

Panhandle

Public Health District

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For immediate release

For more information, contact: Cheri Farris at cfarris@pphd.ne.gov or 308-220-8020

Panhandle Public Health District and Panhandle Equality Sponsor Suicide Loss Support Groups

Panhandle Public Health District (PPHD) and Panhandle Equality have been working to bring suicide loss support groups to help provide comfort, camaraderie, and support for those who have lost someone to suicide. This initiative started in 2023 and continues with meetings every other week on Wednesdays.

The groups are intended to be a confidential, non-judgmental space where those bereaved by a suicide loss can talk freely about something that is highly stigmatized and find some comfort and support from others. Support group facilitators have lost someone to suicide, too, so they know the pain, questions, and complexity of losing a loved one to suicide. They are there to support others along the journey with empathy and nonjudgment.

New members are warmly welcomed. Even when everyone in the group shares certain things in common, there will always be a diversity of individual experiences. Often, the most profound support can come from the most unexpected source. Confidentiality is honored during each group session so all feel comfortable sharing.

The facilitator has a structure and topics in mind for each meeting, and sometimes you may be encouraged, but not required, to journal or complete other exercises between meetings. Still, it's not like taking a course, as there isn't a "curriculum" per se.

Suicide Loss Support Groups are available to any Panhandle resident aged 19 and over who has experienced a loss due to suicide. The group meets in-person at 1517 Broadway in the board room, every other Wednesday from 6-7:30 PM. Tea is provided.

If you would like to join, register here: <https://tinyurl.com/Support4Coping>

PPHD provides additional support for those wanting to be ready to help someone in crisis by offering QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer). This training equips individuals to recognize and address signs of suicide. Available, monthly, and on request, it's a cornerstone of their efforts. Our goal is to ensure that



everyone living in the Panhandle has the tools to have the essential conversation with someone in crisis and knows how to refer to help. Register for an interactive QPR webinar here: <https://tinyurl.com/PPHD-QPR2026>, or contact Cheri Farris at 308-220-8020 or cfarris@pphd.ne.gov to schedule a webinar or in-person training for your group or organization.

Contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline anytime 24/7 if you are experiencing mental health-related distress or are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.

- Call or text 988
- Chat at 988lifeline.org

Connect with a trained crisis counselor. 988 is confidential, free, and available 24/7/365.

Visit the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline for more information at 988lifeline.org. Veterans can dial 988 and press 1 to connect to a specially trained responder.

Suicide prevention is everybody's business, and through collaborative efforts, we can save lives.

Please consider supporting suicide prevention activities near you. Together, we can do more to stop suicide. For more information or to get involved, contact Cheri Farris at 308-220-8020 or cfarris@pphd.ne.gov.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, work, learn, and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community.