

Calling 9-1-1 for help during a mental health emergency can be very stressful. Law enforcement and other responders need to have all the right information in order to help you quickly and safely. Ask the 9-1-1 operator if a CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) officer, who specializes in responding to mental illness emergency situations, is available. Alternatively, you may consider calling the Crisis Line where an operator can assist with a Crisis Mobile Team if one is required.

### Making the Call

When calling 9-1-1, control your voice and speak as calmly and clearly as possible. Try not to panic or ramble. Give the operator the standard information (e.g., name, address, a person's relationship to you, their description, etc.), as well as any other relevant details. Questions the responders might ask are:

- Does the person have a mental illness?
- Are any medication being used?
- If use has stopped, for how long?
- Is there any history of violent acting out or a past history of fighting with police?
- What the person is doing and saying now and where they are in the home.
- Describe the person's behavior and any symptoms (e.g., hallucinations, delusions, paranoia, aggression, self-injury, etc.).
- What is the best way to communicate to and approach the person?
- Are there any weapons in the home?
- Do you feel threatened?
- When you speak to an operator, you can request a CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) officer who has experience in working with people who have a mental illness. (may not be available in all counties)



### BEFORE the Police Arrive

To make sure everyone involved is safe, do the following BEFORE the police arrive:

- **Turn on lights in the house** so that the officers can clearly see everyone in the home.
- If you come out of the house to meet the officers **have nothing in your hands**. No weapons, cell phones, or anything that might look like a weapon.
- **If possible, wait outside** in view of the officer so that when he/she arrives, you can talk with the officer.

### Once the Police Have Arrived

Officers responding to a 9-1-1 emergency call are very focused when they arrive on the scene. First, they will make sure the scene is safe for you, the person with the mental illness, and for themselves. Spend as much time as needed to answer all of the officer's questions in a direct and clear way. Offer any advice you think is necessary and try to be patient.

As calmly as possible, identify yourself to the officer and provide the following information:

1. Who you are and your relationship to the person.
2. The best way to communicate and approach the person.
3. That the person has a mental illness.
4. If any medication use has stopped, and for how long.
5. If the person is a danger to themselves or others.
6. Any history of suicidal thoughts or behavior.
7. The telephone numbers for any attending psychiatrist, therapist and/or case manager.

The Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) is committed to ensuring the availability of timely, quality health care. If you know of an AHCCCS member who is unable to access health services, or if you have a concern about the quality of care, please call your AHCCCS health care plan's Member Services number. If your concern is not resolved, please call AHCCCS Clinical Resolution Unit at 602-364-4558, or 1-800-867-5308.