



# Miami-Dade County Employee Assistance Program



## Asking for help when we are struggling

Have you ever had a hard time asking for help? Asking for help of any kind can be hard, but asking for help with your mental health can be really scary. Mental health is deeply personal and admitting that you're struggling can bring up a lot of complicated feelings. We've struggled with a pandemic in the not-so-distant past, so you may notice that more and more people are feeling burned out in all aspects of their lives. If you're struggling with worsening anxiety, depression, intrusive thoughts, or are thinking about hurting yourself, you are not alone and don't need to deal with that yourself. In fact, it can be dangerous to not reach out for help.

**If you're struggling, it's ok to ask for help.**

Some people struggle with asking for help more than others. We all know someone who prefers to do everything themselves. However, there are a few reasons that asking for help about your mental health is especially anxiety-provoking.

### *Mindful Quotes:*

*Ask for help. Not because you're weak but because you want to remain strong.*

*There is a crack in everything, That is how the light gets in.*



**Miami-Dade County  
Human Resources  
Department  
Employee Assistance Program**

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### Why is asking for help so hard?

Mental health stigma is real. Even though therapy is becoming more and more normalized, it's still seen as a taboo to be open about mental health struggles. No one wants to be seen as "crazy". It's also especially hard to ask for help when you're dealing with mental health symptoms like hopelessness or numbness. Many mental health conditions have symptoms that can make it harder to reach out.

Asking for help is sometimes seen as "not being strong enough or not trying hard enough". We live in a very individualistic culture that prides folks on handling everything on their own, but that's not the only way to approach things. Asking for help is actually a sign of strength and evidence that you're ready to fight for yourself. We're not meant to solve everything on our own. Knowing when you need to tap into your support and resources is important.

Some people also worry that asking for help means they'll be in debt or owe something. Help doesn't have to be transactional or come with strings attached. You may be surprised to find that people are eager to help when asked.

We also struggle with fear that they'll be a burden if they reach out for help. If you've ever felt that way, try to give yourself some compassion. How would you feel if someone reached out to you for help? You probably wouldn't make them feel like they're a burden, even if you're not sure how to help. Try to treat yourself like you'd treat a friend.

It's intimidating to ask for help when you don't know what comes next. You might be worried that you'll be hospitalized or forced to do something against your will. You might worry that you're so used to feeling the way you do now, that you can't feel any other way. Maybe you're worried that getting help will be even more painful than what you're already going through. It's okay to feel

fear of the unknown. It's also important to accept that you can't control everything.

*Asking for help can be hard. Here are some tips for asking for help when your mental health is struggling:*

### **Talk to someone you trust**

Is there anyone you can think of to confide in? It can be strangely intimate to be open about mental health struggles, but having even one person to talk to can be an enormous relief. It doesn't have to be a family member or even a friend if you're not comfortable. It could be a teacher, a doctor, a coworker, or someone else, but don't keep this all inside. It's too much for one person to deal with alone, and you deserve to get help.

### **Write it down**

Sometimes it's easier to write something down than speak about it face to face. You might find it easier to text someone instead of seeing them in person. There's nothing wrong with communicating this way. Talking about mental health can be an intense topic, so it can be less intimidating to approach it via text instead of face to face. Do whatever you need to do to get help.

### **Know that you don't need to have everything figured out**

Asking for help doesn't mean that you need to know exactly what you need. It's okay to say to someone, "I'm not doing well right now. I'm really struggling, but I don't know what I need right now. Can you check in on me every so often to make sure I'm okay?"

You may even find that just talking to someone can be a nice distraction from what you're going through. This is a perfectly valid way to get through emotionally tough times, so feel free to call someone up just to chat. You can let them know that you're having a hard time but you're not ready to talk about it and need a distraction. Most people will be happy to support you.

### **Talk to a hotline**

If talking to someone you know isn't a possibility or you're just not ready to, there are still ways to ask for help. There are several hotlines or crisis lines that are available 24/7. One is the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#), but most cities have a local hotline you can contact as well. There are other options available, like [texting crisis lines](#), if a phone call is too much. You don't need to wait until you're in a crisis to reach out for help. Whatever you decide, know that you are not a burden, you deserve help and there is hope.

*If you, a family member or a team member are struggling with feelings or emotions that are hindering your/their ability to engage in daily life please feel free to reach out to our team at Miami-Dade Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Our EAP counselors focus on supporting employees with internal and external resources that assist in setting the foundation for restoration and enhancement of emotional and mental wellness.*

*The EAP is provides on-site and virtual assessments for all employees and family members that are in need of assistance. To set up an assessment with an EAP counselor at no cost please **call 305-375-3293** or **email [Jessica.Hughes-Fillette@miamidade.gov](mailto:Jessica.Hughes-Fillette@miamidade.gov)**. The hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.*