

Behavioral Health Help Line (BHHL) Overview for PSAPs



Access to treatment by call, text, or chat 24/7/365 at 833-773-2445 or online at masshelpline.com

The **Behavioral Health Help Line (BHHL)** launched on January 3, 2023. It is a valuable resource available for behavioral health needs to anyone in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It will provide individuals with assistance in times of need and will offer access to a variety of services.

The BHHL is a critical tool that will help people connect with a provider before there's a mental health emergency, for routine or urgent help in their community, or even right at home, including mental health assessments and referrals. In addition, warm handoffs to local Community Behavioral Health Centers (CBHC) as well as other partners and providers are available. If the Behavioral Health Help Line identifies someone at imminent risk of harm, 9-1-1 will be contacted.

What the Help Line Is

- Connect individuals and families to the full range of comprehensive treatment services for mental health and addiction offered in the Commonwealth, including **outpatient, urgent and immediate crisis intervention**.
- Provide real time, live clinical triage, and service navigation in multiple languages 24/7.
- Collaborate with existing statewide services such as Mass211, Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS) Substance Use Helpline and 988, including protocols for connecting help seeker and raising awareness about the statewide toll-free behavioral health crisis line.

How the Help Line Connects

- Staffed with Clinicians, Peers Supports, Community Relations, Resource and Referral Specialists.
- Connection to 9-1-1 when emergency services are needed.
- Deployment of Crisis Services when clinically appropriate, as well as handoff to community providers for callers as needed.
- Follow up contact with callers to ensure transitions of care are successful.
- Resources to ensure callers get to the support they need (e.g. transportation, childcare, food)
- Caller intake and clinical information transmitted to other healthcare providers, reducing redundancy and accelerating service delivery.

For callers to BHHL, trained professionals will be completing a risk assessment using standard tools to determine the sensitivity and severity of the caller's situation. **If deemed necessary, 9-1-1 will be connected using the PSAP's e7digit/2WAY number, which has been provided to BHHL.**

Page 2 outlines in more detail the criteria and risk for BHHL.

For 9-1-1, a handoff to the BHHL will be used as a tool, to provide an expanded set of resources for 9-1-1 callers when there is emotional distress with no imminent/emergent risk or a medical emergency.

Page 2 outlines in more detail the interaction between BHHL and 9-1-1.

Hand-off from 9-1-1 to BHHL



In all circumstances, 9-1-1 PSAPs should follow local policy and procedures for handling and responding to behavioral health emergencies in regards for life, safety, and property.

9-1-1 RISK LEVEL	CRITERIA	ACTIONS TAKEN
ROUTINE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When there is no imminent/emergent risk or medical emergency. When there is a routine behavioral health need identified, where the caller is in emotional distress, further behavioral health assessment is best, and social/family support and resources are immediately available. If the caller has only mild impairment in judgment, psychosocial functioning and impulse control, and no check on well-being is necessary by emergency services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9-1-1 can initiate assistance from BHHL as a conference call using the button titled "Behavioral Health Help Line" on the NG9-1-1 position. 9-1-1 should maintain phone contact to ensure no additional resources are needed.
URGENT NEED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The caller is distressed, or risk factors are present, but there is <u>no current potential danger of harm to self or others</u>. The caller indicates intoxication or mild substance withdrawal symptoms not requiring medical assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9-1-1 can initiate assistance from BHHL as a conference call using the button titled "Behavioral Health Help Line" on the NG9-1-1 position. 9-1-1 should maintain phone contact to ensure no additional resources are needed.

Hand-off from BHHL to 9-1-1



BHHL will contact 9-1-1 PSAPs using the e7digit/2WAY numbers when emergency services are needed and require a response from police, fire, or medical services. Calls will ring into the NG9-1-1 positions. Information displayed will be for BHHL and not the caller.

BHHL RISK LEVEL	CRITERIA	ACTIONS TAKEN
EMERGENCY NEED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When failure to obtain immediate care would place the caller's life, another's life, or property in jeopardy, or cause serious impairment of bodily functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHHL will contact 9-1-1 using the provided <u>e7digit/2WAY</u> numbers and remain on the line with the caller to give as much information as available to 9-1-1. BHHL will remain on the line with the caller until First Responders arrive. May also include a behavioral health co-response dispatched by the BHHL.

Please visit www.masshelpline.com.