

# Preparing for 988 in Wisconsin

Spring 2022

**988**  
SUICIDES  
& CRISIS  
LIFELINE

## What You Need to Know

As of July 16, 2022, anyone in the United States can call or text 988 or use the chat function via [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org) to access the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. The name of the service will be changing to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services has been planning for 988 for nearly two years. Partnerships have been established to ensure Wisconsin is ready for 988.

### ABOUT 988

- 988 will accept calls, texts, and chats from anyone who needs support for a suicidal, mental health, and/or substance use crisis. People can also contact 988 if they are concerned about a loved one in crisis.
- After July 16, 2022, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline will be accessible through the existing 10-digit number and 988. Prior to July 16, the 988 dialing code should not be promoted.
- Wisconsinites who use 988 will connect with Wisconsin Lifeline, an in-state call center where trained counselors answer calls, chats, and texts.
- Wisconsin Lifeline is supported and funded by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

### ABOUT WISCONSIN LIFELINE

- Wisconsin Lifeline is Wisconsin's National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, answering calls, chats, and texts that come from residents throughout the state.
- It is operated by Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, an agency based in Green Bay that serves all of Wisconsin with its National Suicide Prevention Lifeline call center.
- The counselors at Wisconsin Lifeline are trained to listen and support callers through their distress with a focus on de-escalation and coping skills.
- Wisconsin Lifeline has some bilingual counselors and staff and has access to third party interpreters 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

# What You Can Do to Prepare



## FOR INDIVIDUALS

- Before July 16, 2022, continue to call 1-800-273-8255 to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.
- Wisconsin Lifeline counselors are trained to reduce the stress of your challenge, provide emotional support, and connect you with local resources.
- Wisconsin Lifeline is not able to send an in-person response directly. A direct in-person response requires a transfer to another service and could involve law enforcement.
- If you or someone you know is in imminent danger, call 911.



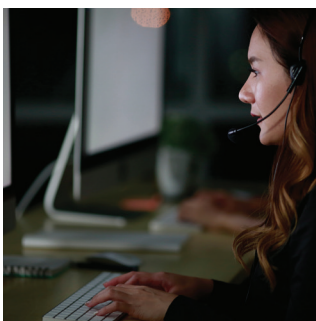
## FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

- Begin conversations with staff in your agency on the existing referral sources and how you will use 988 in the future.
- Continue to provide the 10-digit number (1-800-273-8255) to clients and other individuals.
- Do not identify 988 as an agency-specific crisis service. It can be incorporated as part of a safety plan, but it should not be the only point of contact for clients experiencing a crisis.



## FOR COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

- Engage local partners such as behavioral health, law enforcement agencies, schools, and 911 centers to discuss how your community will use 988.
- Wisconsin Lifeline will transfer a 988 contact to a county's crisis program if the person consents and desires more services than Wisconsin Lifeline can provide.



## FOR 911 CENTERS

- The National Emergency Number Association has a 911-988 Interoperability Standards Workgroup that will release best practice recommendations on 911 and 988 interactions this summer.
- Wisconsin has a statewide 911-988 Workgroup that has been meeting since last year and will continue to meet through the implementation of 988.