988 Updates and Education Newsletter

First Edition

NEW YORK STATE | Office of Mental Health

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

Remember! 988 launches on July 16, 2022!

A Message from the Commissioner

Welcome to the first edition of the 988 Updates and Education Newsletter!

NYS is working to create a robust, comprehensive crisis response system, available to all New Yorkers. This system includes someone to call, someone to come and somewhere to go when experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis. The implementation of 988 in July 2022 is integral to this process. 988 is more than a number, it is an immediate connection to highly trained, local crisis counselors to provide emotional support and assistance for behavioral health crisis and suicide prevention and provides connections to services in the community for support and recovery.

I want to take a moment to thank everyone who has been involved in the 988 planning and implementation process. The diverse group of individuals represented in the Statewide Coalition, comprised of state agencies, peers, counties, vulnerable populations, law enforcement, emergency services and more are to be commended for their expertise and commitment to this planning and implementation. The ongoing commitment, collaboration, and dedication to this groundbreaking work is appreciated and will be felt by all New Yorkers.

Stay tuned for updates and information as 988 is implemented across NYS and the nation!

Sincerely,

Ann Marie T. Sullivan, MD
Commissioner for the New York State Office of Mental Health

New York's 988 Planning Coalition

For the last year, New York has been working with a large coalition of community stakeholders to plan for 988's launch in July 2022. Our coalition members represent New York's diverse population.

The coalition has four subgroups that focus on different areas of 988 implementation in New York:

1. **911/988 Interface:** Developing links between 911 and 988 through training, warm transfers, and diversion plans.
2. **988 Center Functions:** Planning for crucial 988 operations. This includes crisis center staffing and training, call center technology, and follow-up services.
3. **Community Education and Marketing:** Informing New Yorkers about 988 through education and a future multi-media marketing campaign.
4. **Regional Planning:** Ensuring crisis centers have the capacity to provide 24/7 coverage and connections to local resources.

What is 988?

988 is the new FCC-designated three-digit number that connects people to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. This service is for anyone who is:

- **suicidal**
- **experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis**
- **experiencing any kind of emotional distress**

988 is more than just a number. It is a direct connection to compassionate and accessible care. When you call, text, or chat 988 you are connected to trained counselors that are part of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network.

Funding 988 in New York

New York has many funding sources. These will help to build capacity, strengthen infrastructure, train Lifeline staff, and increase call center workforce

$10 Million
One-Time Start up Mental Health Block Grant

$7.2 Million
Two-Year SAMHSA Grant

$35 Million in Year 1, $60 Million Full Annual
Enacted 2022-2023 State Budget Resources

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988 Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we need 988?

Mental health is just as important as physical health. Now there is a three-digit number for mental health emergencies that's easy to remember!

988 helps New York:

- Connect with people who are struggling with behavioral health (mental health and/or substance use) concerns as soon as possible, 24/7.
- Reduce unnecessary use of law enforcement and other safety resources in crisis responses.
- Meet the growing need for crisis intervention where it's needed most.
- Shift the mindset about people who struggle with their mental health.
- Reduce healthcare spending with more cost-effective early intervention.

When will 988 be available?

988 launches nationwide on July 16th, 2022. Until then, if you or someone you know is in crisis, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) to be connected to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Moving to 988 does not mean the 1-800-273-8255 number goes away. After July 16, 2022, using either number will get people to the same services.

Who can contact 988?

988 is for everyone and it's more than a 'suicide' line. Contact 988 if you are:

- suicidal
- experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis
- experiencing any kind of emotional distress
- worried about someone in distress.

988 is for people of all ages, genders, sexes, ethnicities, races, religions, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic statuses. If you are a Veteran or Spanish speaker, 988 has dedicated lines for you.

Does it cost money to use 988?

Contacting 988 is a free service.

What happens when I contact 988?

Starting July 16, 2022, when contacting 988, you will first be routed to a local Lifeline crisis center based on your area code. A trained crisis counselor will answer and listen to how your problem is affecting you. They then provide support and share resources if needed. If a local crisis center is unable to take the call, you will be automatically routed to a national backup crisis center. All contact with 988 is voluntary.

Will services be offered in other languages?

The Lifeline currently provides live crisis center phone services in English and Spanish and uses Language Line Solutions to provide translation services in over 150 additional languages.

What is the difference between 988 and 911?

988 provides easy access to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network and related crisis resources. This is different from 911, where the focus is on dispatching Emergency Medical Services, fire, and police as needed. The goal of 988 is to meet the growing suicide and mental health-related crisis care needs.

Need this Translated?

Español 中文 Русский

বাংলা אידיש 한국어 العَرَبِي

Kreyòl ayisyen Italiano Polski

Action Corner

How do **YOU** play a role? Look in this corner every newsletter to learn how you can take action and be involved in the 988 Launch.

This month's task: Help spread the word

Get people signed up for our newsletter. They can sign up by clicking on this link. Once an email prompt opens, just hit send to be subscribed to future newsletters.

Share this month's newsletter. Send it out on your list servs or distribution lists. Share it on social media. 988 is for everyone! No matter who you communicate with, this information is for them.

Follow OMH on social media to share our 988 content and other mental health messages with your followers and friends. We're on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Stay informed. Visit the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) 988 Webpage.