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## The 411 on the 988 Lifeline

Have trouble remembering numbers? With cell phones, I do not even have my husband's number memorized! There is good news for us, modeled after 911, the new three-digit 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is designed to be a memorable and quick number that connects people who are in any mental health crisis to a trained mental health professional who will provide compassionate, confidential support for free.

For years, the Lifeline – formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline –has answered tens of millions of calls and helped people overcome mental health-related distress. There is **HOPE**. The Lifeline **WORKS**. Most of the people that call get what they need from this line. You are not alone in crisis and there is help!

### Here is what you need to know about 988:

- The Lifeline responds 24/7 to calls (in multiple languages), chats ([988lifeline.org/chat](https://988lifeline.org/chat)), or texts (English only) from anyone who is suicidal or in emotional distress, *including* substance use crisis. People can also utilize 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.
- 988 was established to provide easier access to the Lifeline network and related crisis resources, which are distinct from the public safety purposes of 911 (where the focus is on dispatching Emergency Medical Services, fire and police as needed).
- The 988 lifeline will connect people to the existing network of more than 200 local crisis call centers around the country. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's 10-digit number — 1-800-273-8255 — will remain active, but calls will be routed to 988.
- In most Kansas counties, those calling are transferred to the Kansas Suicide Prevention Headquarters, based in Lawrence, though Wichita residents will be transferred to a line run by their local mental health provider. If a local crisis center is too busy to respond right away, the call gets routed to one of 16 backup centers around the country.
- To reach the Veterans Crisis Line, Veterans need to Press 1 after dialing 988. Veterans and service members who Press 1 are routed to the same trained Veterans Crisis Line responders, 24/7. The Veterans Crisis Line is also available by chat ([VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat)) and text (838255). The Veterans Crisis Line's 800 number remains operational for anyone utilizing the 10-digit number option.

Be sure to check out [www.988lifeline.org](http://www.988lifeline.org) for more specific mental health resources and remember, the only thing you need to remember is 988! For information, feel free to contact me at [tsolomon@ksu.edu](mailto:tsolomon@ksu.edu), 620-378-2167.

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