**What is a Psychiatric Crisis?**
A psychiatric crisis exists when an individual exhibits symptoms of severe mental illness such as:

- Suicidal, homicidal or other violent thoughts or actions
- Psychosis (partial or complete loss of the ability to distinguish what is real from what is not, e.g., hallucinations, delusions, paranoia)
- Inability to provide basic self-care

**What Help is Available?**
Every reasonable effort should be made to encourage individuals with symptoms like those above to seek treatment – from medical or psychiatric providers, a hospital ER – the local mental health agency.

When someone in psychiatric crisis refuses or is unable to seek or accept treatment, a family member, caregiver, mental health provider or other interested party may be able to petition for court-ordered treatment. At least two – and, in most states, three – forms of involuntary treatment are authorized by state law.

- Emergency hospitalization in a treatment facility for a psychiatric evaluation
- Court-ordered treatment in a hospital (inpatient commitment)
- Court-ordered treatment in the community (outpatient commitment, often called assisted outpatient treatment or AOT)

Additional resources and strategies are on the GET HELP pages at www.TreatmentAdvocacyCenter.org

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**Emergency Resources**

The following public and private agencies and organizations may provide assistance or critical information in a psychiatric crisis.

**USER INSTRUCTIONS:**
This panel is intentionally left blank for insertion of contact information for local resources that family members and others may need in a crisis. If possible, briefly explain the role of each resource.

Possibilities include:

- Department of Mental Health
- Hotlines (mental health department, state health and welfare agencies, suicide prevention, others)
- Mental health crisis team
- Police or sheriff’s department non-emergency numbers
- Public agency that can petition the court for involuntary treatment
- Local NAMI helpline or other local support groups

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**Personal Contacts**

Use this space to fill in key names and numbers to contact in an emergency.

- Standby support person(s)
- Case worker
- Medical provider(s)
- Therapist/social worker(s)
- Attorney familiar with mental health law
- Friends of your loved one
- Other key contacts