



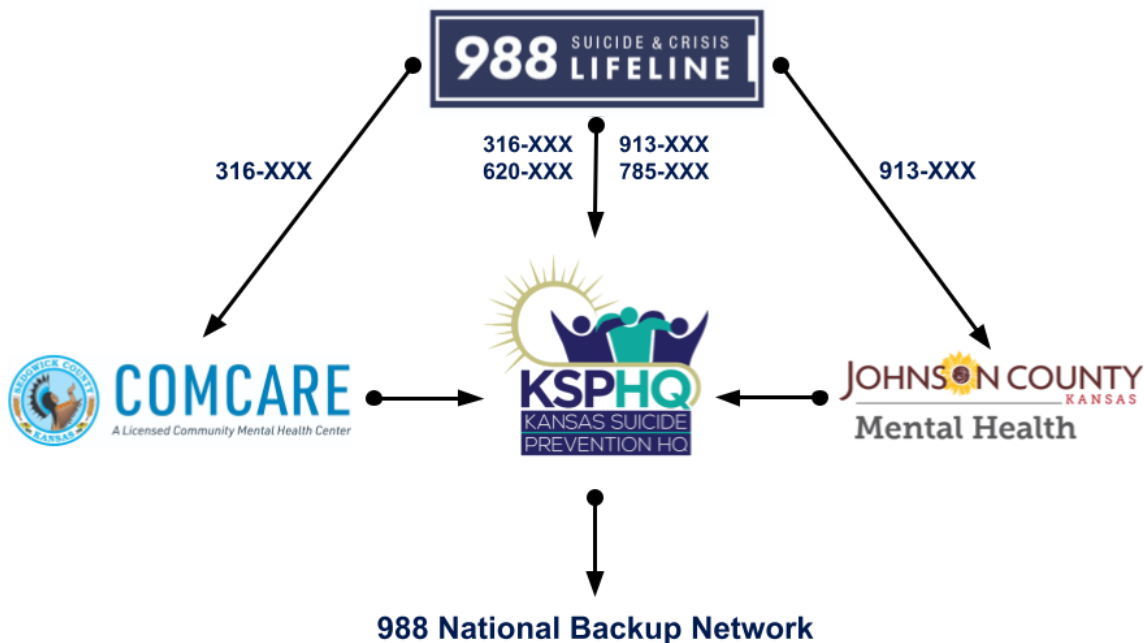
## 988 and You: What you need to know

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is getting upgraded!

On **July 16, 2022**, dialing **9-8-8** will connect anyone in need to a **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** Contact Center staffed by highly trained Crisis Counselors prepared to help navigate any mental health concern. The implementation of 988 means people experiencing any crisis or mental health distress are only a 3-digit dial away from receiving the help they need.

### HOW IT WORKS

Nationwide, phone calls to 988 will be **routed by the caller's area-code and the next three numbers** to a local Lifeline Contact Center. Kansans are served by three Lifeline Contact Centers, COMCARE of Sedgwick County, Johnson County Mental Health Center, and Kansas Suicide Prevention HQ. All Contact Centers provide quality services aligned to best-practice clinical recommendations approved by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Contact Centers must undergo an application process with Vibrant Emotional Health, the administrator of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, and a third-party accreditation process, which evaluates the quality of their training programs and service delivery.



## HOW DOES 988 IMPACT ME AND MY COMMUNITY

- **Free and confidential 24/7** crisis and emotional support is available by calling or texting 988.
- Individuals living in Kansas with a non-Kansas area code, or in an area of Kansas that does not correspond to their area code, should consider using their local Contact Center's 10-digit number to ensure they are connected with Kansas counselors and local resources (see numbers below).
- The Lifeline's existing number: **1-800-273-8255(TALK)** will remain available.
- Support through 988 is available to anyone experiencing mental health related distress, including thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress.
- Crisis Counselors are trained to use the **least invasive** verbal and text-based interventions necessary to de-escalate an individual in a safe and compassionate manner.
- Most of the time, the call, text, or chat itself is the **only intervention needed**.
- Crisis Counselors are also skilled at navigating crisis situations that involve imminent risk and require immediate emergency response and dispatch via 911.
- 988 services are **distinct and separate** from the emergency medical and public safety response associated with 911.
- Ongoing coordination—at the federal, state, and local levels—between 988 and 911 will help individuals in crisis get the appropriate support they need, such as deploying mobile crisis teams or mental health professionals in place of police or EMS responders, when needed and where available.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Educate yourself about how 988 works currently and the vision of 988 by attending an informational session hosted by your local Contact Center.
- Encourage consumers/patients to reach out by calling or texting 988 or calling their local Contact Center to connect to a crisis counselor and local resources.
- **Ensure 988 and the local Contact Center's** number is on resource lists and materials.
- Collaborate with Contact Centers to strengthen the crisis continuum in your community and across Kansas.
- Advocate for sustainable funding of 988 at a state or local level.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q: What is 988?**

A: In 2020, Congress designated 988 as the new dialing code to operate through the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Lifeline) network of local contact centers. 988 is more than just an easy-to-remember number—it is a direct connection to compassionate, accessible support for anyone experiencing mental health related distress, including thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. 988 will be enabled on all phone lines July 16th, 2022.

### **Q: What does the 988 system look like in Kansas and how does call routing work?**

A: There are three Lifeline Contact Centers serving Kansans through 988: KSPHQ, Johnson County Mental Health Center, and Comcare of Sedgwick County. Calls originating from Johnson and Sedgwick County area codes and prefixes ring to their respective Contact Centers before rolling over to KSPHQ. All of the other 103 counties ring first to KSPHQ. If KSPHQ can't answer a call, it goes to the National Backup Network to be answered by a Lifeline Contact Center in another state. This system is intended to

ensure all calls are answered by a highly trained Crisis Counselor and increase the likelihood a Kansan reaching out is served by a Kansas Contact Center.

**Q: What happens when I call 988?**

A: Callers first hear a greeting message while their call is routed to the local Contact Center (based on the caller's area code). A trained crisis counselor will answer the phone, listen to the caller, provide support, and share resources if needed. The Lifeline provides phone services in English and Spanish and translation services in over 250 additional languages.

**Q: What happens when I chat or text via 988?**

A: Chat (English only) is available through the Lifeline's website <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat>. 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 and provide support.

**Q: Is 988 only for crises related to suicide?**

A: 988 responds 24/7 to calls, chats or texts from anyone who needs support for suicidal, mental health, and/or substance use crisis, and connects those in need with trained crisis counselors.

**Q: How does 988 fit into the crisis continuum?**

A: Kansas is actively working to expand mobile response teams state-wide and integrate with 988. The ideal crisis system includes a place to call, someone to respond, and a place to go. 988 efforts include strengthening and expanding Contact Center services, improving follow up care, and improving linkage to local in-person crisis, outpatient, and residential services.

**Q: What will be in place to protect the health information of users of 988?**

A: People contacting 988 are not required to provide any personal data to receive services. SAMHSA recognizes the importance and the expectation of privacy when a person contacts 988. The network system has several safeguards to address concerns about privacy. Any effort to obtain demographic information from those who use 988 will serve three primary purposes: 1) to save lives; 2) to connect people to ongoing supports; and 3) to evaluate system needs and performance, particularly ensuring that gaps and inequities are being addressed.

**Q: If I call 988, will first responders like police and EMS, be automatically dispatched?**

A: The primary goal is to provide support for people in suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress in the moments they most need it and in a manner which is person-centered. The vast majority of those seeking help from the Lifeline do not require any additional interventions at that moment. While some safety and health issues may warrant a response from law enforcement and/or Emergency Medical Services (namely when a suicide attempt is in progress), the 988 coordinated response is intended to promote stabilization and care in the least restrictive manner.

**Q: How is 988 different from 911?**

A: 988 was established to improve access to crisis services in a way that meets our country's growing suicide and mental health-related crisis care needs. 988 will provide easier access to immediate mental health support to a person in crisis and connect those individuals to related crisis resources. These resources are distinct from the public safety purposes of 911, where the focus is on dispatching Emergency Medical Services, fire and police as needed.

**Q: What about geolocation for 988?**

A: Currently, the Lifeline automatically routes calls by area code and prefix to the corresponding crisis center (unlike 911, which uses geolocation). As part of the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020, the Federal Communications Commission submitted a report examining the feasibility and cost of including an automatic dispatchable location that would be conveyed with a 988 call. Within that report, the FCC recommended that Congress establish a federal advisory committee to further examine the key issues and advise on next steps; however, this has not yet been established.

## WHO ARE THE KANSAS LIFELINE CONTACT CENTERS

Kansas Suicide Prevention HQ | Lawrence, KS | **Local 24/7 Crisis Line: 785-841-2345**

Kansas Suicide Prevention HQ, founded under the name Headquarters in Lawrence, KS, has an over 50-year history serving Kansans. KSPHQ is a state-wide provider of suicide prevention education and support and a leader in the field of suicide and crisis care. In addition to providing 24/7 crisis and suicide intervention services to Kansans through the national 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and local crisis line, KSPHQ provides a wide array of training and technical assistance related to suicide prevention, intervention, postvention, and crisis counseling.

Comcare of Sedgwick County | **Local 24/7 Crisis Line: 316-660-7500**

COMCARE's Community Crisis Center is the suicide prevention service for Sedgwick County. The Community Crisis Center is a resource for mental health assistance, providing assessment and intervention to individuals who may be at risk for suicide. Services can be accessed in person at 635 N Main, Wichita, Kansas, or by phone through the national 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and local crisis line. Additionally, the Community Crisis Center provides a variety of other services, which includes face-to-face intervention, mobile crisis unit response, hospital screening, crisis observation/stabilization, and sobering and detox services.

Johnson County Community Mental Health Center | **Local 24/7 Crisis Line: 913-268-0156**

