

**From:** OMHSAS LISTSERV <[OMHSAS\\_GENERAL\\_LISTSERV@LISTSERV.DPW.STATE.PA.US](mailto:OMHSAS_GENERAL_LISTSERV@LISTSERV.DPW.STATE.PA.US)> **On Behalf Of**  
Haubert, Joshua  
**Sent:** Friday, March 20, 2020 8:38 AM  
**To:** [OMHSAS\\_GENERAL\\_LISTSERV@LISTSERV.DPW.STATE.PA.US](mailto:OMHSAS_GENERAL_LISTSERV@LISTSERV.DPW.STATE.PA.US)  
**Subject:** [OMHSAS\_GENERAL\_LISTSERV] OMHSAS Message to Behavioral Health Stakeholders

Dear Behavioral Health Stakeholders,

***Behavioral health services, both mental health and substance use services, are considered essential and life sustaining services.*** As such, those entities that support, authorize and/or provide behavioral health services are exempt from the Governor's directive asking for the closure of all non-essential businesses. Behavioral health services and supports are critical to the health and wellness of our communities and providers are expected to continue offering those services through the COVID-19 crisis period.

Thank you all for your support and continued dedication to providing these life sustaining services to the citizens in Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

Valerie J. Vicari

**Valerie J. Vicari** | Acting Deputy Secretary

Department of Human Services | Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

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Mental illness affects 1 out of every 4 persons. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death nationally and over 1,900 Pennsylvanians died by suicide in 2016.

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis or is considering suicide, help is available. Reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)** or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting PA to **741-741**.

