



New Hampshire Range Owners: Your vigilance could save a life!

Over 1-in-20 firearm suicides in New Hampshire occur with guns purchased or rented within that same week, usually within hours. While not all suicides are preventable, you could reduce the odds that a gun rented or sold at your range is used in a suicide moments later. Many gun ranges have adopted policies that require proof of training for people seeking to rent a gun who are both at the range alone and unknown to the staff.

Signs that a customer could be suicidal

Note: None of these signs clearly indicate someone is suicidal, but if any are present (especially if more than one is present), use extra caution in deciding whether to proceed.

- No knowledge about guns AND no interest in learning; asks no questions
- Doesn't care which gun s/he rents; is unresponsive to your questions about the rental
- Gives unconvincing response when asked about prior shooting experience/training
- No interest in firearm instruction or safety
- Mentions recent crisis, such as a divorce, job loss, or other setback
- Makes comments that could suggest suicidality (e.g. "I don't need a lot of ammunition, I won't have the gun for long.")
- Looks anxious, avoids eye contact
- Appears distraught (shaking, fighting back tears)

Options for responding to a customer you suspect may be suicidal

- Notify range owner or manager (if applicable) if at all uncomfortable with a prospective rental
- Urge customer with little firearm experience to seek training before renting
- Ask person directly if s/he is suicidal; if yes, offer the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline number 988 (Dial 988 and then 1 for veterans).
- Notify nearby dealers/range owners that someone you denied a rental may go to their store/range; notify police
- Trust your instincts; you are under no obligation to rent a gun to anyone

"What else can I do?"

- Consider displaying a suicide prevention hotline poster in your range
- Give customers firearm safety brochures that include information about recognizing suicide warning signs and keeping firearms away from suicidal or depressed family members
- For more information on suicide prevention in NH visit:
<https://theconnectprogram.org/articles/annual-reports/>
- Spread the word!
- Ask other dealers/range owners you know to visit our website to request our materials

If, in spite of your best efforts, a suicide does occur at your facility, anyone who witnessed the incident or its aftermath may be affected. The state's Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team is available to help people process the experience. There is no fee for this service. Contact them at:

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/disaster-behavioral-health>

- Resources for people affected by a suicide loss can be found at:
<https://theconnectprogram.org/find-support/coping-with-suicide-loss/>

