

# YOUR WELL-BEING DURING COVID-19

## INFORMATION FOR RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has identified alarming racial and ethnic disparities in COVID-19 cases and deaths. This crisis makes managing mental and emotional health even more difficult during the pandemic.

### FACT

Racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to have chronic conditions that put them at risk for severe COVID-19 illness. People of color are less likely to have insurance, a doctor, or reliable transportation to get medical care. People of color may avoid testing or treatment due to fear of cost, mistrust of healthcare, and lack of information about resources.

It may be harder for racial and ethnic minorities to isolate or quarantine due to factors such as unstable housing or lack of easy access to food.

Racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to have low-wage jobs and live in poverty, which makes it challenging to take time off work.

Racism, discrimination, violence and poverty can worsen mental illness and prevent minorities from seeking help.

### YOU SHOULD KNOW

#### Everyone who needs a test can be tested.

There are low-cost and no-cost options, even for people who don't have insurance.

- No insurance? Apply at [Michigan.gov/MIBridges](https://Michigan.gov/MIBridges)
- Find a testing site (including free tests) at [Michigan.gov/CoronavirusTest](https://Michigan.gov/CoronavirusTest)
- Your insurance provider may be able to help with transportation to medical appointments. Call them for details.

#### Help is available.

Call 2-1-1 or visit [Michigan.gov/MIBridges](https://Michigan.gov/MIBridges) to see what help there is for housing, food, utilities and other important needs.

#### Your livelihood is important.

You may be eligible for paid sick time or unemployment if you are sick with COVID-19 or caring for a sick family member. Talk to your employer or apply for unemployment at [Michigan.gov/UIA](https://Michigan.gov/UIA).

#### Your mental health matters.

There are options for private, free counseling and support. Find the right resource for you at [Michigan.gov/StayWell](https://Michigan.gov/StayWell).



## WHEN SHOULD I SEEK HELP FOR MY MENTAL HEALTH?

If you feel stressed, uncertain, afraid of becoming ill or disrupted by changes in routine, you are not alone, many people feel this way. Caring for your mental well-being is a priority.

Signs and symptoms of anxiety, stress and depression look a little different for everyone, but here is what to look for:

- Irritability
- Feelings of confusion
- Feelings of being overwhelmed easily
- Tearfulness
- Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleep
- Increased use of substances to cope
- Changes in energy

If you notice these signs and symptoms it is time to get help. Call 211 to access mental health support in your area or find a COVID-19 resource on the right.

If you are considering harm to yourself or others, consider the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (contact info on the right) or call 911 for immediate support.



## WHERE CAN I GET FREE HELP FOR MY MENTAL HEALTH?

For individuals experiencing emotional distress in the context of the COVID-19 crisis:

- Michigan Stay Well counseling line - 24/7
  - Call 888-535-6136 and press “8.”

For individuals living with ongoing mental health conditions:

- Certified Peer Support Warmline – daily 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
  - Call 888-PEER-753 (888-733-7753)

For individuals in crisis, including those considering suicide:

- National Disaster Distress Helpline – 24/7
  - Call 800-985-5990
  - Text TalkWithUs to 66746
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 24/7
  - Call 800-273-8255
  - Text TALK to 741741

For mindfulness and meditation:

- Guided meditation and mindfulness exercises: [Headspace.com/MI](https://www.headspace.com/MI)
- [Simple mindfulness activities](#)

**Find more resources to help cope with the added stress of the COVID-19 pandemic at [Michigan.gov/StayWell](https://Michigan.gov/StayWell).**

# CARING FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

## SIMPLE ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE FOR YOUR WELL-BEING

- Seek help if your physical or mental health symptoms worsen, and ensure that you have access to necessary medications for your health condition.
- Create a schedule that can be put into place in your household. Adjust it to fit your needs and resources, allowing for flexibility.
- Stay connected to public health announcements and updated news, but set aside time for media breaks, turn off the TV, and focus on other things.
- Address feelings of helplessness by focusing on what you can control.
- Talk to someone you trust about your worries. Open discussions help individuals to support one another, and feel heard.
- Access resources outside the family system. This could be a friend, someone from a faith-based community, a counselor or anyone you trust.
- Try to avoid alcohol and drugs as a means to reduce stress and anxiety.
- Rely on natural networks, cultural communities, and faith-based supports.
- Know that you are truly not alone. This situation can lead to stress and anxiety for all people, but we are all in this together.

### Share information with your doctor to help them better understand how to help you.

- Share your cultural identity and heritage. You are the owner of your lived experience and it has value in medical treatment.
- Share your traditional beliefs on emotional and mental distress and preferred ways to care for your mental health.
- Request translation and interpretation services as needed.

**If you have experienced or witnessed discrimination file a complaint with:**



**Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR)**