Following are **CONTACT** Procedures which **MUST** be adhered to **at all times**. *If you have any questions regarding ANY policy, please feel free to reach out to our CONTACT Executive Director. Thank you.*

Procedure: **FIRE & SAFETY**

**FIRE:**

In the event of a fire, Crisis Hotline Specialists and Staff are to:

1. Immediately exit the Center.
2. From your personal cell phone or the nearest neighbor, immediately call 9-1-1- to report the fire.
3. After calling 9-1-1, immediately notify the Executive Director at 732-901-3031.
4. DO NOT RETURN INTO THE BUILDING UNTIL IT IS DEEMED SAFE BY THE PROPER AUTHORITIES.

**EMERGENCY EXIT MAP ROUTES:**

In event of a fire:

1. There are eight (8) Fire Extinguishers located strategically throughout the building.
2. “Fire Extinguisher” Signs are posted, pointing to their locations.
3. Smoke Alarms and a Carbon Monoxide Detector are also located throughout the building.
4. ***Emergency Exit Routes*** are posted and clearly visible in **EACH AREA** of the Phone Center Building.
5. Also, clearly stated and posted is a Fire Emergency Procedure.

**EMERGENCY EXIT DOOR LOCATIONS:**

***Phone Room / Two (2) Outside Doors in the phone room:***

1. One (1) on the right side, **with a HANDICAP Accessible Ramp**
2. One (1) on the left, leading to the backyard.
3. One(I) Outside door located in the front entrance of Breezeway, facing Hadley.
4. One(I) Outside door located at front *side* of Executive Director's Office, facing Hadley.
5. One(I) Outside door is located in the basement, which leads to the backyard.

**EXIT SIGNS** ARE LOCATED **ABOVE** ALL OUTSIDE DOORS.

Procedure: ***ADDITIONAL* MISCELLANEOUS SAFETY PROCEDURES**

1. All doors shall be locked from inside at all times.
2. Safety Motion Detector Lights are located on the approach to the driveway and the Breezeway door.
3. There is an outside light located on the front door of the Executive Director's office
4. No unauthorized person shall enter the phone center.
5. When an off-duty telephone worker stops by the phone center, they are required to call in on the Hello line (732-240-4118) to notify the on-duty telephone worker of their impending arrival.

**Procedure: ELECTRICAL STORMS**

In the event of an Electrical Storm, the Crisis Hotline Specialist will:

1. Immediately POWER off computers until the storm has passed.
2. BUSY OUT Phone Lines until the Lightning stops.

**Procedure: THREATS OF VIOLENCE**

1. If a Crisis Hotline Specialist or staff member feels that they are in Danger they should call 9-1-1 **IMMEDIATELY** from the nearest phone.
2. If there is *NO Immediate Danger*, but Crisis Hotline Specialist remains uneasy in the office or phone room, they should reach out in the following order:
   1. Executive Director
   2. Training Director
   3. Members of the Board of Directors, until someone can be reached.

**Procedure: EMERGENCY CALL FORWARDING PROCEDURE:**

*\*For Crisis Hotline Specialist RELIEVING the ACTIVE/CURRENT Shift:*

1. 15 minutes prior to Shift end, call Hello Line and notify Crisis Hotline Specialist that you are about to transfer the calls to your home for Emergency Call Forwarding.

*After confirming that the Transfer Process is completed, the Crisis Hotline Specialist has no further action to take other than to lock up the building upon their exit.*

**Procedure to TRANSFER:**

1. Forward the hello line to the cell phone or your second phone line.
2. Forward the hotline to your home phone.
3. Disconnect caller ID.
4. Limit your calls to 15 minutes unless it is a crisis situation.
5. Be certain to have ALL on-call BackUp Workers names and phone numbers.
6. Complete instructions and listings of BackUp Workers are available and sent to the Crisis Hotline Specialists who have been approved on a monthly basis.

**The person taking over from Call Forwarding on the following shift, will**

1. Call on the Hello line when taking over.
2. Once that call is made, the call forwarding person will deactivate the system to return call to the center.

**Procedure: ELDER or DISABLED NEGLECT or ABUSE**

[Is not uncommon for a concerned neighbor, medical professional or police officer to reach out to us reporting strange or unusual behavior or possible Elder neglect or abuse.]

**PROCEDURE DURING WORKING HOURS:**

1. Instruct the caller to immediately report their concerns to Adult Protective Services [APS} **directly** at 732-349-1500.

**AFTER HOURS PROCEDURE:**

1. Take the name, phone number and brief summary of current Crisis situation.
2. Explain to the caller that you will transferring this information to our on call Special Response/Adult Protective Services [APS} BackUp Worker.
3. Explain to them to be sure their phone accepts Blocked Calls and to please wait for a response from the BackUp Worker.
4. To ensure accuracy, REPEAT the phone number back to the caller, before disconnecting the line.
5. Lastly, advise caller that if they DO NOT receive a response to their call within 30 minutes, to be certain to call you back for immediate follow up.
6. **FROM THE HELLO LINE (732-240-4118),** Call your Special Response / Adult Protective Services scheduled BackUp Worker *[whose phone number is located on the Phone Room Clipboard*
7. Relay all information to BackUp Worker. They will return the call Immediately and assess the situation accordingly.

**IF YOUR BACK UP WORKER DOES NOT ANSWER:**

On the Answering Machine leave the following information:

1. Your name, from CONTACT
2. Hello Line Phone number (732-240-4118)
3. Message of: Please return my call, I have an emergency APS call for you.
4. ***NEVER*** leave detailed information regarding call on the answering machine.
5. **ALWAYS** wait until you speak to the BackUp Worker **DIRECTLY** when relaying the information.

**IF YOUR BACK UP WORKER DOES NOT RETURN YOUR CALL WITHIN 15 MINUTES, (depending upon the magnitude of the Emergency) continue to proceed with the following steps, in the following order:**

1. Call again, leave another message.
2. If no response within (5 -10) minutes , go to the BackUp Worker Schedule Binder (located on the Phone Desk) and go “down the list” in effort to reach the next available BackUp Worker, even if they are NOT on schedule.
3. If you are unable to reach an available BackUp Worker, immediately call the supervisor.

**Procedure: CHILD ABUSE**

*[Is not uncommon for a concerned neighbor, medical professional or police officer to reach out to us reporting possible concerns of child neglect or abuse.]*

Callers informing they have knowledge or suspect that a child is being abused the Crisis Hotline Specialist is to:

**PROCEDURE DURING WORKING HOURS:**

* Instruct the caller to *immediately* report their concerns to Child Protective Services **directly** at 800-792-8610.

**AFTER HOURS PROCEDURE:**

[**If the abuse is ACTIVELY** occurring at the time of the call]

* Instruct the caller to hang up and *immediately call 9-1-1 to* report their concerns

**[If the CALLER is the abused party, but the abuse is *not* active at the time]**

1. Inquire of the callers safety
2. Utilize Active Listening Skills
3. Instruct the caller to reach out and confide in a trusted adult and/or to call Child Protective Services **directly** at 800-792-8610.

**Procedure: HOMELESS in OCEAN County**

*[We are the after-hours answering service for* ***OCEAN County*** *Board of Social Services]*

If a caller from OCEAN COUNTY is in a homeless situation, the followings procedures are to be taken:

**PROCEDURE DURING WORKING HOURS**

1. Instruct the caller to call the Board of Social Service **directly** at 732-349-1500 for immediate assistance.

**AFTER HOURS PROCEDURE**

1. Get a general understanding of the callers situation.
2. CONFIRM the caller is from OCEAN COUNTY
   1. *If they are NOT from OCEAN COUNTY instruct them to call 2-1-1.*
3. CONFIRM the caller has ABSOLUTELY NO SHETLER FOR THAT PARTICULAR EVENING. Special Response is only to be used as absolute last resort.
4. If caller has shelter for THAT evening, instruct them to call or visit OCBOSS first thing in the morning.
5. Explain to the caller that we are ONLY the Answering Service for the OCEAN COUNTY Board of Social Services and that you need to gather some information to relay to our Special Response Emergency BackUp Worker.
6. Get the following BOSS Screening Information from the caller:
7. Full Name and Age
8. What town do you live in? (Last town on record)
9. Do you have Ocean County Id?
10. Are you alone or do you have family with you that also needs emergency housing?
11. If they have others with them, get each person's FIRST & lAST Name AND their ages.
12. What are the circumstances that you are without housing?
13. What is source of income and do you have any money at THIS time? Do you have any Credit Cards you can use?
14. If Special Response is able to provide emergency housing, do you have transportation to get to the location?
15. Tell the caller that need to pass their information on to our Special Response Emergency BackUp Worker.
16. Remind the Caller to be sure their phone accepts Blocked Calls.
17. To ensure accuracy, REPEAT the caller's phone number back to the caller, *before* disconnecting the line.
18. Lastly, advise caller of the current time {It is now 7:15}
19. Instruct them to wait with their phone and that if they DO NOT receive a response within 1 hour {If you don’t hear from them by 8:15}, to be certain to call you back for immediate follow up.

**CALLING THE SPECIAL RESPONSE WORKER**

**FROM THE HELLO LINE (732-240-4118),** Call your scheduled Special Response BackUp Worker *[whose phone number is located on the Phone Room Clipboard.]*

* Provide all screening information to BackUp Worker and let them handle it from that point. They should return the call, assess the situation and respond accordingly.

**IF YOUR BACK UP WORKER DOES NOT ANSWER:**

On the Answering Machine leave the following information:

1. Your name, from CONTACT
2. Hello Line Phone number (732-240-4118)
3. Message of: Please return my call, I have a Homeless call for you.
4. ***NEVER*** leave detailed information regarding the call on the answering machine.
5. **ALWAYS** wait until you speak to the BackUp Worker **DIRECTLY** when relaying the information.

**IF YOUR BACK UP WORKER DOES NOT RETURN YOUR CALL WITHIN 30 MINUTES, (depending upon the magnitude of the Emergency) continue to proceed with the following steps, in the following order:**

1. Call again, leave another message.
2. If no response within a reasonable period of time, go to the BackUp Worker Schedule Binder (located on the Phone Desk) and go “down the list” in effort to reach the next available BackUp Worker, even if they are NOT on schedule.
3. If you are unable to reach an available BackUp Worker, call the supervisor.

**Procedure: RAPE / ST. FRANCIS**

**NON-EMERGENCY:**

If an incoming call is of a NON-EMERGENCY nature, such as inquiring about the various services provided St Francis, the Crisis Hotline Specialist shouLd explain to the caller that we are only an EMERGENCY After-Hours answering services and that they should call again on the next business day.

Do NOT taKe any messages.

**RAPE / EMERGENCY: [An “emergency” would be any caller who is currently in crisis over a sexual assault and wants/needs to speak to a Rape counselor.]**

**If a caller is in crisis and requests to speak with a qualified Specialized Rape Counselor, the Crisis Hotline Specialist is** to take the following steps:

1. Access the caller's safety and let them know they have reached CONTACT and we are the Emergency Answering Service for St. Francis.
2. Take their FIRST name (ONLY if they are comfortable with giving you it)
3. Get their phone number, REPEAT IT BACK FOR ACCURACY and remind the caller that the phone needs to be set to accept blocked calls.
4. Let the caller know that you are going to call the on duty Emergency St. Francis Counselor and they will call them back immediately.

In an 2018 Ongoing -presentation from St. Francis, the Rape Advocate requested that when at all possible, it is preferred to forward the victims contact information to Back up *as soon as possible*, so Advocates can directly reach out to the sexual assault victim immediately.

They have advised that it has been found to be more traumatic for the victim to repeat their story, so it is preferred that when possible our Chess Hotline specialist do NOT attempt to question or create a bond with the victim unless they are reluctant to speak to an advocate.

**Procedure: Domestic Violence**

If a call is received from a caller regarding Domestic Violence, the Crisis Hotline Specialist is to take the following steps:

1. Access the caller's safety

**If the Caller feels threatened:**

1. The Crisis Hotline Specialist is to instruct the caller to hang up and call 9-1-1- **IMMEDIATELY**

**If the caller is SAFE at the time of the call:**

1. Providence House/ Catholic Charities (800-246-8910) is the appropriate referral that should be given.

**Procedure: REPORTS OF ALL CRIMES**

Crisis Hotline Specialist should call 911 or the appropriate authorities.

**Procedure: SUICIDE**

If a call is received from a caller regarding an impending SUICIDE attempt, the Crisis Hotline Specialist is to take the following steps:

1. **CONFRONT** the caller. **Ask DIRECTLY AND CLEARLY:** 
   1. “ARE YOU CONSIDERING COMMITTING SUICIDE?”
   2. “Are you saying you want to kill yourself?”
   3. “Are you telling me you intend to take your life?”

**Do NOT be delicate in your CONFRONTATION.**

**Do NOT be timid OR ask in General terms, such as:**

“Are you thinking of doing something drastic?”

*[The reasoning behind this is that you want to be absolutely 100% certain that*

*your caller actually* ***CLEARLY*** *hears what* ***YOU*** *are hearing]:*

**“I AM GOING TO COMMIT SUICIDE”**

*You* ***WANT*** *your caller to HEAR the* **Magnitude** and S**everity***of the action they*

*are considering.*

*Being “delicate” when asking about the Suicide is only undermining the intent.*

**You MUST Be CLEAR And DIRECT With Your Confrontation**!

* **IF caller responds** “No**,** that is not what I am saying”, your direct confrontation has now temporarily removed the concern of Suicide and you now are able to continue using your Active Listening Skills to connect, validate and talk feelings with your caller until their temporary crisis has passed.
* **IF caller responds “YES”to your CONFRONTATION:**

1. **USE YOUR ACTIVE LISTENING SKILL**S:
2. **PUT YOUR OPEN LINES ON HOLD:** *Without interrupting the flow of your call, go to the 2nd phone and quickly put your open lines on hold so you can focus fully and uninterrupted with your caller****.***
3. **DETERMINE LETHALITY**: *After you have confirmed that YES, the Caller IS planning Suicide, you now need to discover:*
   1. **PLAN**
   2. **METHOD**
   3. **MEANS**

***The SUICIDE LETHALITY ASSESSMENT FORM*** *is a tool designed to assist you in making this determination and are located in the RED Suicide Binder on the Phone Desk.*

1. **GET DETAILS:** *Through use of feelings/conversation/connection, (you do NOT want to “question” your caller), attempt to gather as much information as possible - that can help assist you in locating a caller if necessary. Be certain to take many notes concerning possible location, medications, family members, landmarks, etc.*
2. **NO CALLER ID*:*** *Advise we do not have Caller ID*
3. **MAKE CONTRACT*:*** *After Crisis has passed, make Contract with Caller and do not hang up until they say the words:* ***“I PROMISE”***

**Procedure: CALLING FOR BACKUP:**

Intervention can ONLY be sent under specific direction of a CONTACT BACKUP WORKER:

1. From the Hello Line, use 2nd phone to call your CONTACT BACKUP WORKER [Their phone number is listed on the clipboard]
2. DO NOT USE YOUR CELL PHONE
3. Continue to parrot, summarize and clarify with your caller, in effort to assist Backup in understanding the situation as fully as possible.
4. If instructed by backup you contact the police, you will find the phone numbers of local police departments located in the red binder for both Monmouth and Ocean County.
5. If you have been given the address from your caller and they are hoping for intervention, you can simply tell the officer the address.
6. If you have **NOT** been given an address, you will parrot, summarize and clarify as much information as possible to allow the police to assist you in understanding your situation as fully as possible.
7. If possible, stay on the phone with your caller until intervention arrives.

***CONFRONT*:**

**ARE YOU PLANNING ON COMMITTING SUICIDE?**

***PLAN: Do you have a plan?***

*IF YES, What is the Plan?*

***MEANS: Do you have the means? (gun, pills, etc)***

*IF YES, get them* ***away*** *from the means:*

*“Please put the gun away”*

***ADVISE: We do NOT have Caller ID***

*Be sure to let caller know that we do not have Caller ID, and unless they give us their contact information, we are not able to send them help.*

***DISCOVER: What/Who do they value? What keeps them alive?***

*Use this information to your advantage. “Who will raise your children if you end up killing yourself?”*

***CONTRACT****:* ***“I PROMISE”*** *Once the Crisis has passed and caller agrees they are NOT going to die by suicide TONITE, insist that they call CONTACT in the morning and leave a message for you that they are doing okay. Do NOT hang up with caller until they say the words,* ***“I PROMISE”.***  *This holds them accountable for* their *actions as well as accountability for* YOUR emotional well being.