

988 Planning Efforts

In July 2022, 988 will become the national three-digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, replacing the current phone number of 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Behavioral Health has received the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's 988 State Planning Grant through Vibrant Emotional Health, the nonprofit administrator of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

This grant provides for DHHS and other system partners to participate in the development of an implementation plan to address projected infrastructure needs, volume growth, and access to the Lifeline's new 988 number in Nebraska.

The 988 implementation plan will be developed under the leadership of the 988 Implementation Coalition

through targeted work sessions and meetings with identified system partners and content experts. Work sessions are anticipated to focus on the areas of financial sustainability, service continuum, quality assurance and public messaging.

Monthly stakeholder meetings will occur virtually to share progress on the planning efforts and gather recommendations.

The initial 988 draft plan is due August 30, 2021, with a final plan due to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) by December 1, 2021.

Eight core considerations identified below will drive planning activities and provide the structure around which DHHS and stakeholders will create the 988 implementation plan.

1. Assurance of 24/7 statewide coverage for 988 calls, chats and texts.
2. Development of strategies for supporting funding streams which will boost the financial stability of the Lifeline Center.
3. Lifeline Center capacity sufficient to manage 988 calls, chats, texts and follow-up, plus projected growth.
4. Development of operational, clinical and performance standards for the Lifeline Center.
5. Consideration of multi-stakeholder input through the 988 Implementation Coalition.
6. Maintenance of local resource and referral listings, as well as assurance of linkages to local community crisis services, including 911 public safety answering points, mobile crisis teams and other outreach alternatives.
7. Provision of follow-up services to 988 callers, texters and chatters based on best practices and guidelines.
8. Consistent public messaging regarding 988, its distinction from 911 and the range of services 988 provides.



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