



LIFE ALERT: SAVE A LAWYER

- ≧ *Lawyers are three times as likely to suffer from depression as any other profession.* ≦
- ≧ *Suicide is the third leading cause of death among lawyers.* ≦
- ≧ *The rate of death by suicide for lawyers is two to six times that of the general population.* ≦

Don't take a chance ... get prepared now and be ready to use your advocacy skills and take action.

Get training from suicide prevention organizations in your community. For a list of training programs, go to the Best Practices Registry for Suicide Prevention at www.sprc.org/bpr/index or call TLAP at 800-343-8527 for suggestions about training.

Action Step One

Know the signals alerting that a conversation about suicide may be needed.

- Verbal
 - “hopeless”
 - “end of my rope” or “trapped”
 - “tough time”
 - “no purpose or meaning to my life”
- Behavioral
 - isolation
 - dramatic mood change
 - unusual behavior or more reckless behavior
 - excessive irritability, anger, or rage
 - perceived public embarrassment/humiliation
 - increased or excessive use of drugs or alcohol
 - possession of or acquiring a weapon
 - increased anxiety, including panic, insomnia, and agitation

+ Consider the totality of the situation and trust your intuition.

Action Step Two

Marshal your advocacy skills to get the lawyer help.

- Research and investigate by interviewing the lawyer to get to the facts.
 - Are you thinking of hurting yourself?
 - Use an open-ended question, asked without judgment.
 - Wait for an answer and listen.
- Plead your case to the lawyer.
 - Share a relevant experience to encourage your colleague to open up.
 - Show empathy, but maintain professional and personal boundaries.
- Get your verdict by making your argument.
 - Advocate for professional help.
 - Have the name and phone number of a doctor or therapist on hand.
 - Offer to contact the professional with your colleague.
 - Offer a ride to the appointment.
 - If the colleague refuses to seek professional help:
 - Discuss who he/she would feel comfortable talking with.
 - Get a commitment that the colleague will seek help in the future.
 - Get a commitment that he/she will not harm him/herself and make sure he/she is not alone for the remainder of the day.
 - If necessary, call 911 or take the person to the emergency room.
 - Follow-up with your colleague the next day.
 - Never promise to keep a secret when dealing with suicide issues.



For more information find TLAP at www.texasbar.com/tlap