



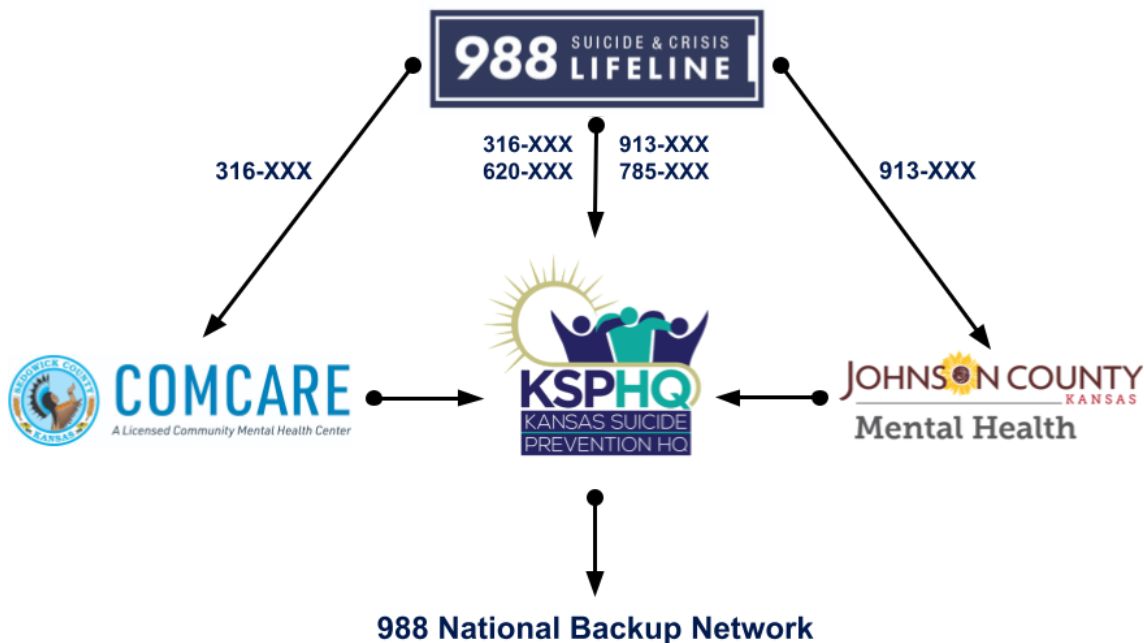
## Overview of 988 for Helping Professionals

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.

This document is intended to give helping professionals the information they need to know about 988 as it's implemented and what to be looking for in the future.

### 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 that meet best-practice clinical recommendations approved by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Contact Centers must go through 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 HELPING PROFESSIONALS

Collaboration between 988 centers, healthcare entities, social service agencies, and behavioral health agencies will help realize 988's vision, which is to integrate a crisis care response system across Kansas that links people to community-based providers who can deliver a full range of crisis care services. Community Mental Health Centers, mobile response teams, crisis stabilization centers, treatment facilities, hospitals, and private practitioners all play a critical role in the crisis care continuum. We envision a day when everyone across Kansas has **someone to call, someone to respond, and a safe place to go** for crisis care.

- **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 match 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 made 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: 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 connections 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: 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 shared 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.

**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.

## 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**

Johnson County Mental Health Center offers a range of mental health and substance use services to residents of Johnson County and serves as a safety net for individuals with the most severe forms of mental illness who are unable to afford or access care elsewhere in the community. Crisis call specialists and licensed clinicians are on duty 24/7 to provide emergency services through the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and local crisis line. Johnson County Mental Health Center is celebrating its 60th year of service to the community in 2022.

