## MENTAL ILLNESS CRISIS

### DO

1. **REMEMBER**: a person with a mental illness has the RIGHT to FAIR TREATMENT and police protection.

2. Continually ASSESS THE SITUATION for dangerousness.

3. MAINTAIN ADEQUATE SPACE between you and the subject.

4. **BE CALM**.

5. **BE HELPFUL**. Respond to basic needs.

6. **GIVE FIRM, CLEAR DIRECTIONS**; one person should talk to the subject.

7. **RESPOND TO FEELINGS**, rather than content.

8. Respond to DELUSIONS by talking about the person's feelings rather than what he or she is saying.

### DON'T

1. **ARREST** a person for mentally ill behavior not criminal in nature.

2. **JOIN** into behavior related to the person's mental illness.

3. **STARE** at the subject.

4. **CONFUSE** the subject. One person should interact with the subject. Follow through with directions or commands.

5. **TOUCH** the subject unless necessary. For people with mental illnesses it may cause fear and lead to violence.

6. **GIVE MULTIPLE CHOICES**. This can increase the subject's confusion.

7. **WHISPER, JOKE OR LAUGH**.

8. **DECEIVE** the subject. Dishonesty increases fear and suspicion; the subject will likely remember it in any subsequent contacts.

### 1989 Mental Health Screening Law:

**30:4-27.7** A law enforcement officer... acting in good faith pursuant to this act who takes reasonable steps to assess, take custody of, detain or transport an individual for the purpose of mental health assessment or treatment is immune from civil and criminal liability.

### 24 hour CRISIS HOTLINE:

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Psychiatric Emergency/Screening

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