



If someone is at risk,  
encourage safe storage of  
lethal means until the crisis  
has passed

**LETHAL MEANS**

## **LETHAL MEANS FACT SHEET**

### **What are means?**

An object, instrument, and/or method in which one could potentially inflict self-directed violence or injury, whether lethal or non-lethal in intent or by outcome. Examples include firearms, poisons, suffocation, and jumping from buildings or bridges.

### **What is means safety?**

Techniques, policies, and procedures designed to reduce access or availability to lethal means and methods of deliberate self-harm.

### **What is lethal means safety?**

The process of ensuring that lethal means, such as firearms and medications, are removed during times of increased stress, when risk of suicide is heightened.

The term “lethal” is important because some methods are more harmful or destructive than others and used to attempt suicide.

### **Lethal Means Safety Practices**

#### **FIREARMS**

Firearms are the most common method of suicide in the Marine Corps. Store personally owned firearms with a cable lock in a secured safe separate from ammunition. Cable locks may be available at your installation. Check with your command Suicide Prevention Program Officer (SPPO).

#### **MEDICATIONS**

Proactively disposing of unwanted, unused or expired medications is another way to practice lethal means safety (e.g., at-home disposal, locking up all medications, etc.)

#### **OTHER MEANS**

Availability of household objects that can be used in a suicide or suicide attempt is hard to address. If someone is at risk, anything that can be used to anchor or used to tie should be removed. Household chemicals can be locked away or removed.