspace is a free mental health support program available to any NYC teen ages 13 to 17. Whether you struggle with mental health challenges or just want somebody to talk to, you can sign up for Teenspace to be connected to a licensed therapist for ongoing support. You will also get access to online mental health exercises to complete at your own pace.

Teenspace is offered by the NYC Health Department and powered by Talkspace.

Follow these steps to register:

1. Visit [Talkspace](#) and enter your address and birthday.
2. Enter your parent or guardian’s info and email so they can provide consent.
3. Complete a simple online assessment to share your mental health needs and preferences.

You will then get matched with a licensed therapist for ongoing virtual support, access online mental health exercises or both.

Connect to ongoing support

Older New Yorkers: Older New Yorkers (60+) who are isolated can request volunteer support through the Friendly Visiting program. Older adults can get paired with a volunteer visitor, a peer close to their age, or join a virtual group.

- Reach out for support by calling **Agging Connect at 1-212-244-6469**

Veterans: Veterans can access mental health support by calling the Veterans Crisis Line: **988, then press 1.**

If you want to speak to a peer who is a veteran or a member of the military community go to [Vets4Warriors](#), or call: **1-855-838-8255**

Help For People Who Are Having Trouble Staying Connected To Care

Flexible community-based treatment for people with serious mental illness

New York City's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene offers a range of services for New Yorkers with a serious mental illness who have high service needs and are unable to connect or stay connected to site or clinic-based treatment. These services can include care coordination or ongoing clinical support from an interdisciplinary mobile treatment team.

A referral is needed for these services, and the individual's outpatient or inpatient mental health provider can start the process of qualifying the individual for these services.

- Visit the [Mental Health Single Point of Access website](#) for more information.

This website includes a description of services available for children and adults and the requirements for submitting a referral, which includes a recent psychosocial evaluation and a client consent form.

- For answers to questions about adult Single Point Of Access (SPOA), email SPOA@health.nyc.gov, or call **347-396-7258**
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- For answers to questions about Children's Single Point Of Access (CSPOA), or the referral process, call **347-396-7205**

Intensive help for people having difficulty staying connected to treatment and who pose an imminent risk to themselves or others.

In New York State, people with mental illness who are unlikely to survive safely in the community without help can be mandated by a court to participate in mental health treatment under a law called Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT), or Kendra's Law.

Almost anyone with personal or professional contact with the individual can make a referral including family members, roommates, healthcare professionals, treatment providers, and corrections, parole, or probation officials.

After a judge orders a person who meets the legal criteria to AOT, the person will be connected with the City's AOT program, which will assign them to outpatient mental health treatment and will monitor their compliance to help them live successfully in the community.

To learn more about how to begin the AOT process visit the [Department of Health and Mental Hygiene AOT page](#), or call one of the Assisted Outpatient Treatment Program's main numbers:

- Manhattan AOT Team: **1-347-396-7373**
- Queens AOT Team: **1-347-396-7004**
- Bronx AOT Team: **1-347-396-7375**
- Brooklyn/Staten Island AOT Team: **1-347-396-7374**

Find Hospital Based Treatment

Inpatient mental healthcare can help to stabilize people experiencing acute psychiatric symptoms. During an inpatient stay, physicians and other mental health professionals establish a diagnosis and begin a treatment plan. Hospitalizations may extend for several days or longer while a patient stabilizes.

At many hospitals, social workers and other staff members will create a discharge plan to ensure patients have a safe place to continue treatment after leaving the hospital and, in some cases, follow up after discharge to ensure a connection to outpatient services was made.

New Yorkers can walk in to Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEP) 24/7, 7 days per week. CPEPs offer triage, observation, evaluation, care, treatment, and referral in a safe and comfortable environment for those individuals with a known or suspected mental illness. CPEPs provide a full range of psychiatric emergency services and crisis outreach services within a defined geographic area to individuals experiencing symptoms of a behavioral health crisis including co-occurring disorders. These co-occurring disorders may include substance use disorders, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and medical conditions.

In addition to walk ins, Individuals may present to CPEP in a variety of ways including but not limited to referrals from providers, emergency medical services transport, and police transport. The CPEP staff will make a reasonable effort to obtain as much information from the individual(s) accompanying them to the CPEP. CPEP sites are in each borough.

- Call **1-844-NYC-4NYC (1-844-692-4692)** to find the Health + Hospitals Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Services Program (CPEP) closest to you, or visit nyc.gov/988, click “**Find Services**” in the menu to find all CPEPs in New York City

If a person is experiencing concerning symptoms and refuses to go to the hospital or participate in treatment, involuntary psychiatric assessment, which may lead to involuntary hospitalization, may be an option. If the person is conducting themselves in a manner that is likely to result in serious harm to themselves or others, there are several ways they can be assessed to determine what course of action to take.

- **To reach a Mobile Crisis Team call 988.**
- **Only NYC 988 can connect you to a Mobile Crisis Team.**
- **If you are calling from an area code outside of NYC (212, 332, 646, 917, 347, 718, 917, 929) and you want a Mobile Crisis Team, request to be transferred to NYC 988.**
- **If you are a provider looking to make a referral to a Mobile Crisis Team please refer to the provider page nyc.gov/988 or call 988**

Find Hospital Based Treatment

You can file a petition for an emergency psychiatric evaluation through the court system. In New York, anyone can file a petition about someone else. You do not need a lawyer to file a petition. After a petition is filed, a judge will determine whether the person of concern is experiencing mental illness and engaging in disorderly conduct or conduct likely to result in serious harm to themselves or others. If so, the judge will issue a warrant requiring the Sheriff's office to bring the individual of concern to the court, where they will be held until there can be a second hearing.

Depending on the results of this second hearing, the individual may then be taken to a hospital for a psychiatric evaluation.

- To find the appropriate court closest to you, call **1-800-COURTNY (1-800-268-7869)**. For more information on New York State court operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit nycourts.gov or call the coronavirus hotline at **1-833-503-0447**

If someone is in imminent danger to themselves or others, or needs immediate medical attention, call 911

Where appropriate, police officers and Emergency Medical Services personnel will respond and may transport someone to a hospital in an ambulance. Medical professionals at the hospital will determine whether the person of concern meets the criteria for involuntary hospitalization.

Find Peer Support

New York City has free clubhouses that provide supportive communities for people with a history of mental illness and substance misuse. Designed to help people rejoin society and maintain their position in it, clubhouses offer mutual support from other members, professional staff support, work training, educational opportunities, and social connection.

- To find a Clubhouse call 988 at or visit nyc.gov/988, click “**Find Services**” in the menu and search “**Clubhouse**”

Become a peer

Through the New York Peer Specialist Certification Board, individuals with personal experience with mental illness can receive training and become certified as a peer specialist. Peer specialists are recognized as qualified professionals and can work in a number of different areas to support others in their recovery journey.

- To find peer support call 988 or visit nyc.gov/988, click “**Find Services**” in the menu and search “**Peer Support**”
- To learn more about the benefits of becoming a peer, and how to obtain certification, visit the [NY Peer Specialist website](http://NYPeerSpecialist.com).

Support For Family, Friends & Caregivers

Support groups

If someone you love is experiencing a mental health challenge, it may be helpful to learn how to support your loved one while also taking care of yourself.

Support groups, facilitated by people who have experience caring for someone with a mental health condition, can offer important information and community.

NAMI NYC offers many different support groups for families and friends of people with mental health conditions.

- Find a [calendar of support groups](#)
- Call NAMI's helpline at **1-212-684-3264** for more information

To learn more about mental illness and the support available to caregivers and loved ones of people experiencing mental illness, visit [NAMI's website](#).

Family counseling

Family counseling from a professional mental health provider can help to improve communication, help you and your family members better understand family dynamics, and build stronger relationships with one another.

NYC Health + Hospitals offers expert care provided by bilingual-bicultural therapists in family therapy programs offered at clinics citywide.

- To make an appointment or find the H+H clinic closest to you, call **1-844-NYC-4NYC (1-844-692-4692)**.

988's database of behavioral health services includes over 600 providers that offer family counseling.

- Visit nyc.gov/988, click "**Find Services**" in the menu and search "**Family Counseling**"
- This directory allows you to narrow results by neighborhood, language spoken, and insurance type
- You can also contact 988 and ask a counselor for help finding a family therapy provider who meets your needs



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About The Mayor’s Office of Community Mental Health (OCMH):

The Mayor’s Office of Community Mental Health is committed to improving mental health outcomes for all New Yorkers, so that more people can get the mental health support they need to live healthy and content lives. We work with City agencies to reduce barriers to mental health care for underserved communities. Our priorities are rooted in equity, racial justice, and cultural responsiveness. We adopt a community-centered and strength-based approach that recognizes diverse perspectives, lived experiences, resilience, and the unique needs of New Yorkers.

You can [visit our website for more information and mental health resources.](#)



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