

A person wearing a yellow long-sleeved shirt is holding a smartphone with both hands. The person's face is not visible, but their hands are in the foreground, interacting with the device. The background is dark and out of focus.

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

Using 988

988 is the new three digit dialing code for anyone experiencing suicidal thoughts, a mental health crisis and/or substance use crisis.



About 988

In 2020, Congress designated the new 988 dialing code to operate through the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL). With a network of over 200 locally operated crisis centers across the country, the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly NSPL) offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to strengthen and expand the existing Lifeline. This transition occurred on July 16, 2022, and now 988 is operational throughout the United States and its territories.

988 is more than just an easy-to-remember number—it's a direct connection to compassionate, accessible care and support for anyone experiencing thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis services or support.

Need for 988

In 2021 alone, the U.S. had one death by suicide every 11 minutes. For people aged 10-34 years, suicide was a leading cause of death and an additional 106,000 Americans died from drug overdoses.

There is hope. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline works. 988 provides free and confidential support for people in crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

FAQs

WILL 988 REPLACE THE LIFELINE?

988 will not replace the Lifeline; rather it will be an easier way to access an expanded network of crisis call centers. People can access the Lifeline via 988 or by the Lifeline 10-digit number (1-800-273-8255).

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CALL 988?

Callers first hear a greeting message while their call is routed to a crisis center (based on the caller's area code). A trained crisis counselor will answer the phone, listen to the caller, understand how their problem is affecting them, provide support, and share resources if needed. If that center is unable to take the call, the caller will be automatically routed to another crisis center. The Lifeline provides crisis center phone services in English and Spanish and uses Language Line Solutions to provide translation services in over 250 additional languages for people who call 988.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CHAT VIA 988?

Chat services are available in English and Spanish through 988lifeline.org/chat. People seeking chat services will be provided a pre-chat survey before connecting with a counselor that identifies the main area of concern. If there is a wait to chat with a crisis counselor, a wait-time message will appear. If demand is high, individuals can access the Lifeline's "helpful resources" while waiting or they can call 988. Once connected, a crisis counselor will listen to you, work to understand how the problem is affecting you, provide support, and share resources that may be helpful.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I TEXT 988?

When someone texts 988, they will receive a response from a trained crisis counselor. Once connected, a crisis counselor will listen to you, work to understand how your problem is affecting you, provide support, and share resources that may be helpful. Texting is currently available in English and Spanish.

WILL 988 ACCOMMODATE THOSE WHO ARE HARD OF HEARING OR BLIND?

Callers who are Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, Hard of Hearing, and Late-Deafened can directly dial 988 on a videophone or click the "ASL Now" button on 988lifeline.org to connect with trained crisis counselors who are trained in working with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.



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IS IN-PERSON SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO REACH OUT TO 988?

Mobile Crisis Outreach Response Teams (MCORTs) provide face-to-face response to adults experiencing a non-life-threatening mental health, substance use, or suicidal crisis. **Based on 988 assessment**, MCORTs will prioritize timely community-based care without the involvement of law enforcement whenever it is safe to do so. MCORTs respond to individuals 18 years of age and older by de-escalating crises, providing follow-up support, and linkage to ongoing community services. MCORT services are voluntary and can be accessed by calling 988 to determine eligibility for an outreach.

ARE THERE SPECIALIZED SERVICES FOR VETERANS, SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES?

Veterans, Service Members, and their families can call 988 and press option 1. To learn more, please visit veteranscrisisline.net/about/what-is-988. This process is the same as it has been in the past for Veterans; however, it's now simpler with the shortened 988 number.

988

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CALL | TEXT | CHAT
24/7/365

samhsa.gov/find-help/988/faqs



State of New Jersey



Department of Human Services



**FOR MORE
INFORMATION
ABOUT 988, VISIT
[SAMHSA.GOV/FIND-
HELP/988/FAQS](https://samhsa.gov/find-help/988/faqs)**