

DHS-Columbia Protocol Mobile App User Guide



May 2022

Brief Background

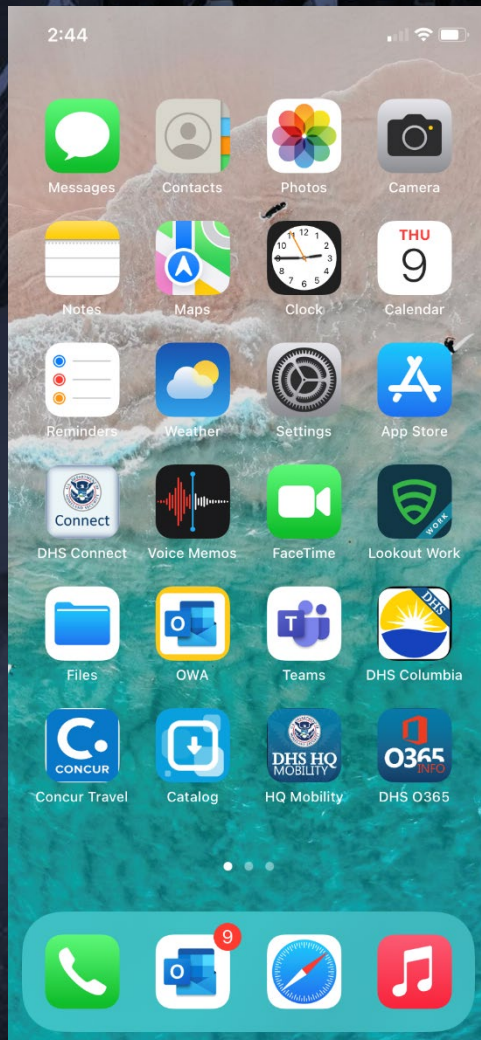


- The Columbia Protocol is based on the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS), an evidence-based instrument designed to assess suicide risk severity.
- The DHS-Columbia Protocol Mobile App utilizes the existing Columbia Protocol App for a customized DHS (and all its components) version.
- The app is designed to be used by anybody, adolescents to adults, to enter a conversation with someone suspected of needing help. The app assists the user to ask a few questions (up to six questions) about another person's suicidal thoughts and behaviors, then generates recommended steps and support resources. The support resources include Component-specific Employee Assistance Program contact information.

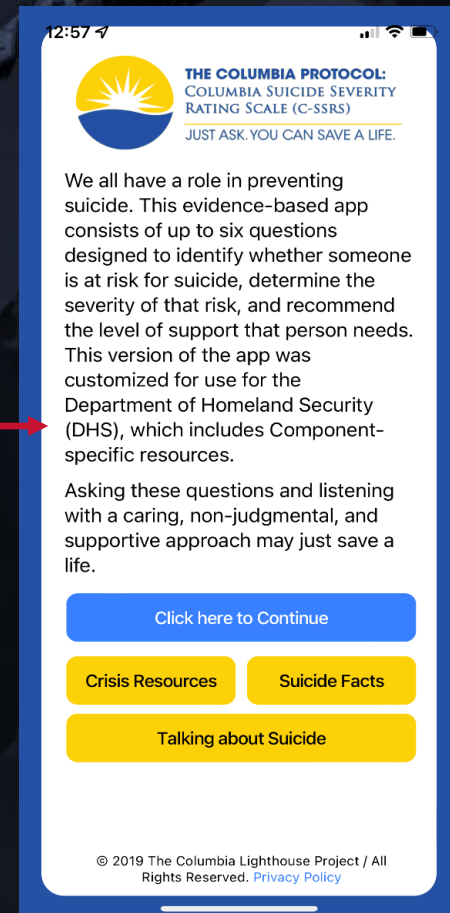
Opening the DHS-Columbia Protocol App



From your phone's desktop, find/click DHS-Columbia App



Introductory page



Introductory Page Options



- From the opening screen, the user can immediately access crisis resources, become better familiar with the topic of suicide, learn more about talking about suicide, or continue to the questions.
- There is also a privacy policy link at the bottom of the page.



THE COLUMBIA PROTOCOL:
COLUMBIA SUICIDE SEVERITY
RATING SCALE (C-SSRS)
JUST ASK. YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE.

We all have a role in preventing suicide. This evidence-based app consists of up to six questions designed to identify whether someone is at risk for suicide, determine the severity of that risk, and recommend the level of support that person needs. This version of the app was customized for use for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which includes Component-specific resources.

Asking these questions and listening with a caring, non-judgmental, and supportive approach may just save a life.

[Click here to Continue](#)

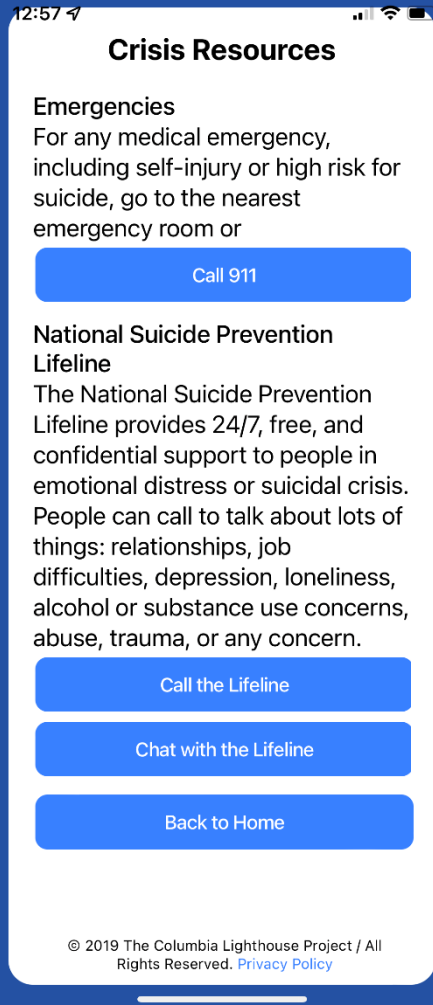
[Crisis Resources](#)

[Suicide Facts](#)

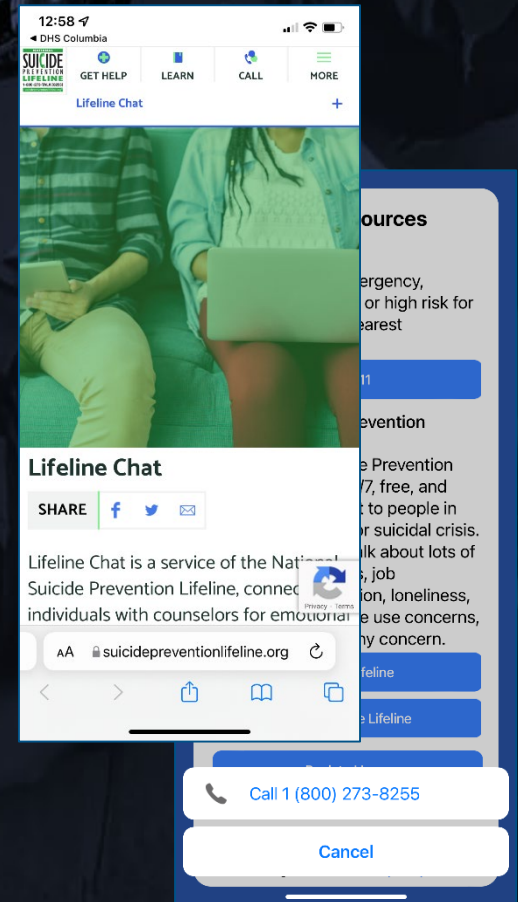
[Talking about Suicide](#)

© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. [Privacy Policy](#)

Crisis Resources



- If the user clearly identifies an emergent situation, clicking on *Crisis Resources* opens options to call 911 or contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, by phone or by chat (24/7).
- Buttons are linked for action.



Crisis Resources – Veteran Options



1:14

Crisis Resources

Lifeline

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides 24/7, free, and confidential support to people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis. People can call to talk about lots of things: relationships, job difficulties, depression, loneliness, alcohol or substance use concerns, abuse, trauma, or any concern.

Call the Lifeline

Chat with the Lifeline

Veteran Crisis Line

Calls the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – Press 1, for expanded options for Veterans.

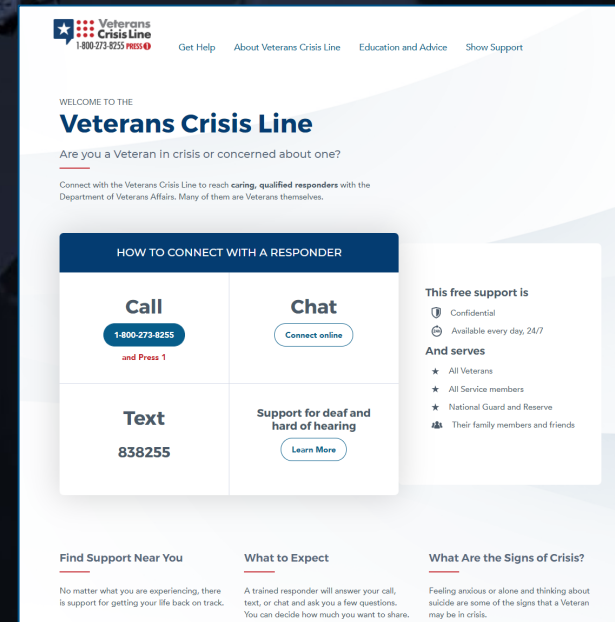
Call the Veterans Crisis Line

Text Veterans Crisis Line

Back to Home

© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. [Privacy Policy](#)

- Scrolling down the page reveals options for Veterans, including a texting option.
- The Veterans Crisis Line includes counselors specially trained to help Veterans, many are Veterans themselves.
- Suicide Prevention Coordinators, through the VA, are available to connect Veterans to additional local resources.



About the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

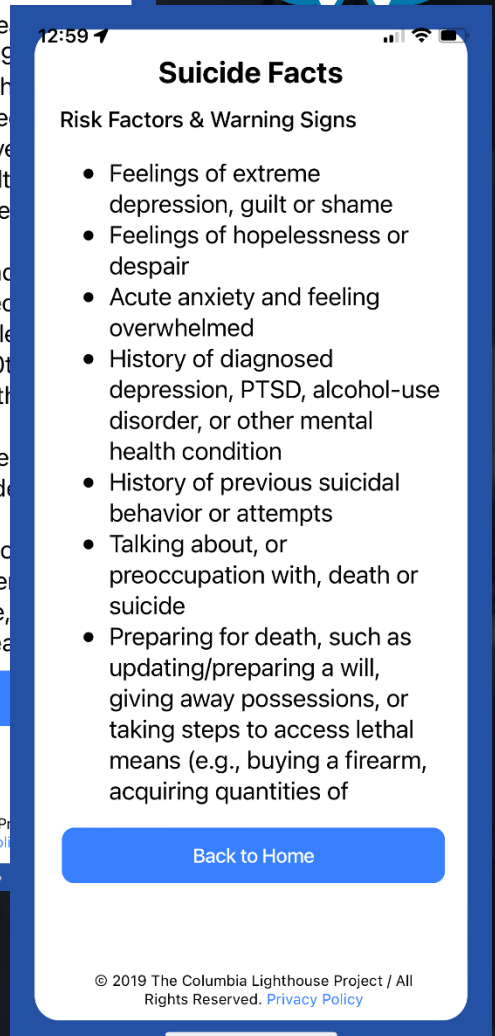
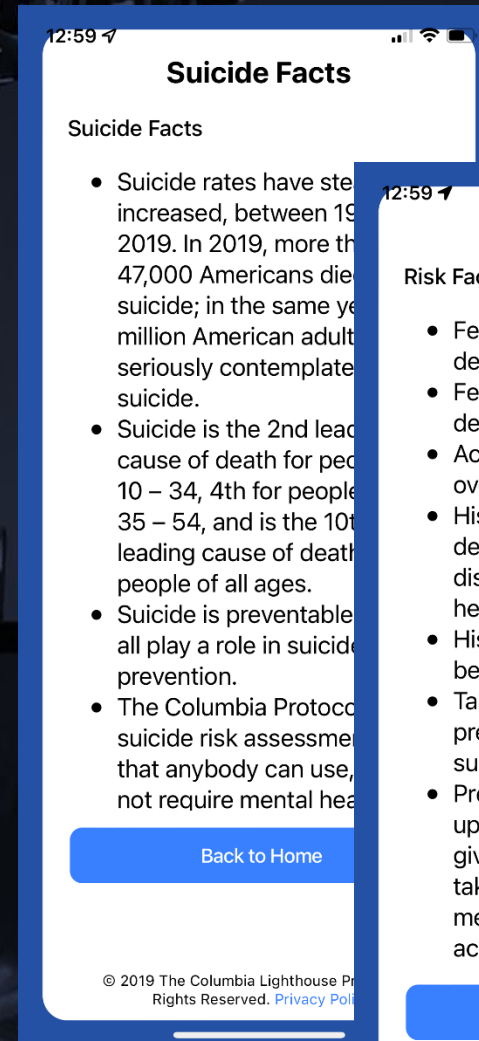
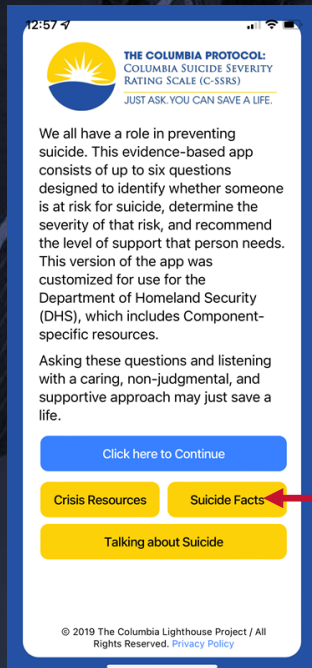


- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free, confidential, 24/7 emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.
- Staffed by trained crisis counselors
- Available by phone: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Available by private chat
- Counselors will listen, understand how your problem is affecting you, provide support, and share any resources that may be helpful.
- Anyone can call, regardless of the type of concerns the person has and whether or not the person is thinking of suicide

Suicide Facts Page



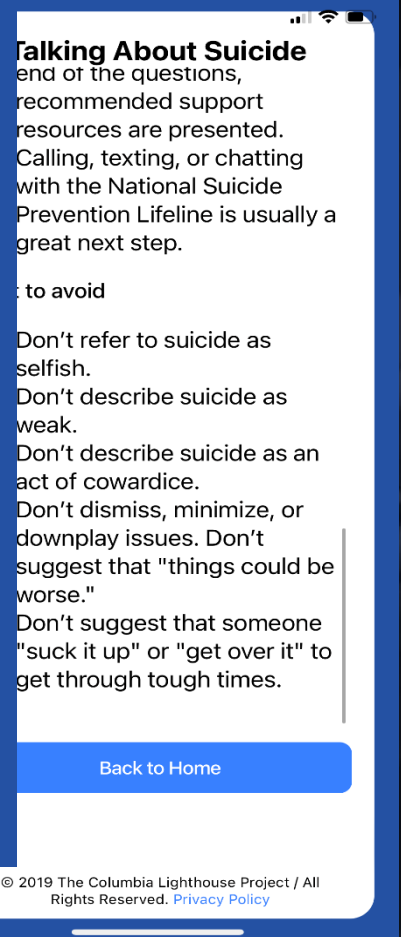
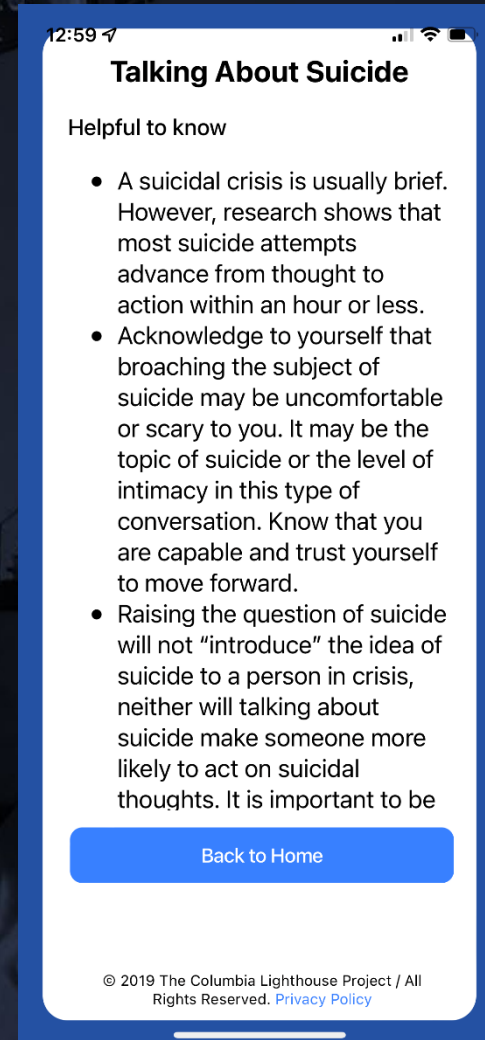
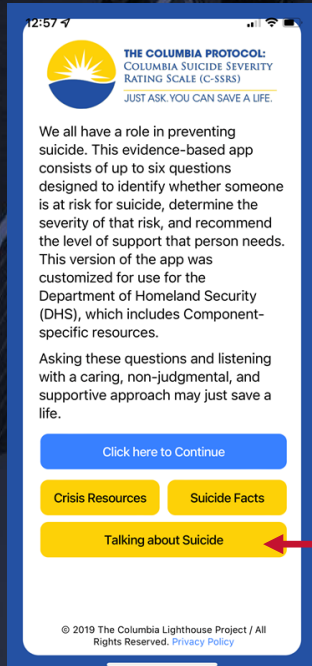
- From the app's opening page, the user can learn about suicide and scroll down the page for warning signs and risk factors.



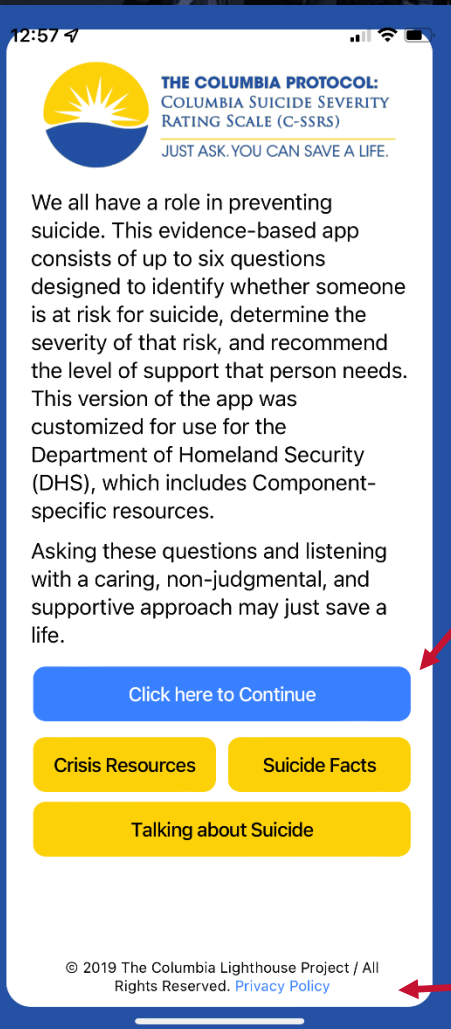
Talking About Suicide Page



- Talking about suicide and getting help can be difficult for many reasons. This page provides tips and do's and don'ts that may help the user feel more comfortable and confident talking about suicide.



Protocol Questions and Privacy



- Clicking “Click here to Continue” will present the protocol questions.
- The questions are of a sensitive nature and it’s important to know that the app is for private use.
- The app does not ask for nor does it collect any personally identifiable information.
- The response options are in a Yes/No format. These responses are not collected, stored, or distributed by the app.
- No responses are recorded or tied to your identity.
- Privacy Policy is accessible through the link at the bottom of each page.

The Columbia Protocol



- The Columbia Protocol is comprised of straightforward questions that anyone can ask.
- Listening with an intent to understand, being present and available without judgment can be a vital act of caring and support.
- Each question requires a Yes or No response. Click the Continue button at the bottom of the screen to advance to the next question.
- Note that if Questions 1 and 2 are answered, “no”, then Question 6 will follow.

THE COLUMBIA PROTOCOL:
COLUMBIA SUICIDE SEVERITY
RATING SCALE (C-SSRS)
JUST ASK, YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE.

1) Within the last month, have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Back Continue

© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. Privacy Policy

THE COLUMBIA PROTOCOL:
COLUMBIA SUICIDE SEVERITY
RATING SCALE (C-SSRS)
JUST ASK, YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE.

2) Have you actually had any thoughts about killing yourself?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Back Continue

© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. Privacy Policy

THE COLUMBIA PROTOCOL:
COLUMBIA SUICIDE SEVERITY
RATING SCALE (C-SSRS)
JUST ASK, YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE.

3) Have you thought about how you might do this?

e.g. "I thought about taking an overdose but I never made a specific plan as to when where or how I would actually do it... and would never go through with it."

☒ Yes
☐ No

Back Continue

© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. Privacy Policy

THE COLUMBIA PROTOCOL:
COLUMBIA SUICIDE SEVERITY
RATING SCALE (C-SSRS)
JUST ASK, YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE.

4) Have you had these thoughts and had any intention of acting on them?

for example "I had the thought of killing myself and I'm not sure whether I would do it or not."

☒ Yes
☐ No

Back Continue

© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. Privacy Policy

THE COLUMBIA PROTOCOL:
COLUMBIA SUICIDE SEVERITY
RATING SCALE (C-SSRS)
JUST ASK, YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE.

5) Have you started to work out or worked out the details of how to kill yourself? Do you intend to carry out this plan?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Back Continue

© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. Privacy Policy

THE COLUMBIA PROTOCOL:
COLUMBIA SUICIDE SEVERITY
RATING SCALE (C-SSRS)
JUST ASK, YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE.

6) Have you ever done anything, started to do anything, or prepared to do anything to end your life?

e.g. "Collected pills, wrote a suicide note, got a gun, started to do something to end your life but stopped yourself (changed your mind) or someone else stopped you, attempted to kill yourself."

☒ Yes
☐ No

Back Continue

© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. Privacy Policy

THE COLUMBIA PROTOCOL:
COLUMBIA SUICIDE SEVERITY
RATING SCALE (C-SSRS)
JUST ASK, YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE.

Was this within the past 3 months?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Back Continue

© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. Privacy Policy

Determining Level of Suicide Risk



- Based on the responses, the Columbia Protocol calculates a **Low**, **Moderate**, or **High** risk.
- Each risk category assigns recommended support resources and next steps, based on risk.
- In all cases, a connection with a helping resource is recommended.
- The app prompts the user to select your specific DHS Component, which then provides the contact number (press to call) for that component's Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

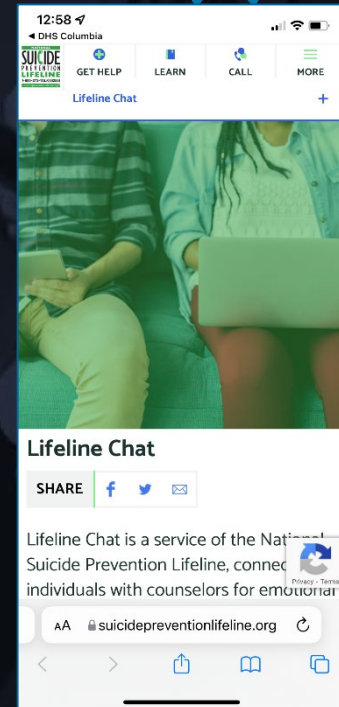
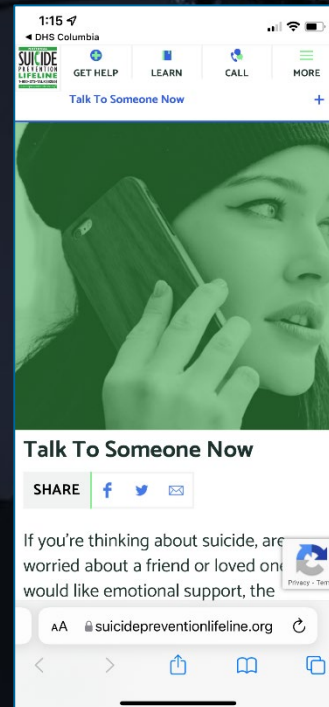
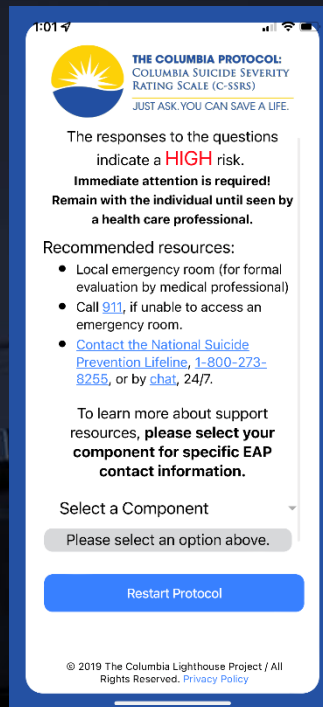
A screenshot of the Columbia Protocol app interface. At the top, it says "THE COLUMBIA PROTOCOL: COLUMBIA SUICIDE SEVERITY RATING SCALE (C-SSRS)" and "JUST ASK. YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE." Below this, it states "The responses to the questions indicate a LOW risk." Under "Recommended resources:", it lists: "Support from family and friends", "Peer Support program", "Employee Assistance Program (EAP)", "Mental health care", and "National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-8255, or chat at https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/, available 24/7". It then says "To learn more about support resources, please select your component for specific EAP contact information." Below this is a dropdown menu labeled "Select a Component" with the text "Please select an option above." and a blue button labeled "Restart Protocol". At the bottom, it says "© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. Privacy Policy".A screenshot of the Columbia Protocol app interface, showing a dropdown menu for selecting a component. The menu is open, showing options: "DHS HQ", "CBP", "U.S. Coast Guard", and "USCIS". The "DHS HQ" option is selected, indicated by a blue checkmark. Below the menu is a blue button labeled "Restart Protocol". At the bottom, it says "© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. Privacy Policy".A screenshot of the Columbia Protocol app interface, showing the contact number for the selected component. It states "The responses to the questions indicate a LOW risk." Under "Recommended resources:", it lists: "Support from family and friends", "Peer Support program", "Employee Assistance Program (EAP)", "Mental health care", and "National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-8255, or chat at https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/, available 24/7". It then says "To learn more about support resources, please select your component for specific EAP contact information." Below this is a dropdown menu labeled "DHS HQ" with the text "Please select an option above." and a blue button labeled "Restart Protocol". At the bottom, it says "© 2019 The Columbia Lighthouse Project / All Rights Reserved. Privacy Policy".

- It is important to know that risk category reflects risk at a particular point in time and can change with changing circumstances, physiological state, and mental status.
- Your continued support, willingness to listen, dialog about suicidal thoughts, and commitments to safety are encouraged.

Determining Level of Suicide Risk - continued



- **High** risk indicates a need for immediate attention, as safety is of utmost concern.
- Escorting your coworker, friend, or family member to the nearest Emergency Room for formal evaluation and care is advised.
- Other recommended resources are hyperlinked for immediate action.
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline will provide support and recommend further connection to needed resources.



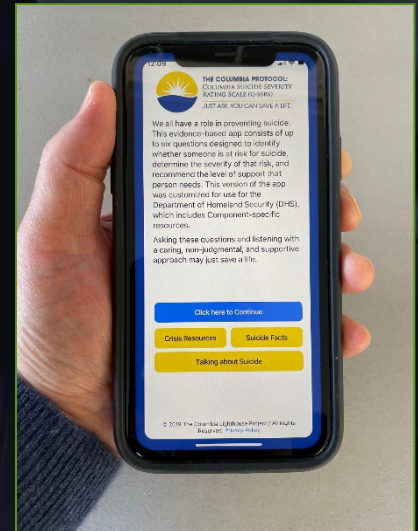
Safety Note

- During a time of crisis, ensuring time and space between a person in crisis and their access to lethal means, including firearms, medications/pills, knives, and other means can be highly effective in preventing suicide. This is usually a cooperative endeavor, and your assistance can be key.

How to obtain the DHS-Columbia Protocol App



- For HQ employees, the DHS-Columbia Protocol app will be pushed to your government work iPhones in the coming weeks. Look for it on your iPhone Desktop.
- Employees (HQ and Components) and family members may also download the app to their personal phones through either the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.



For Further Assistance



Additional questions may be directed to:

CDR LaMar Henderson

LaMar.B.Henderson@USCG.mil