

# 988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

## AVAILABLE NATIONWIDE STARTING JULY 16TH, 2022

When people call, text, or chat the number 988, they will be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network. The Lifeline accepts calls from anyone who needs support for a suicidal, mental health and /or substance use crisis.



### URGENT REALITIES

Too many Americans are experiencing suicide and mental health crises without the support and care they need. In 2020 alone, the US had one death by suicide about every 11 minutes — and for people aged 10-34 years, suicide is a leading cause of death.



### THERE IS HOPE

Providing 24/7, free and confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress works! The Lifeline helps thousands of people overcome crisis situations every day.



### EASIER ACCESS

Moving to an easy-to-remember, 3-digit dialing code will provide greater access to life-saving services.



**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration





## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I TEXT 988?

When someone texts to 988, they will be responded to by a group of Lifeline crisis centers that respond to chat and text. Text is currently available in English only. 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.


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

The Lifeline currently serves TTY users either through their preferred relay service or by dialing 711 then 1-800-273-8255. Lifeline also offers services through chat and text. Lifeline is in the process of expanding to video phone service to better serve deaf or hard of hearing individuals seeking help through the Lifeline/988.



CALL | TEXT | CHAT  
24/7/365

[samhsa.gov/find-help/988/faqs](https://samhsa.gov/find-help/988/faqs)

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



State of New Jersey  
Phil Murphy, Governor | Sheila Oliver, Lt. Governor



Department of Human Services  
Sarah Adelman, Commissioner



# Using 988

The new 3-digit code to dial for anyone having thoughts of suicide and experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis.





Talk  
with  
us.

## About 988

In 2020, Congress designated the new 988 dialing code to operate through the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's (1-800-273-8255) network of over 200 locally operated and funded crisis centers across the country. On July 16, 2022, the U.S. transitioned to using the 988-dialing code, and it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to strengthen and expand the existing Lifeline.

988 is more than just an easy-to-remember number—it's a direct connection to compassionate, accessible care and support for anyone experiencing mental health-related distress – whether that is 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 support.

## Need for 988

Too many people are experiencing suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress without the support and care they need, and sadly, the pandemic has only made a bad situation worse when it comes to mental health and wellness in America.

In 2020 alone, the U.S. had one death by suicide about every 11 minutes—and for people aged 10 – 34 years, suicide is a leading cause of death. Additionally, from April 2020 to 2021, over 100,000 individuals died from drug overdoses.

There is hope. The Lifeline works — providing 24/7, free and confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress helps thousands of people overcome crisis situations every day.

## FAQs

### WILL 988 REPLACE THE LIFELINE?

Moving to 988 will not replace the Lifeline, rather it will be an easier way to access a strengthened and expanded network of crisis call centers. People can access the Lifeline via 988 or by the 10-digit number (which will not go away).

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CALL 988?

When calling 988, callers first hear a greeting message while their call is routed to the local Lifeline network 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 the local crisis center is unable to take the call, the caller will be automatically routed to a national backup crisis center. The Lifeline provides live 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 (English only) is available through the Lifeline's website <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.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 call 988. 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.

