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# MANAGER BULLETIN LIFE ADVISOR

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March 2020

**Ulliance**  
Enhancing People. Improving Business.



Because employees bring more to work than just their lunches.



## Anxiety During a Public Health Crisis: Ulliance Can Help with That

Although the name may change, the anxiety surrounding the crisis stays the same. Whether we're talking about a type of Coronavirus, (such as the current COVID-19 or SARS), Bird Flu, or Ebola, a public health crisis is just



that – a crisis. And with any crisis, people will react accordingly. Common stress reactions for these situations are generally similar and easily identifiable, especially if symptoms develop into something that affects an individual's mental well-being or ability to function. So how can Ulliance help Managers cope with their own anxiety while also supporting concerned employees? Being mindful of common signs of anxiety, and the simple suggestions below can help leaders understand their own emotional reactions so they can contribute to a culture of support during a difficult period.



# BE MINDFUL OF COMMON SIGNS OF ANXIETY



## Dos and Don'ts

**DON'T** look the other way if false information, gossip or panic amongst your employees ensues.

**DO** consult your leadership and your Risk Management Department to reference or your organization's Emergency Procedures.

**DON'T** trust everything you read. Some articles available on the internet do not contain facts verified by reputable sources.

**DO** focus on and guide your employees to reputable sites such as the CDC <https://www.cdc.gov> and/or World Health Organization <https://www.who.int> or if your place of employment has an intranet posting/link that they have already put together for you, reference that.

**DON'T** watch news outlets for hours on end.

**DO** minimally watch the news or set a time limit, change the channel or turn off the TV completely.

**DON'T** rely on social media for facts.

**DO** minimize your screen time on social media. Information on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter may not be accurate and can feel very overwhelming, so it's best to limit exposure.

**DON'T** obsess.

**DO** find other things to do with your time to keep your mind and hands busy! Try tackling a new work project, exercise, cooking, cleaning or organizing, reading a book, or playing a fun board game with your family.

**DON'T** overlook your employees' concerns regarding their health or their co-worker's health. See the signs of anxiety below for information that details red flags your staff may present.

**DO** be proactive. Check in with your staff to see how they're doing.

**DON'T** forget to check in with yourself so you'll be in a better position to help your employees feel healthy and supported. Ask for help and assist your employees in doing the same.



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## Know the Common Signs and Red Flags

Signs of anxiety can manifest themselves in the form of behavioral, physical, emotional and cognitive responses. Keep an eye out for certain changes in your employees, which can be warning signs for those who are struggling with stress and anxiety.

### Behavior:

- Increase/Decrease in activity level
- Increase in alcohol, tobacco or drug use
- Increased irritability, or argumentative behavior
- Difficulty relaxing or sleeping
- Crying spells
- Excessive Worry
- Difficulty with focus or concentration
- Withdrawal from social and work functions

### Physical/Body:

- Stomach upset
- Headaches
- Changes in appetite
- Sweating
- Tremors or muscle spasms
- Easily startled

### Emotions:

- Fear
- Depression
- Guilt
- Anger
- Euphoria
- Emotional numbing

### Thoughts:

- Difficulty with memory and focus
- Confusion



## Not sure what to do to help your employees?

Contact your Account Manager via the directory in this newsletter or call **877.912.2733**

Many employees have difficulty managing emotions, especially in stressful situations.

If you notice one or more of the warning signs above, or if your employee shares their feelings with you, it's time to assist them in getting the right guidance and support.

There are **two ways** Managers can point employees in the right direction:

Sources: SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)  
CDC (Centers for Disease Control) <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>

**1.) Casual Referral/Suggestion-** If you notice your employee struggling, or if they have shared their feelings with you, provide them with information about the Ulliance benefit. Services that can help, such as counseling (telephonic or in person) may be all that's standing between the employee and getting past their anxiety. Depending on the need, available resources may also help. Encourage them to call and assure them that it's completely confidential.

**2.) Formal/Mandatory Referral-** If an employee is unable to manage stress and anxiety, at some point it will begin to affect their work, and interactions with others while on the job. If your employee has a performance, attendance, conduct or other work-related concern, a mandatory referral to Ulliance can be made to ensure that the employee addresses the underlying cause of their challenges at work, such as anxiety and stress.