

How is 988 different from 911?

For individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline provides a **trained crisis counselor who can effectively de-escalate the person's distress** and provide a means of **connection** to local resources within their community.

Contacting the Lifeline is an intervention in itself, and **most individuals reaching out to the Lifeline are able to be de-escalated and served over the phone.**

Although 911 is highly effective for emergencies involving physical harm and public safety concerns, it is not designed or intended to manage behavioral health crises.

If a **life-threatening behavioral health crisis** is underway, such as a suicide attempt in progress, then **911 is the best number** to get immediate assistance and medical attention.

A small percentage of 988 Lifeline callers require dialing 911, and many of those are done with the consent and cooperation of the caller. This occurs when there is an imminent risk to someone's life that cannot be reduced during the 988 Lifeline call. In these cases, the crisis counselor shares information with 911 that is crucial to saving the caller's life.

Will you call 911 if I am suicidal?

988 is for emotional and behavioral health support with minimal law enforcement involvement unless there is an **immediate physical safety threat**. The primary goal of the 988 Lifeline is to provide **support** for people in suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress in the moments they need it most and in a manner that is person-centered. The 988 Lifeline coordinated response is intended to promote stabilization and care in the least restrictive manner. Most crises are managed by counselors working with you to de-escalate the situation and without involving law enforcement.

Reasons a crisis counselor may contact 911 include:

- A suicide attempt is in progress
- A person has a specific suicide or self-harm plan that they are or intend to immediately carry out and they have the means to carry it out
- A person is suspected of being in the midst of an overdose
- A person is experiencing physical symptoms such as chest pain or shortness of breath that could be a medical emergency



www.988lifeline.org



No Judgment. Just Help.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Network Center

50 Beech Drive
Norristown, PA 19403
610-279-6102
www.mces.org



What is the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline?

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a national hotline offering one-on-one support for **mental health, suicide, and substance use-related problems for anyone 24/7**. No matter where you are in the United States, you can call or text the number 988 or chat online at 988lifeline.org and connect with a skilled, compassionate crisis counselor.

The 988 Lifeline is a direct connection to immediate support and resources for **anyone** in crisis. **There is no reason too big or too small to reach out to 988**. People can also call, text or chat 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support. 988 call, chat, and text services are available in English and Spanish, and call services with interpreters are available in more than 240 languages.

Is 988 confidential?

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is minimally invasive. Callers are not required to give their name or any identifying information. Callers are routed to their local center via geo-routing. A counselor may ask for personal information if the person of concern is determined to be at imminent risk of harming themselves or another.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
VISIT
988LIFELINE.ORG

www.988lifeline.org

What does 988 do?

Every 988 Lifeline crisis center actively engages with individuals at risk and provides support and assistance in the least restrictive setting possible. Most individual needs are resolved in their call, text, or chat connection with the 988 counselor and do not require additional immediate intervention..

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline counselors:

- Provide empathetic, nonjudgmental support to individuals reaching out
- Complete a safety assessment to determine if any thoughts of harming oneself or another are present and whether suicidal ideation is occurring
- Collaborates with the caller on creating a plan to secure their own safety through the use of safety planning
- Provide resources within the caller's community that may be able to assist with presenting concerns
- As appropriate, facilitate connections to mobile crisis teams or local crisis centers

What if I'm a veteran?

Callers can press "1" when prompted to speak to a member of the Veterans and Military Crisis Line.

Can I text or chat 988?

Yes. You can text "4HOPE" to 741741 to reach a crisis counselor or visit 988lifeline.org/chat. Both services are available in English and Spanish.

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

Why is MCES a local center?

Being part of the Lifeline fits our crisis services mission, helps us divert persons in crisis from criminal justice contact, and makes us part of a national network offering a wide range of resources.

988 is the nation's mental health safety net. It was created to reduce suicides and mental health crises, as well as providing a pathway to well-being.

How did 988 begin?

In 2005, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline was established to provide mental health emergency support to callers 24/7. The Lifeline became a network of more than 200 call centers across the United States providing emotional support, suicide risk assessment, transfers to emergency services, and referrals to treatment.

Montgomery County Emergency Service joined what is now known as the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Network in 2013.

In 2020, Congress enacted the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act that established a three-digit number (988) as the mental health emergency number.

988 is easier to remember than the original Lifeline number (800-273-8255) and is supported by the county, state, and national governments.

MCES
SERVES 988 CALLERS IN
MONTGOMERY AND
DELAWARE COUNTIES