
The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, or 988 Lifeline, is the national three-digit dialing code individuals may contact for mental health crisis services, support, information, and referrals. This publication describes the establishment of the 988 Lifeline, the operation of the 988 Lifeline and Lifeline Centers, duties of the commissioner of health related to the 988 Lifeline, and state funding for and usage of the 988 Lifeline in Minnesota.

Background and Establishment of the 988 Lifeline

In the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020 (Pub. Law No. 116-172), 988 was designated as the universal telephone number for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline. The 988 Lifeline replaced the 1-800 number that had operated since 2005 as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. In 2022, the 988 Lifeline became operational as the contact for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis or in need of mental health support, information, or referrals. At the federal level, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services oversees aspects of the 988 Lifeline and awards federal grants to support it, including funding to Vibrant Emotional Health, a national nonprofit organization, for network administration, training, routing contacts to the 988 Lifeline, and administering the backup network. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) also establishes requirements for telecommunications carriers related to the 988 Lifeline. In Minnesota, the commissioner of health oversees Lifeline Centers and performs other duties related to the 988 Lifeline.

Operation of the 988 Lifeline and 988 Lifeline Centers

Individuals may contact the 988 Lifeline by call, text, or online chat, and Minnesota Lifeline Centers must have staff available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to answer contacts from individuals in Minnesota. As of October 2024, in Minnesota five Lifeline Centers respond to calls to 988, and three Lifeline Centers respond to text messages and chat contacts. When an individual contacts 988, the individual is connected to a Lifeline Center, and a 988 specialist provides emotional or crisis support services, provides information on appropriate local resources, and, when appropriate, transfers the individual to mobile crisis services or emergency services. In October 2024, the FCC adopted rules requiring wireless telecommunications carriers to implement georouting for calls to the 988 Lifeline; georouting routes wireless calls to 988 Lifeline Centers based on the geographic area in which where the call originates.

Duties of the Commissioner of Health

The commissioner of health's duties related to the 988 Lifeline include designating, overseeing, and evaluating the network of Lifeline Centers operating in the state; promoting the 988 Lifeline and working with the 988 Lifeline, the veterans crisis line, and other networks to ensure consistency of public information about 988 services; adopting rules on information-sharing between crisis and emergency response systems; developing protocols for interactions between 988 and 911 services in the state; and administering the 988 special revenue account. The commissioner also collects data on 988 usage, engages in quality improvement activities, and issues public reports on 988 usage and reports to the legislature and the FCC on the 988 special revenue account. ([Minn. Stat. § 145.561](#), subds. 2, 3)

State Funding for the 988 Lifeline

At the state level, the 988 Lifeline is funded by money in a 988 special revenue account and by a onetime general fund appropriation of \$4,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 to the commissioner of health. Money in the 988 special revenue account consists of 988 telecommunications fees of 12 cents per month charged to each consumer access line for wireline, wireless, or IP-enabled voice service; prepaid wireless 988 fees of 12 cents charged to each retail transaction for prepaid wireless telecommunications service; money from the state or another source that is deposited in or transferred to the account; grants and gifts to the account; and interest, premiums, gains, and earnings of the account. Money in the 988 special revenue account is appropriated to the commissioner of health for the creation and maintenance of the 988 Lifeline, data collection and reporting activities, and administration of the account. ([Minn. Stat. §§ 145.561](#), subds. 3, 4; [403.161](#); [403.162](#))

Usage of the 988 Lifeline

The commissioner of health collects data on 988 contacts from the 988 Lifeline Centers operating in Minnesota and issues an annual public report on these contacts. The following table provides data on 988 contacts in calendar years 2022 and 2023, including the number of contacts, the contact type, and the result of the contact.

988 Contacts		Calendar Year 2022	Calendar Year 2023
Number of Contacts		30,000	53,325
Contact Type	Crisis support for person seeking immediate crisis intervention	22%	23%
	Emotional support for person in emotional distress	42%	49%
	Informational for person seeking noncrisis referral information or connection with community resources	10%	7%
	Nontransactional if person contacts 988 for reasons outside the line's purposes	26%	21%
Result of Contact for Calls Only (not including non-transactional calls)	Stabilized call (necessary support, services, and resources provided, additional support from crisis or emergency services not needed)	93%	92%
	Transferred to mobile crisis services	5%	6%
	Transferred to emergency services	2%	2%

Sources: Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, 2022 and 2023 Summaries

For more information on the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, see the Minnesota Department of Health website at <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/suicide/988/systems.html> or the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration website at <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988>.



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