

What People are Saying

We asked New Yorkers how 988 has helped them. Here's what they had to say:

"Supportive counselors who **listen without judgment**. Helped during a dark time when hope couldn't be found."

"It helped me to help a friend in crisis. It also gave me coping skills to get through a tough spot myself."

New National 988 LGBTQ+ Youth and Young Adult Support Line

The National 988 Lifeline started a pilot program for LGBTQ+ youth and young adults (under age 25) in Fall 2022. 988 Lifeline callers can press 3 to be connected to specialized LGBTQ+ affirming counselors. This service is also available by texting 988 and by chat at <https://988lifeline.org/chat/>. The LGBTQ+ program is available 24/7.

Training for 988 Counselors

The counselors responding to 988 receive in-depth training. The 988 Lifeline requires all Crisis Contact Centers to follow specific standards regarding Suicide Risk Assessment and Imminent Risk Interventions. All counselors complete several hours of high-quality training and supervision before they independently respond to 988 calls, chats, and texts.

The training covers:

- How to respond to crisis callers
- Active listening
- Serving special populations
- Cultural competency
- ...and more

All crisis counselors will handle calls with empathy, professionalism, and confidence.

988: Just the Facts

Since its launch in July 2022, there has been a lot of false information about 988 being shared on the Internet. These are the important facts about 988 in New York that everyone should know.

- **988 and 911 are separate services** with separate contact centers.
- 988 **does not have the ability to track callers' geographic location**.
- 988 is **for more than just suicidal crises**. It is for any problem a person is having that causes them distress.
- 988 offers **free and confidential emotional support**. You will be connected to a trained counselor who will talk with you and offer you support if you choose to accept it.
- You **do not need to provide personal information** when you call 988. The counselor may ask for information, but you can decline to share if you don't feel comfortable doing so.
- 988 is not the 911 for mental health. Rather than immediately sending services to you, **988 provides emotional support from trained crisis counselors**.
- Currently, **less than 2% of calls to 988 require police to be involved**. This typically happens when there is imminent risk to someone's life.
- **80% of calls to 988 are resolved over the phone**. The other 20% usually require agreed-upon mobile crisis or other follow-up services.
- The people answering the 988 texts, chats, and calls are **trained crisis counselors that receive extensive training and supervision, including how to respond to a crisis**.

Action Corner

Look in this corner every newsletter to learn how you can take action and be involved in 988 in New York.

THIS MONTH'S TASK:

Encourage Others to Focus on Wellness

Taking care of yourself is important – so is encouraging others to do the same! For this newsletter, we're asking you to focus on wellness by:

- Making sure you and the people around you understand that 988 is a resource that's available for them 24/7.
- Following [OMH's Resiliency Tips for New Yorkers](#).
- Sharing OMH's 988 social media posts.



do some light stretching



organize a space in your home for a few minutes



try a meditation



write down 3 things you're grateful for



Remember to Dial 1!

There have been reports of fax machines and other automatic systems making accidental calls to 988. This happens when a system dials “9” to connect outside of the office followed by a phone number that begins with “88.”

Make sure that your systems are set to dial “1” before any phone number (ex: “1-888”) to avoid accidental calls to the 988 Lifeline.

Calling 988 From A Landline?

If a phone system requires that a number is dialed before making an external call, that is likely true for calling 988, too. Ex: Dial 9, then 9-8-8 to complete a call.

Some phone systems may require additional time to make the connection to 988. Don’t be alarmed if it feels like a wait; the call will go through!

Find Your New York 988 Crisis Contact Center

Are you wondering which 988 Crisis Contact Center is responsible for answering calls from your county?

Refer to the table below to learn more about 988 call coverage in New York State. Please note: As the State continues to build capacity among 988 Crisis Contact Centers, coverage may change.

| 988 Crisis Contact Center (as of May 2023) | Counties Covered |
|---|--|
| 211 / LIFE LINE | Cayuga, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Yates |
| Contact Community Services | Clinton, Cortland, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego, St. Lawrence, Warren, Washington |
| Crisis Services of Buffalo | Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Wyoming |
| Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health | Dutchess, Sullivan, Ulster |
| Long Island Crisis Center | Nassau |
| Mental Health Association in Orange County, Inc. | Orange |
| The Neighborhood Center, Inc. | Chenango, Delaware, Herkimer, Oneida, Otsego, Schoharie |
| Niagara County Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services | Genesee, Niagara, Orleans |
| NYC Well / Here2Help Connect | Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens, Richmond |
| Response of Suffolk County | Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk |
| St. Vincent’s Hospital Westchester | Westchester |
| Suicide Prevention & Crisis Service of Tompkins County | Broome, Chemung, Essex, Tioga, Tompkins |
| Vibrant Capital Region | Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady |

Questions?

Do you have more questions about 988 in New York?
Email Crisis.Initiative@omh.ny.gov



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