



# DHS-Columbia Protocol Mobile App User Guide



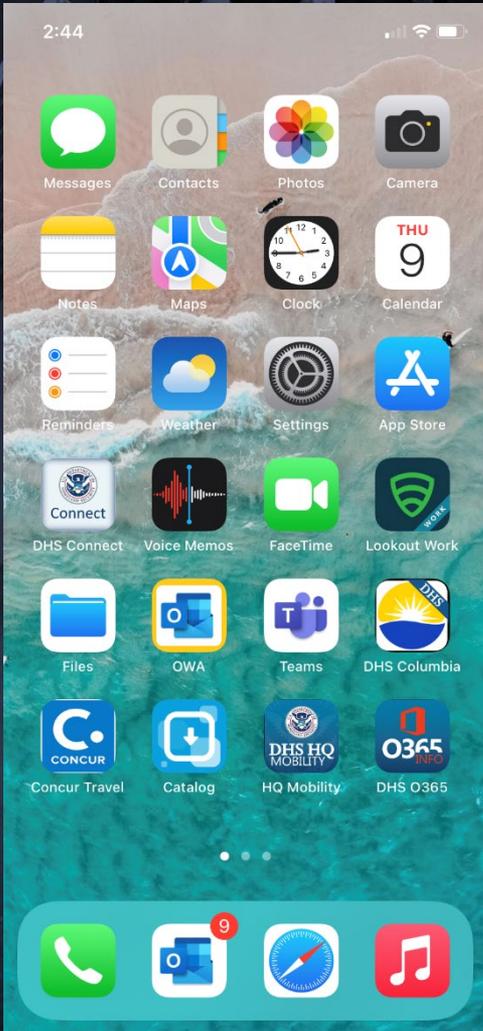
May 2022

# Brief Background



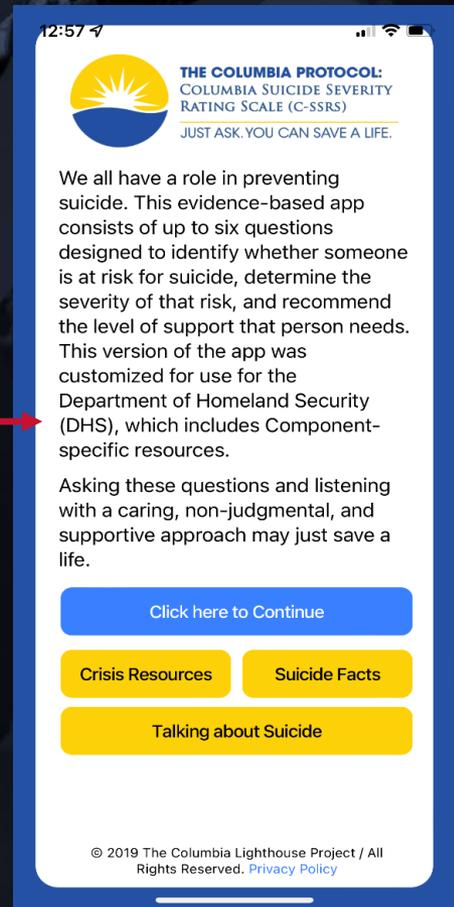
- The Columbia Protocol is based on the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS), an evidence-based instrument designed to assess suicide risk severity.
- The DHS-Columbia Protocol Mobile App utilizes the existing Columbia Protocol App for a customized DHS (and all its components) version.
- The 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

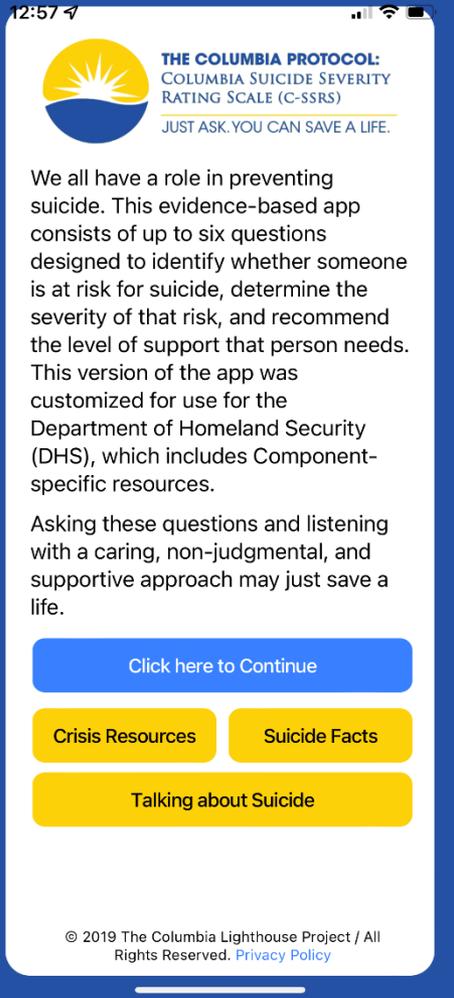


From your phone's desktop, find/click DHS-Columbia App

Introductory page

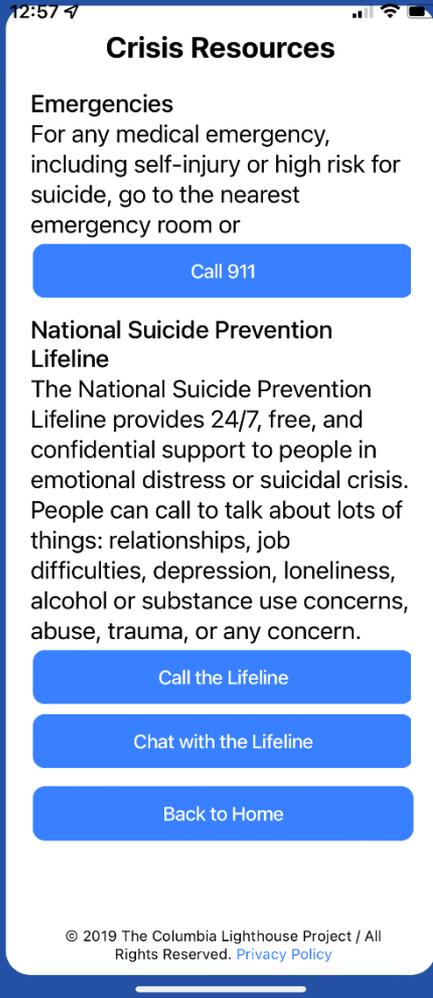


# Introductory Page Options

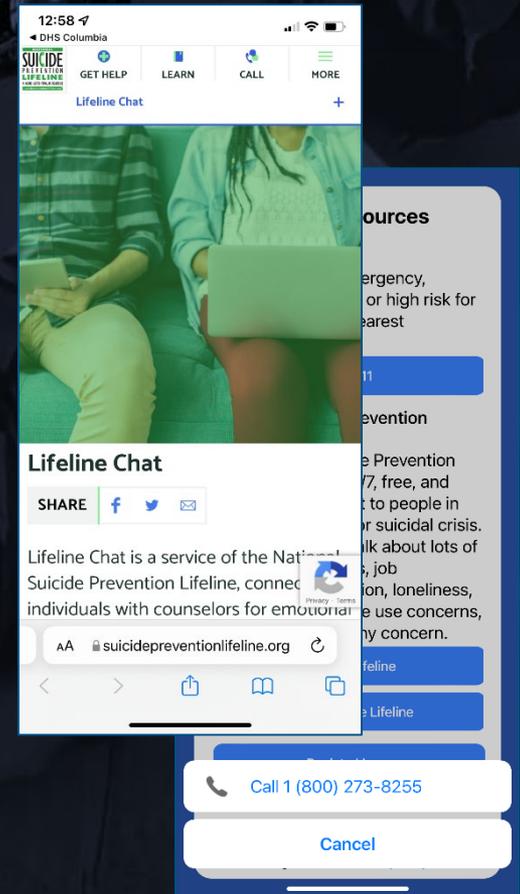


- From the opening screen, the user can immediately access crisis resources, become better familiar with the topic of suicide, learn more about talking about suicide, or continue to the questions.
- There is also a privacy policy link at the bottom of the page.

# 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



- 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.

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](#)

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**Veterans Crisis Line**  
1-800-273-8255

Get Help About Veterans Crisis Line Education and Advice Show Support

WELCOME TO THE  
**Veterans Crisis Line**

Are you a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one?

Connect with the Veterans Crisis Line to reach caring, qualified responders with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Many of them are Veterans themselves.

**HOW TO CONNECT WITH A RESPONDER**

<b>Call</b> 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1	<b>Chat</b> Connect online
<b>Text</b> 838255	<b>Support for deaf and hard of hearing</b> Learn More

**This free support is**

- Confidential
- Available every day, 24/7

**And serves**

- All Veterans
- All Service members
- National Guard and Reserve
- Their family members and friends

**Find Support Near You**      **What to Expect**      **What Are the Signs of Crisis?**

No matter what you are experiencing, there is support for getting your life back on track.

A trained responder will answer your call, text, or chat and ask you a few questions. You can decide how much you want to share.

Feeling anxious or alone and thinking about suicide are some of the signs that a Veteran may be in crisis.

# About the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

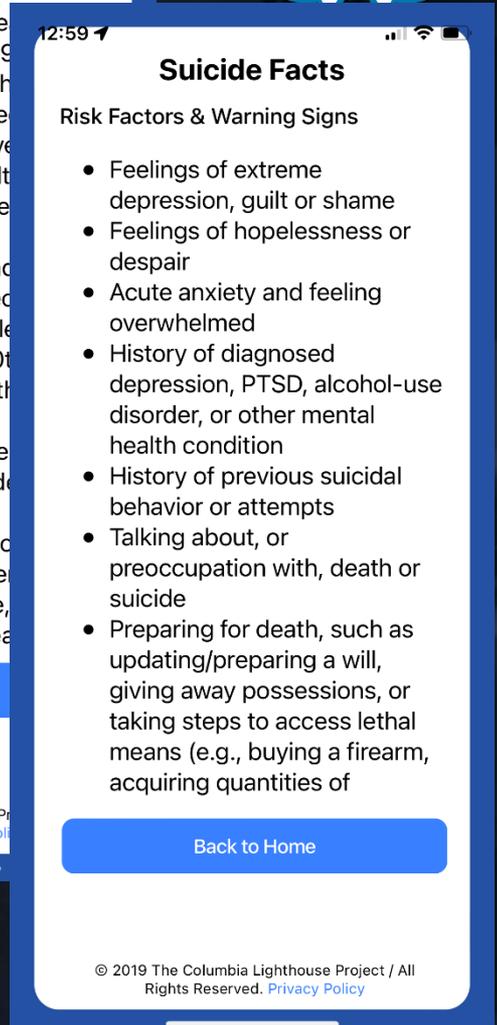
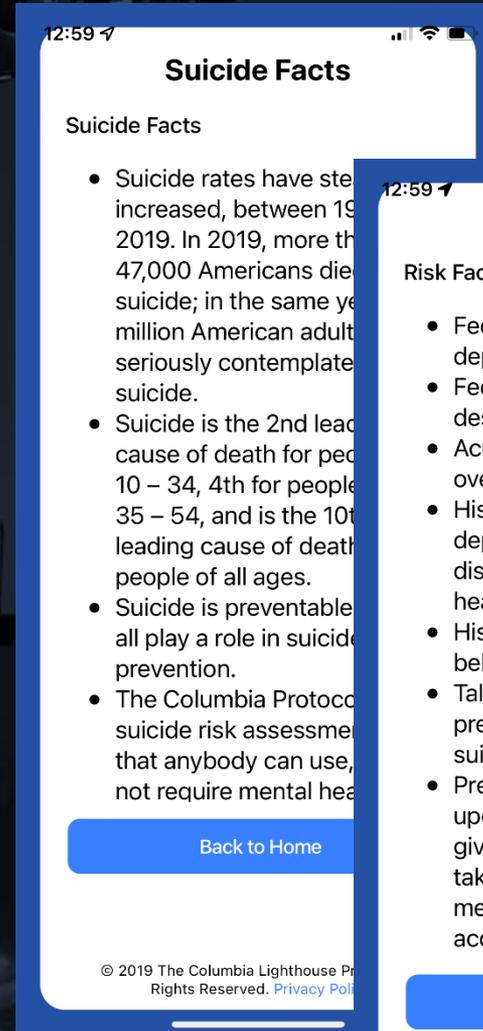
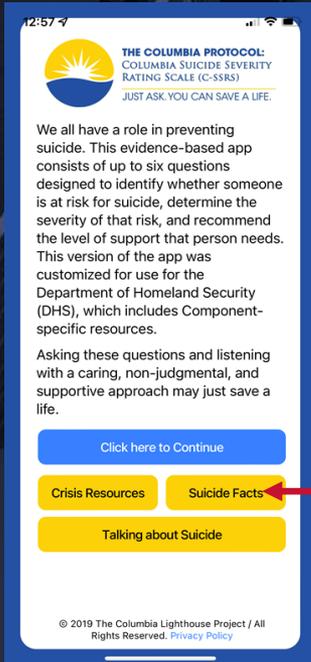


- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free, confidential, 24/7 emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.
- Staffed by trained crisis counselors
- Available by phone: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Available by private 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



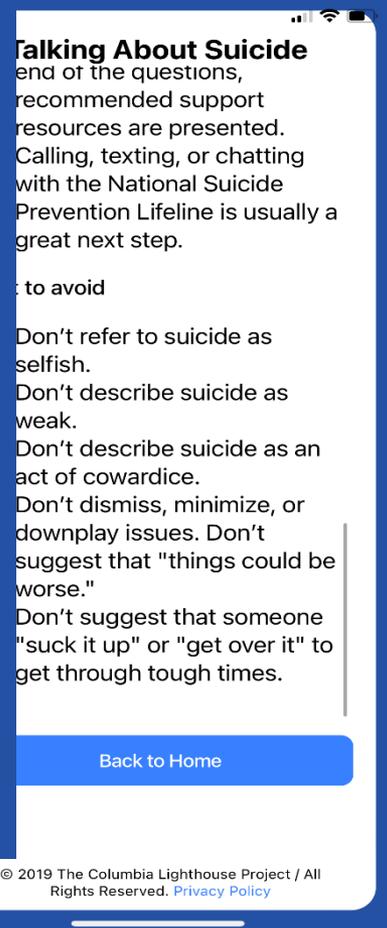
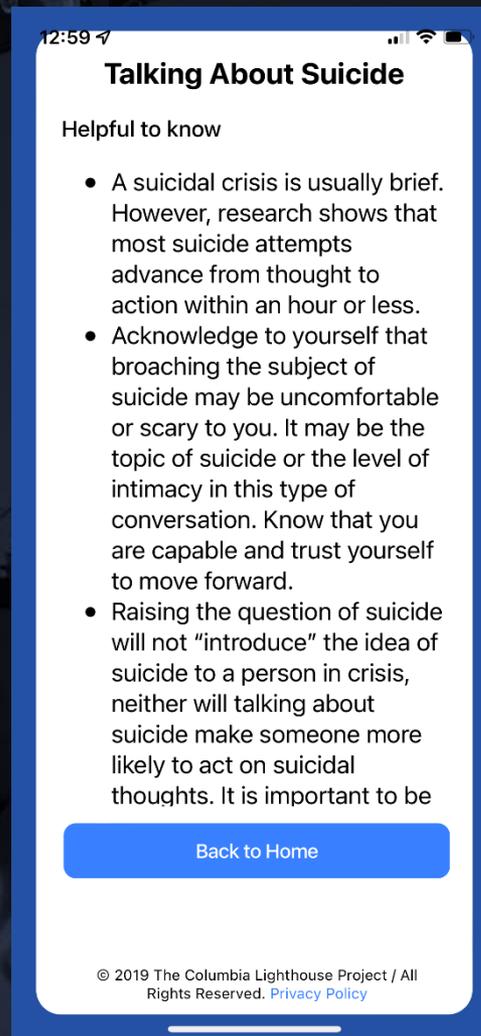
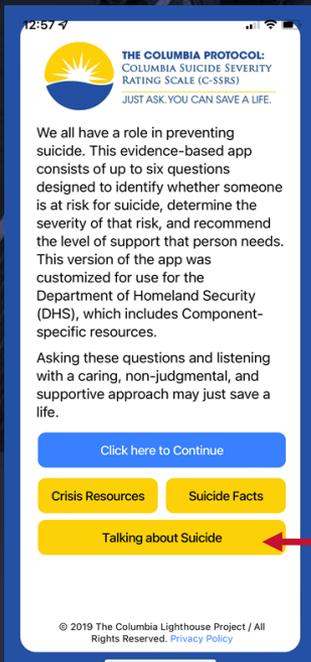
- From the app's opening page, the user can learn about suicide and scroll down the page for warning signs and risk factors.



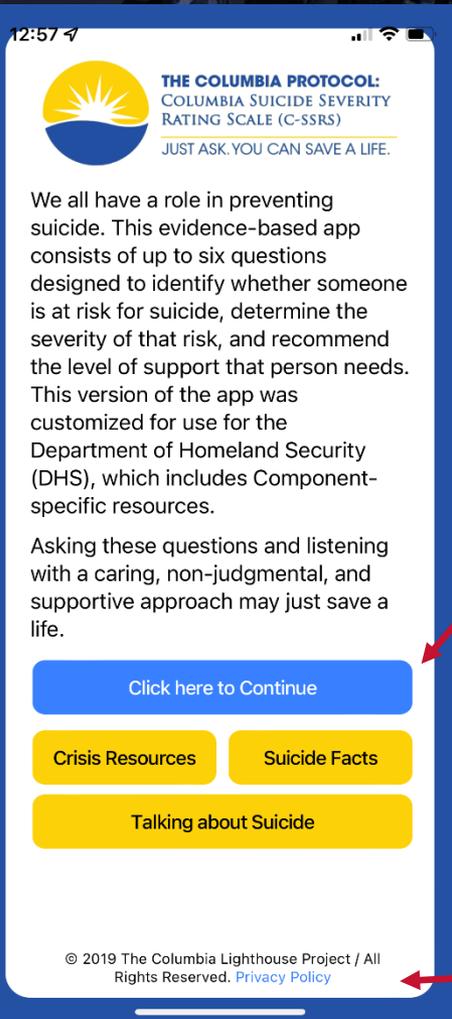
# Talking About Suicide Page



- 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 image displays seven screenshots of the Columbia Protocol app interface, arranged in two rows. Each screenshot shows a question with a "Yes" or "No" radio button option and a "Continue" button. The app title is "THE COLUMBIA PROTOCOL: COLUMBIA SUICIDE SEVERITY RATING SCALE (C-SSRS) JUST ASK, YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE.".

**Question 1:** Within the last month, have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?  
 Yes  
 No

**Question 2:** Have you actually had any thoughts about killing yourself?  
 Yes  
 No

**Question 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

**Question 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

**Question 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

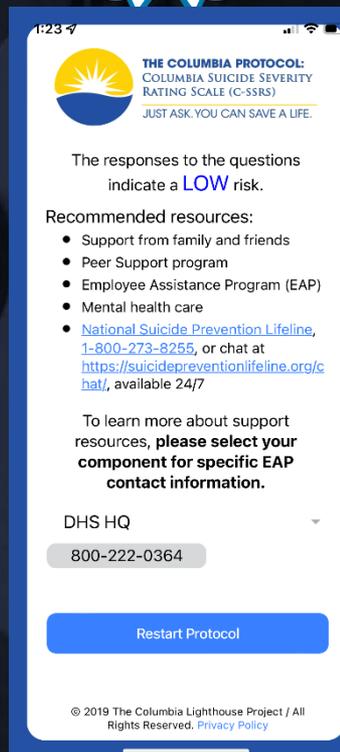
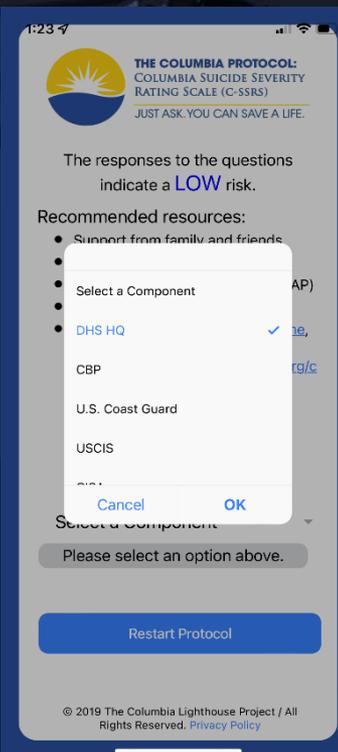
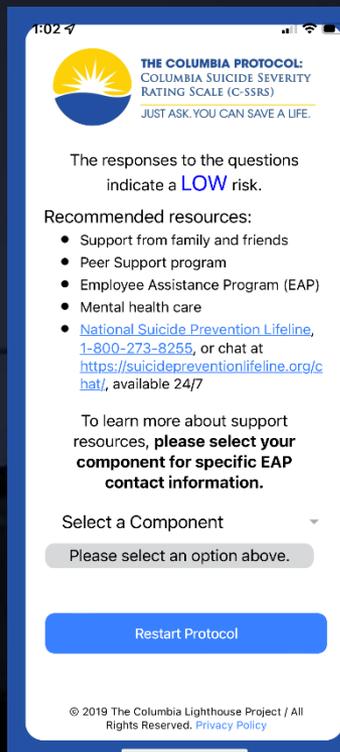
**Question 6:** Have you ever done anything, started to do anything, or prepared to do anything to end your life?  
e.g. "Collected pills, wrote a suicide note, got a gun, started to do something to end your life but stopped yourself (changed your mind) or someone else stopped you, attempted to kill yourself."  
 Yes  
 No

**Question 7:** Was this within the past 3 months?  
 Yes  
 No

# 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)

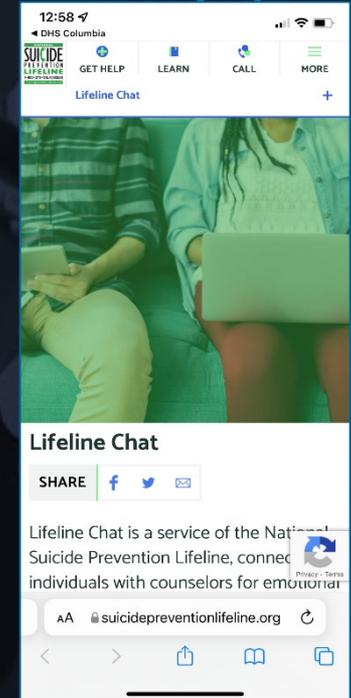
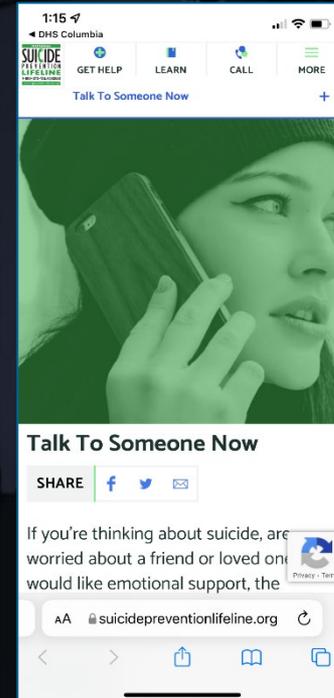
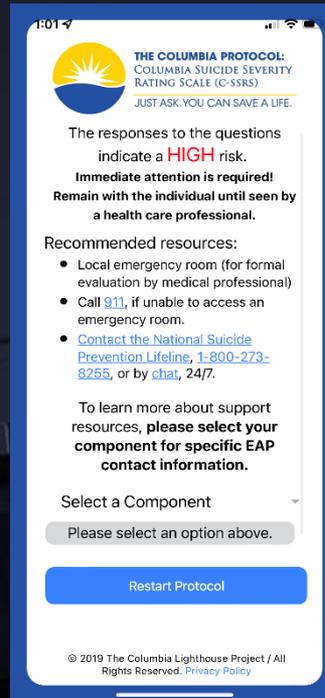


- It is important to know that risk category reflects risk at a particular point in time and can change with changing circumstances, physiological state, and mental status.
- Your continued support, willingness to listen, dialog about suicidal thoughts, and commitments to safety are encouraged.

# 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.

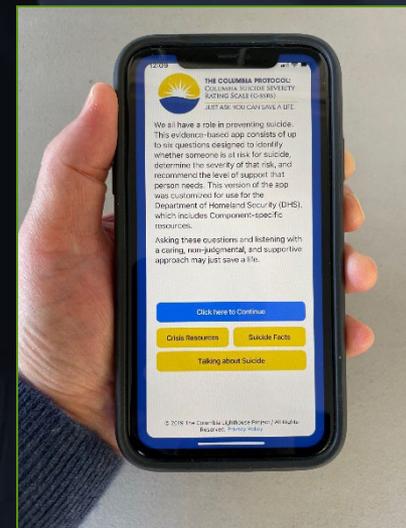
# How to obtain the DHS-Columbia Protocol App



- 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](mailto:LaMar.B.Henderson@USCG.mil)