# SUICIDE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

POLICY: 1.260

| Date Updated and Published:<br>Review: Annually<br>Last Date Reviewed: July 19, 2026 | **Revision History:**<br>● **July 2019**<br>● **June 2020**<br>● **August 2021**<br>● **August 2023**<br>● **August 2024**<br>● **August 2025**<br>● **July 2026** |
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*This document was developed and prepared by Dr. Joseph Hames, BETHEL UNIVERSITY's Provost, and Rachael Brooks, BETHEL UNIVERSITY's Title IX and Prevention Services Coordinator, with the assistance of Tosha Gurley, former Northwest TN Director of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN). The template of this document was provided to Bethel University by the Coalition for Healthy and Safe Campus Communities (CHASCo) with permission from the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR).*

## POLICY

The following is a list of positions for people within BETHEL UNIVERSITY who are responsible for enacting this plan:

- Safety & Security Office
- Provost
- Dean of the Chapel
- Chaplain
- Dean of Students
- Director of Human Resources
- University President
- Marketing Department
- Title IX and Prevention Services Coordinator
- Paris Satellite Location Campus Manager

College students are in a state of life transition and can be overwhelmed with new opportunities and new responsibilities. Lifestyle changes, such as sleep deprivation and substance abuse, can contribute to suicidal behavior.

- Suicide is the **second** leading cause of death for college students.
- Approximately **1,100** college students die by suicide every year.
- 6% of college students report they have seriously considered suicide over the past year.
    - 90% of those students created a suicide plan
    - 14% attempted suicide
    - 60% continued to have thoughts of suicide. (https://tspn.org/for-higher-education)

As such, and in adherence with T.C.A. § 49-7-172, BETHEL UNIVERSITY has developed a Suicide Prevention Plan and this associated protocol that engages in a variety of initiatives to improve crisis services.

## PREVENTION

**Suicide or Mental Health Wellness Syllabus Statement:**

All faculty syllabus documents and/or program handbooks will prominently display the following statement:

"*BETHEL UNIVERSITY is committed to and cares about all students. Support services are available for any person at BETHEL UNIVERSITY who is experiencing feelings of being overwhelmed, hopelessness, depression, thinking about dying by suicide, or is otherwise in need of assistance. For immediate help, contact the* ***National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988) or Text 741741****. Students and employees on the McKenzie or Paris campuses can also contact* ***Bethel's Safety and Security Office (731-415-7599)*** *or the* ***Mobile Crisis Number (1-800-353-9918)****.* ***Emergency Services (911)*** *should be contacted in the event of an emergency.*"

**Relationships:**

BETHEL UNIVERSITY will establish relationships with local Mental Health facilities for the purpose of providing annual suicide prevention, education and outreach, and programming.

BETHEL UNIVERSITY has a relationship in place with the following community agencies to provide the noted services (may include crisis referral services, prevention screenings, etc.):

- Carey Counseling Center, Inc. provides counseling, mobile crisis services, trainings, and trauma debriefings.
- The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) provides trainings and resources.
- Hometown Health Clinic in the Student Health Building provides counseling.

Information regarding such relationships at BETHEL UNIVERSITY is available from the Provost, the Department of Student Development, and/or the Title IX and Prevention Services Department. Those Departments can provide referrals to members of the BETHEL UNIVERSITY community which may include crisis referral services, prevention screenings, training programs, etc. Any campus member interested in accessing the services/agencies and training noted above, or in need of more information about BETHEL UNIVERSITY's suicide prevention efforts, should contact the Provost or the Title IX and Prevention Services Coordinator.

**Training:**

BETHEL UNIVERSITY will provide suicide prevention training to faculty and staff, as needed and as available. Incoming freshmen students will also receive suicide prevention training in their College Orientation Experience (COE) classes, as well as other student groups, as needed. Training may be conducted by third party providers via relationships with community-based organizations, the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, and/or Carey Counseling Center.

**Dissemination of Information:**

BETHEL UNIVERSITY will strive to promote these resources through the COE classes, Mental Health Resources Fair, flyers/posters around campus, and resources listed on the BETHEL UNIVERSITY website as needed and available.

BETHEL UNIVERSITY will disseminate this document each academic year via appropriate and effective channels of communication to faculty, staff, and students and, specifically, email communication. The Dean of Students, along with the IT Department, will be responsible for disseminating the policy.

## INTERVENTION

BETHEL UNIVERSITY has intervention protocol in place with the understanding that some students, faculty, or staff will be thinking about suicide, but not be in imminent danger while other students, faculty, or staff

considering suicide may have made plans and/or have the means to complete suicide. Appropriate assistance for these students, faculty, or staff includes acknowledging their thoughts and providing services to help them learn coping skills, seeking hospitalization to keep them safe and provide mental health treatments, and/or treating them after they have attempted suicide to keep them alive. Counselors or other trained providers can assess the individual thinking about suicide and determine a plan of care.

Information regarding such relationships at BETHEL UNIVERSITY is available from the Provost, the Title IX and Prevention Services Coordinator, and the Department of Student Development who can provide referrals to members of the BETHEL UNIVERSITY community, which may include crisis referral services, prevention screenings, training programs, etc.

The safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty, and staff are of the utmost importance. In situations that require immediate action because of safety or other concerns, BETHEL UNIVERSITY will take any reasonable administrative action or accommodation protocols that are appropriate. Such interim actions may include but are not limited to adjustments to schedules, ADA accommodations, extensions on assignments/exams, medical withdrawals, incompletes, etc.

## SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

There is no typical suicidal person. No age group, ethnicity, or background is immune. Fortunately, many troubled individuals display behaviors that deliberately or inadvertently signal their suicidal intent. Recognizing the warning signs and learning what to do next may help save a life (https://tspn.org/warning-signs).

**The Warning Signs:**

The following behavioral patterns may indicate a possible risk for suicide and should be watched closely. If they appear numerous or severe, seek help at once. The Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or the Crisis Text Line (text "TN" to 741741) provides access to trained telephone counselors, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- Talking about suicide, death, and/or no reason to live
- Preoccupation with death and dying
- Withdrawal from friends and/or social activities
- Experience of a recent severe loss (especially a relationship) or the threat of a significant loss
- Experience or fear of a situation of humiliation or failure
- Drastic changes in behavior
- Loss of interest in hobbies, work, school, etc.
- Preparation for death by making out a will (unexpectedly) and final arrangements
- Giving away prized possessions
- Previous history of suicide attempts, as well as violence and/or hostility
- Unnecessary risks; reckless and/or impulsive behavior
- Loss of interest in personal appearance
- Increased use of alcohol and/or drugs
- General hopelessness
- Recent experience of humiliation or failure
- Unwillingness to connect with potential helpers

**Feelings, Thoughts, and Behaviors:**

Nearly everyone at some time in his or her life thinks about suicide. Most everyone decides to live because they come to the realization that the crisis is temporary, but death is not. On the other hand, people in the midst of a crisis often perceive their dilemma as inescapable and feel an utter loss of control. Frequently, they:

- Can't stop the pain
- Can't think clearly
- Can't make decisions
- Can't see any way out
- Can't sleep, eat, or work
- Can't get out of the depression
- Can't make the sadness go away
- Can't see the possibility of change
- Can't see themselves as worthwhile
- Can't get someone's attention
- Can't seem to get control

**What Do You Do?**

1. Be aware. Learn the warning signs.
2. Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
3. Ask if s/he is thinking about suicide.
4. Be direct. Talk openly and freely about suicide.
5. Be willing to listen. Allow for expressions of feelings and accept those feelings.
6. Be non-judgmental. Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or feelings are good or bad. Don't lecture the value of life.
7. Don't dare him/her to do it.
8. Don't give advice by making decisions for someone else to tell them to behave differently.
9. Don't ask "why." This encourages defensiveness.
10. Offer empathy, not sympathy.
11. Don't act shocked. This creates distance.
12. Don't be sworn to secrecy. Seek support.
13. Offer hope that alternatives are available, do not offer glib reassurance; it only proves you don't understand.
14. **Take action. Remove means. Get help from individuals or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention** (check out this webpage for regional crisis resources: https://tspn.org/northwest-region).

**Who Can You Talk To?**

- A community mental health agency
- A private therapist
- A school counselor or psychologist

- A family physician
- A suicide prevention/crisis intervention center
- A religious/spiritual leader

**If you or someone you know is severely depressed, potentially, or actively suicidal, call the *Suicide & Crisis Lifeline* at 988. Trained counselors in your area are standing by to provide you with the help you need.**

Saving College Student Lives in Tennessee:

Saving College Student Lives in Tennessee is a brochure available through The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network. It can be found at: (https://irp.cdn-website.com/d1aaa55a/files/uploaded/TSPN-Trifold-2019-College-Students.pdf). This brochure provides information about signs and risk factors related to the potential for suicide, as well as resources and information on how to help who is considering suicide.

## INTERVENTION PROTOCOL

**College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) or College of Health Sciences (CHS)**

The following process should be followed if a College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) or a College of Health Sciences (CHS) student, faculty, or staff member encounters a student, faculty, or staff member on their respective campuses who is considering suicide.

1. *Do NOT leave the student/employee alone.*
2. **Alert BU Security Officers-Call the 24/7 Cell Phone (731-415-7599).**

   If the suicidal person has plans and access to lethal means, is planning to make an attempt very soon, or is currently in the process of making an attempt, contact 911 and then contact Security.

3. If working with a student, Security will either attempt to contact Mobile Crisis (1-800-353-9918) directly or, alternatively, the Provost, the Dean of the Chapel, or the Chaplain or at a minimum, the Residence Advisor and/or Residence Director.

   In acknowledging the potential for additional fear and/or anxiety a student may experience during the initial response by Security, where the situation allows and support is available to quickly and readily obtain, it is the preferred practice of Bethel University to aid Security in response to mental and spiritual health concerns with the presence of the Provost, the Dean of the Chapel, and/or the Chaplain. This holistic and trauma informed response allows the Provost, the Dean of the Chapel, and/or the Chaplain to take lead in response with the support of Campus Security to approach the student with a sense of concern ahead of inciting a fear of bad behavior.

   At a minimum, making contact with the on duty Residence Advisor and/or Residence Director to assist in making contact as to reduce potential for escalation during the response is recommended. Residence Advisors and Residence Directors are trained in QPR but are in no way intended to assess risk factors and/or make decisions regarding next steps. RA's and RD's are to serve as an additional form of support prior to moving to Step 3 as outlined below if and when utilized.

   It should be noted that during the reporting process a referent may need follow up from a student support member such as the Dean of Students, Provost, Dean of the Chapel, and/or Chaplain to minimize the potential for secondary trauma and/or retaliation for making said report.

4. The Provost, the Dean of the Chapel, or the Chaplain will assess suicidal ideation, risk factors, and lethality.
   a. They may work with the student, contact Mobile Crisis, and/or work with Security to

secure transportation of the student to the ER.

b. In some situations, they may be able to accompany the student to the ER.

c. They will also complete a "No Harm Contract" with the student.

d. BETHEL UNIVERSITY and the Dean of Students will contact other involved parties, including parents/guardians of the student.

5. If working with an employee or, in situations when the Provost or the Chaplain's Office cannot be reached to work with a student, Security will contact Mobile Crisis or secure transportation of the student/employee to the ER in Paris or Huntingdon.

    a. During working hours, Coaches, Directors, etc. may be needed to transport their students to the ER.

    b. Security/the Provost/the Chaplain's Office will determine which ER to transport the student/employee to based on various factors, including the severity of the suicide attempt.

6. If working with a student, Security will document the incident and provide documentation to the Dean of Students. Students who are identified at risk for suicide, have voiced serious suicidal ideation, or have attempted suicide should be reported to Security and the Dean of Students as soon as possible.

7. If working with an employee, Security will document the incident and provide documentation to the Human Resources Department. Employees who are identified at risk for suicide, have voiced serious suicidal ideation, or have attempted suicide should be reported to Security and the Director of Human Resources as soon as possible.

**Following an Emergency Crisis or Medical Withdrawal:**
After a student has received emergency help from outside resources for suicidal or self-harm ideation/behaviors, or completed a medical withdrawal, and returned to campus, the student must meet with the Dean of Students to determine how the student can best be supported in making a transition back to classes and campus. The Dean of Students may determine, in some cases, that the student cannot be adequately supported while living on campus. In such cases, the student may continue to be enrolled at the University but may not reside in campus housing. Any such decision will not be made as a punishment to the student.

For situations in which a student continues to reside on campus, BETHEL UNIVERSITY may require the student to agree to follow specific guidelines as a condition of remaining in school. Any such requirement is not a punishment to the student, but rather, a means to ensure student wellbeing, as well as maintaining a safe environment within the University community.

At any time, a student may be required to participate in an assessment with a mental health counselor, based on serious, legitimate concerns of harm to self or harm to others, and enforced under the University's Student Code of Responsibility.

If the student is non-compliant with the guidelines or requirements, Bethel may ask the student to voluntarily withdraw.

Students who are self-harming or suicidal, and disrupt the University community in the course of their actions, (e.g. posing a substantial threat to the safety of others or the University's property), may still be held accountable for their disruptive behavior under the Student Code of Responsibility. Further behaviors that disrupt the institution or interfere with the mission of the institution may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion. Procedures for involuntary or emergency suspension can still be applied when a student is a direct threat to themselves and/or others--but with caution when related to a disability.

**College of Professional Studies (CPS)**

The following process should be followed if a student, faculty, or staff member encounters a CPS student, faculty, or staff member who is considering suicide.

**At a BETHEL UNIVERSITY satellite campus location:**

1. *Do NOT leave the student/employee alone.*
2. Alert the Dean of CPS.
   If the suicidal person has plans and access to a lethal means, is planning to make an attempt very soon, or is currently in the process of making an attempt, contact 911, and then contact the Dean of CPS.
3. The Dean of CPS will contact the TN Statewide Crisis Phone Line (1-855-CRISIS-1 or 1-855-274-7471) or the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988).
4. Whomever can be reached will assess suicidal ideation, risk factors, and lethality.
   They may counsel the student and/or work with the Dean of CPS to secure transportation of the student to the closest stabilization unit.
5. The Dean of CPS will document the incident and provide documentation to the Office of Safety and Security at the main campus. If working with an employee, the Dean of CPS will document the incident and provide documentation to the Human Resources Department and the Office of Safety and Security at the main campus. The Dean of CPS will also report the incident to the President of Bethel University.

**On the Phone or Online:**

The following process should be followed if a student, faculty, or staff member encounters a student, faculty, or staff member over the phone or in an online format, who is considering suicide.

1. Keep the person considering suicide talking on the phone until someone who can help is able to be with them in person.
   - Gather as much information as possible, including the person's name, location, and phone number. If needed and available, check the campus directory to identify this information.
2. If the person considering suicide has plans and access to a lethal means, is planning to make an attempt very soon, or is currently in the process of making an attempt, contact 911 or the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988).
   - If possible, enlist another person with you to call 911 or 988 and provide the person's information to the dispatcher. This additional person should also contact the parents/guardians or emergency contact of the person considering suicide.
   - If you are alone, ask the person, "*Can we call 911 or the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988) together?*"
     - If the person agrees, then add the call to your phone conversation.
     - If the person refuses, then continue to talk with the person and ask again later in the conversation.
   - You can also text "TN" to 741741 (the Crisis Text Line) to ask for help while talking on the phone with the person considering suicide.
   - You should also ask the person who else you both could contact together that could be a support for that person, such as a family member, friend, or neighbor.
   - DO NOT end the phone conversation with the person considering suicide.
3. If the risk of death is not imminent, but there is cause for concern, contact the Dean of CPS or the Dean of Students (CAS and CHS).
   - If you cannot reach the above, contact the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988).

4. If the encounter happens in an online format, such as an email or class discussion board, attempt to contact the person considering suicide by phone and follow steps #1-3.
    - If the person cannot be reached by phone, call 911 and provide the dispatcher with the person's contact information listed in the campus directory.
5. Once the person is safe, you should contact your supervisor, Bethel's Security Department, and the Human Resources Department, when applicable, and report your encounter to them.

The safety and wellbeing of students, faculty, and staff is of the utmost importance. In situations that require immediate action because of safety or other concerns, Bethel University will take any reasonable administrative action or accommodation protocols that are appropriate. Such interim actions may include, but are not limited to, adjustments to schedules, ADA accommodations, extensions on assignments/exams, medical withdrawals, incompletes, etc.

## POSTVENTION

Campus leadership will respond to a student/faculty/staff suicide using best practices to decrease the trauma experienced by the students and other campus community members left behind and to help prevent further suicides through contagion.

Goals of Postvention

The goals of a postvention response after a suicide include:

- Providing resources to those impacted.
- Stabilizing the community and restoring balance and routine to the campus at a pre-crisis level of functioning.
- Preventing further suicides through contagion and decreasing the trauma experienced by students.
- Facilitating understanding and processing the emotional impact of grief and loss.
- If a student/faculty/staff member is affected by suicide that is not connected to the campus community, the individual should be connected to mental health resources in the area.

## PROCEDURE

The following should take place if a student, faculty, or staff member's death occurs by suicide.

- The President of BETHEL UNIVERSITY will be notified immediately, regardless of the awareness of the incident occurring during or after office hours.
- Bethel's Safety & Security Department should be notified immediately.
- The President will lead the response on behalf of the institution. The President will need to confirm that the death was indeed a suicide; contact the family of the deceased student, staff, or faculty member; contact campus resources, such as the Dean of Students and Chief of Security; contact outside resources that are now needed on campus; etc.
    - Hometown Health Clinic, Carey Counseling Center, Inc. and TSPN will serve as resources to assist the McKenzie and Paris campus communities and their members in working to decrease community trauma.
    - TSPN and the local area mental health providers will serve as resources to assist Bethel's satellite campus communities and their members in working to decrease community trauma.
- The President, assisted by the Marketing Department will determine the appropriate messaging and disseminate the messaging to the Bethel community. For further information, please see:
    - Sample announcements and notifications provided by TSPN in APPENDIX;
    - "Best Practices and Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide" at https://reportingonsuicide.org/and
    - The Higher Education Mental Health Alliance's "POSTVENTION: A Guide for Response to

Suicide on College Campuses" at

https://hemha.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/jed-hemha-postvention-guide_copyright.pdf.

- Referrals for counseling sessions will be offered to students experiencing grief, depression, and associated secondary trauma. Employees in need of counseling will be referred to outside resources.

## CAMPUS & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

*Please note: email and office phone numbers may not be an appropriate method of contact in moments of immediate crisis.

**On Campus Resources**

| Department or Title | Name | Phone | Website/Email |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dean of the Chapel | Anne Hames | (o) 731-352-4066<br>(c) 731-415-6781 | bethelu.edu/student-life/christian-life/chaplains<br>hamesa@bethelu.edu |
| Chaplain | Garrett Burns | (o) 731-352-6449<br>(c) 731-535-3126 | burnsg@bethelu.edu |
| Title IX and Prevention Services | Title IX Coordinator | 731-352-4246 | klopfensteinn@bethelu.edu;<br>bethelu.edu/about/title-ix-and-prevention-services |
| Dean of Students | Tina Hodges | (o) 731-352-4032<br>(c) 731-695-3036 | hodgest@bethelu.edu |
| Safety & Security | Chief Daniel Thomas | (o) 731-352-4222<br>(c) 731-415-7599<br>(cell is 24/7) | busecurity@bethelu.edu<br>https://www.bethelu.edu/current-students/safety-and-security |
| Human Resources | Vicky Williams | 731-352-6405 | williamsv@bethelu.edu<br>bethelu.edu/employees |

**Community Resources**

| ***Local Emergency Resources*** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Emergency Services | 911 | |
| Mobile Crisis Services | 1-800-353-9918 | https://www.careycounselingcenter.org |
| Carroll County Sheriff's Office | 731-986-8947 | http://carrollcosheriff.com/ |
| McKenzie Police Department | 731-352-2265 | https://mckenzietn.org/government/departments/police-department/ |

| *Local Hospitals* | | |
|---|---|---|
| Baptist Memorial Hospital | 731-986-4461 | https://www.baptistonline.org/locations/carroll-county |
| Henry County Medical Center | 731-642-1220 | https://www.hcmc-tn.org/ |

| *Local Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Treatment Resources* | | |
|---|---|---|
| Carey Counseling Center | 1-800-611-7757 | https://www.careycounselingcenter.org/ |
| Pathways Behavioral Health Services | 1-800-587-3854 | https://www.wth.org/services/pathways-behavioral-health-services/ |
| Jackson Area Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency (JACOA) | 731-423-3653 | https://www.jacoa.org/ |
| Wo/Men's Resource and Rape Assistance Program (WRAP) | 1-800-273-8712 | https://www.wraptn.org/ |

| *Off Campus Crisis Support* | | |
|---|---|---|
| Hopeline Network | 1-800-784-2433 | https://www.thehopeline.com/ |
| Suicide & Crisis Lifeline | 988 | Lifeline (988lifeline.org) |
| Crisis Text Line | Text "TN" to 741-741 | https://www.crisistextline.org/ |
| TN Statewide Crisis Phone Line | 1-855-CRISIS-1 or 1-855-274-7471 | https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/need-help/crisis-services/mental-health-crisis-services/tn-statewide-crisis-phone-line.html |

For a region-specific resource guide, please visit https://tspn.org/northwest-region.

Bethel University does not endorse nor guarantee the accuracy or usefulness of the resources referred to in this document.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Information regarding such relationships at BETHEL UNIVERSITY is available from the Provost, the Department of Student Development, and/or the Title IX and Prevention Services Department. Those Departments can provide referrals to members of the BETHEL UNIVERSITY community which may include crisis referral services, prevention screenings, training programs, etc. Any campus member interested in accessing the services/agencies and training noted above, or in need of more information about BETHEL UNIVERSITY's comprehensive Suicide Prevention and Response Protocols, should contact these departments.

## RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network: The statewide public-private organization responsible for implementing the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention as defined by the 2001 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. TSPN is a grass-roots association which includes counselors, mental health professionals, physicians, clergy, journalists, social workers, and law enforcement personnel, as well as survivors of suicide and suicide attempts. TSPN works across the state under the direction of an Executive Director to eliminate the stigma of suicide and educate communities about the warning signs of suicide, with the ultimate intention of reducing suicide rates in the state of Tennessee.

The Jed Foundation: The nation's leading organization working to prevent suicide and promote mental health among college students.

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988

## APPENDIX

The following pages include these forms:

- No Harm Contract
- Sample Announcement: only to be made when such information has become public
- Sample Email Notification
- Sample Death Notification Statement for Students

## BethelUniversity | NO HARM CONTRACT

I, _____, do hereby agree that I will not harm myself or any other person. If I have serious thoughts of harming myself or any other person, I do hereby agree to refrain from acting on those thoughts.

- I am surrendering my letter to _____ as a symbol that I will not harm myself.
- I state, "I am not in need of crisis intervention" and "I will not harm myself, or anyone else, in any way".
- I agree to maintain all scheduled appointments.

Listed below are at least three people and/or options I will utilize in case of emergency (the person listed as number 1 must be the person completing this form for the recipient):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

If I find all the above-mentioned people/options insufficient in helping me keep this contract AND if I have a plan and serious intent to harm myself or any other person, then I do hereby agree to immediately contact one of the following:

1. **Carey Counseling Adult Crisis Line** 1-800-353-9918
2. **24/7 Campus Security** Line 731-415-7599 (text or call)
3. **Text Suicide Crisis Line** – text TN to 741741 to be connected to a trained professional counselor
4. **Suicide Hotline Crisis Line** 988
5. **Call 911**

Student / Recipient _____ Date _____

Provider _____ Date _____

Chaplain _____ Date _____

Bethel Security (as needed) _____ Date _____

A follow-up appointment is scheduled with _____

on the following date: _____.

## SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENT

Only to be made when such information has become public (Medical Examiner rules death and the Family approves a public announcement). When death hasn't been ruled a suicide as confirmed by Law Enforcement and/or Medical Examiner - wording should NOT be added publicly. Also, when the family requests privacy of the cause of death - wording should NOT include the cause of death. (Note: this is a sample letter. The names/resources may change with time. Please check for updated information before sending this announcement.)

Dear Members of the Bethel University Community:

I am deeply saddened to inform you of the tragic loss of a member of our Bethel University family. [Name of student] [took his/her life/ passed away] on [date]. We offer our deepest condolences to [student name]'s family, friends and loved ones. During this time of great loss, we are reminded of the importance of community. Losing a fellow student and member of our University can be very difficult.

The best way to honor [Student's Name] is to seek help if you or someone you know is struggling. If you're feeling lost, desperate, or alone-please call the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988. The call is free and confidential, and crisis workers are available 24/7 to assist you. Also, you may text "TN" to 741741 for immediate support.

I encourage those who feel they may need additional support to contact the following resources. Students and employees on the McKenzie and Paris campuses can contact Bethel's Safety and Security Office (731-415-7599) or the local Mobile Crisis Number (1-800-353-9918). Referrals for counseling are available on campus to our students through Bethel University's Provost (office: 731-352-6381 cell: 731-415-7212 email: hamesj@bethelu.edu), Bethel University's Department of Student Development (731-352-4225), Bethel's Dean of the Chapel (731-352-4066: office; 731-415-6781: cell; and hamesa@bethelu.edu), and Bethel's Chaplain (731-352-6449: office; 731-535- 3126: cell; and burnsg@bethelu.edu). Students may be referred by these resources to other treatment programs for more intensive treatment.
Students needing academic assistance may contact their respective Deans:

- CAS students, Dr. Keith Herris (731-352-4205; herrisk@bethelu.edu)
- CHS students, Director of Nursing, Dr. Ashley Johnson (731-352-6477; johnsonas@bethelu.edu)
- CHS students, Director of the Physician Assistant Program, Trent Scates (731-352-7651; scatest@betelu.edu)
- CPS students, Pam Hornbuckle (731-336-7040; hornbucklep@bethelu.edu).

Bethel University's Human Resources Department (731-352-6405; williamsv@bethelu.edu) also offers employees assistance through appropriate referrals. Students and employees in Tennessee may also contact the Statewide Crisis Number (1-855-274-7471). Emergency Services (911) should be contacted in the event of an emergency.

Sincerely,

President Perry Moulds

## SAMPLE EMAIL NOTIFICATION

(Note: this is a sample letter. The names/resources may change with time. Please check for updated information before sending this announcement.)

Dear Bethel Family,

You may have heard the sad news of the untimely death of one of our students, (Students Name), a (can identify students major/home location).

Losing a student is one of the saddest events that a close-knit campus community like Bethel can experience. It hurts deeply because we care about each other, and (Students Name) was a part of us with hopes and dreams for the future like we all have. A shocking tragedy of this nature is not redeemed with explanations and answers. It is redeemed through Christ's love, compassion for each other, and bearing one another's burdens. It is faced through faith which trusts in the eternal goodness and grace of God.

Please join me in remembering and praying for (Student's Name)'s family, friends, and our Bethel community in the days ahead. Faculty, counselors, ministers, and others are ready and available to provide support and assistance during this trying time. Don't hesitate to ask for help if you need it. Reach out and encourage others who need support. Students needing additional support, please reach out to Bethel University's Provost (731-352-6381: office; 731-415-7212: cell; hamesj@bethelu.edu), Bethel's Chaplain (731-352-4066: office; 731-415-6781: cell; and hamesa@bethelu.edu), and Bethel's Associate Chaplain (731-352-6449: office; 731-535-3126: cell; and burnsg@bethelu.edu). Bethel University's Human Resources Department (731-352-6405 and williamsv@bethelu.edu) also offers employees assistance through appropriate referrals. God bless you all.

Faithfully,

President Perry Moulds

## SAMPLE DEATH NOTIFICATION STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS

Share this death notification statement with students in small groups/Classrooms when the death has been ruled a suicide.

I am so sorry to tell you all that one of our students, [NAME], has died. I'm also very sad to tell you that the cause of death was suicide. Many of you may also feel very sad. Others may feel other emotions such as

anger or confusion. It's okay to feel whatever emotions you might be feeling. When someone takes their own life, it leads to a lot of questions, some of which may never be completely answered. While we may never know why [NAME] ended their life, we do know that suicide has many causes. In many cases, a mental health condition is part of it, and these conditions are treatable. It's really important if you're not feeling well in any way to reach out for help. Suicide should not be an option. Rumors may come out about what happened, but please don't spread them. They may turn out to be untrue and can be deeply hurtful and unfair to [NAME] and their family and friends. I'm going to do my best to give you the most accurate information as soon as I know it. Each of us will react to [NAME]'s death in our own way, and we need to be respectful of each other. Some of us may have known [NAME] well, and some of us may not. But either way, we may have strong feelings. You might find it difficult to concentrate on schoolwork for a little while. On the other hand, you might find that focusing on school helps take your mind off what has happened. Either is okay. I want you to know that your Professors and I are here for you. We also have counselors here to help us all cope with what happened. If you'd like to talk to one of them, just let me or one of your Professors/Deans know or look for the counselors in [NOTE SPECIFIC LOCATION] between classes. We are all here for you. We are all in this together, and the University will do whatever we can to help you get through this.

## DISSEMINATION

This policy is to be disseminated to all BETHEL UNIVERSITY students and employees on an annual basis.

## FREQUENCY OF REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed on an annual basis.

## RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

This policy is to be maintained and reviewed by the Provost and/or the Title IX and Prevention Services Coordinator. This policy is to be enforced by the positions and departments noted at the beginning of this document.

## PUBLICATION

This policy will be posted with the University's internal protocols and emailed to all Bethel employees and students on an annual basis.