Mental Health Resources and Options

If this is an emergency, please call 9-1-1 or seek help at an emergency room. If you are having concerning thoughts, please call or text 9-8-8 or reach out on their website, *988lifeline.org*.

Resources and options while waiting to be seen by a mental health provider

- **See your primary care provider.** While general practitioners do not specialize in mental health, they can run tests to ensure physical issues are not causing the problems, start you on medications, suggest resources, and offer support.

- **Ask to be on multiple waitlists.** Sign up to be on waitlists through multiple agencies and/or clinics so you are able to accept the soonest appointment offered.

- **Use your Employee Assistance Program (EAP).** Ask your employer's HR department if they offer an EAP as part of the benefit package. Many employers do and an EAP can help connect you to other resources or provide a few sessions to get you started quickly.

- **Write down the questions you have for a new provider.** Thinking through the questions you would like to ask a potential mental health provider can help you narrow your search to find a provider that will best fit your needs. Finding a provider who you connect with will prevent frustrations in your experience later. Examples of questions include:
  - ► How long have you been practicing?
  - ► What problems or issues do you usually treat?
  - ► How do you approach [*fill in the blank*]?

- **Use apps or computer-based mental health resources.** There are many FREE apps available for general mental health concerns. The website ptsd.va.gov/appvid/mobile provides lists of apps based on the specific need. These can be used on the digital platform with which you are most comfortable.

- **Learn as much as you can about mental health and your specific concerns.** By using reputable sites to find books and internet articles about your issues, you may find online support and/or learn ways to manage your symptoms. Two websites that are great places to start are the National Institute of Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov/) or the National Alliance on Mental Illness (www.nami.org).

- **Find an online or in-person support group.** Attending groups online or in person can be a great way to get support before, during, and after therapy. Use Google to search your main issue and "support groups" to find options. You may also find support groups on the websites listed above.

- **Practice good self-care.** It can be difficult to take care of yourself when you are not feeling well, but do your best to drink water, get plenty of rest, eat healthy and nutritious food, do some gentle exercise, and connect to your social support system. Most important, be kind and compassionate with yourself.