

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What support is available through the 988 Lifeline?

The 988 Lifeline offers free and confidential support for anyone in crisis. That includes people who need support for a suicidal, mental health and/or substance use crisis, or who are in emotional distress.

### What happens when a person calls, texts, or chats?

When a person calls or texts 988 or chats [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org), they are connected with a crisis counselor who listens, tries to understand how the problem is affecting the person, provides support, and shares resources. 988 Lifeline crisis counselors are trained to help reduce the intensity of a situation for the person seeking help and connect them to additional local resources to support their wellbeing.

### How does the 988 Lifeline protect the privacy of those who call, text, or chat?

When a person contacts the 988 Lifeline, they don't have to say who or where they are to get support. The 988 Lifeline crisis counselor knows only the person's phone number if they call or text, or their IP address if they use chat. No one is required to provide any personal information to receive the help from the 988 Lifeline.

### How is 988 different from 911?

The 988 Lifeline was established to improve access to immediate support to meet the nation's growing mental health, suicide, and substance use distress needs. The 988 Lifeline provides easy access to emotional distress care, which is distinct from 911, where the focus is on dispatching emergency medical services, fire, and police, as needed.

Only a small percent of 988 Lifeline calls require activation of the 911 system. Most of those are done with the consent and cooperation of the caller. This occurs when there is imminent risk to someone's life that cannot be reduced during the call. In these cases, the crisis counselor shares information with 911 that is crucial to saving the caller's life.

SAMHSA is working towards a long-term vision of strong coordination between 988 and 911 so people in crisis get to the most appropriate care needed in that moment. SAMHSA is actively working with 911 counterparts at federal, state, and local levels as our country continues to improve response.



## Urgent Realities.

**A person dies by suicide every 11 minutes.**

In 2022:

- The number of suicides was the highest number ever recorded in the U.S.
- Over 950,000 youth and 1.6 million adults attempted suicide.
- 12.3% of Asian youth, 12.6% of Latino youth, 12.2% of Black youth, and 15.2% of multiracial youth had serious thoughts of suicide, made suicide plans, or attempted suicide in the past year.
- Nearly 108,000 people died from a drug overdose.



## Easier Access.

988 is an easy-to-remember number that is providing greater access to life-saving services.



## You Are Not Alone.

988 offers 24/7 judgment-free support for mental health, substance use, and more. Text, call, or chat 988.

Email 988 questions to:

[988Team@  
samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:988Team@samhsa.hhs.gov)