

Wisconsin Counties Association

2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



9:15 – 10:15 AM

**Mental Health and the 988 Crisis Hotline:
Breaking Barriers to Improve Care**



Breaking Barriers: Mental Health and 988 Wisconsin Lifeline

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE
24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT

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INTRODUCTIONS

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TODAY'S AGENDA

- 988 overview
- Current 988 and county crisis coordination
- DHS grant funding opportunity (GFO)
- Awardees' projects
- NAMI perspective on 988 coordination

POLL

How would you rate your level of knowledge on the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline?

- Low
- Moderate
- High

WHAT IS 988?

988 is shorthand for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, which became available in the U.S. and U.S. territories July 16, 2022.

WHAT IS 988?

- 988 centers have counselors trained to help others during stressful situations, support people in a crisis, and provide connections to local resources.
- There are over 200 988 centers across the nation.

WHAT IS 988?

988 has three modalities:

- Call 988
- Text 988
- Chat at 988lifeline.org

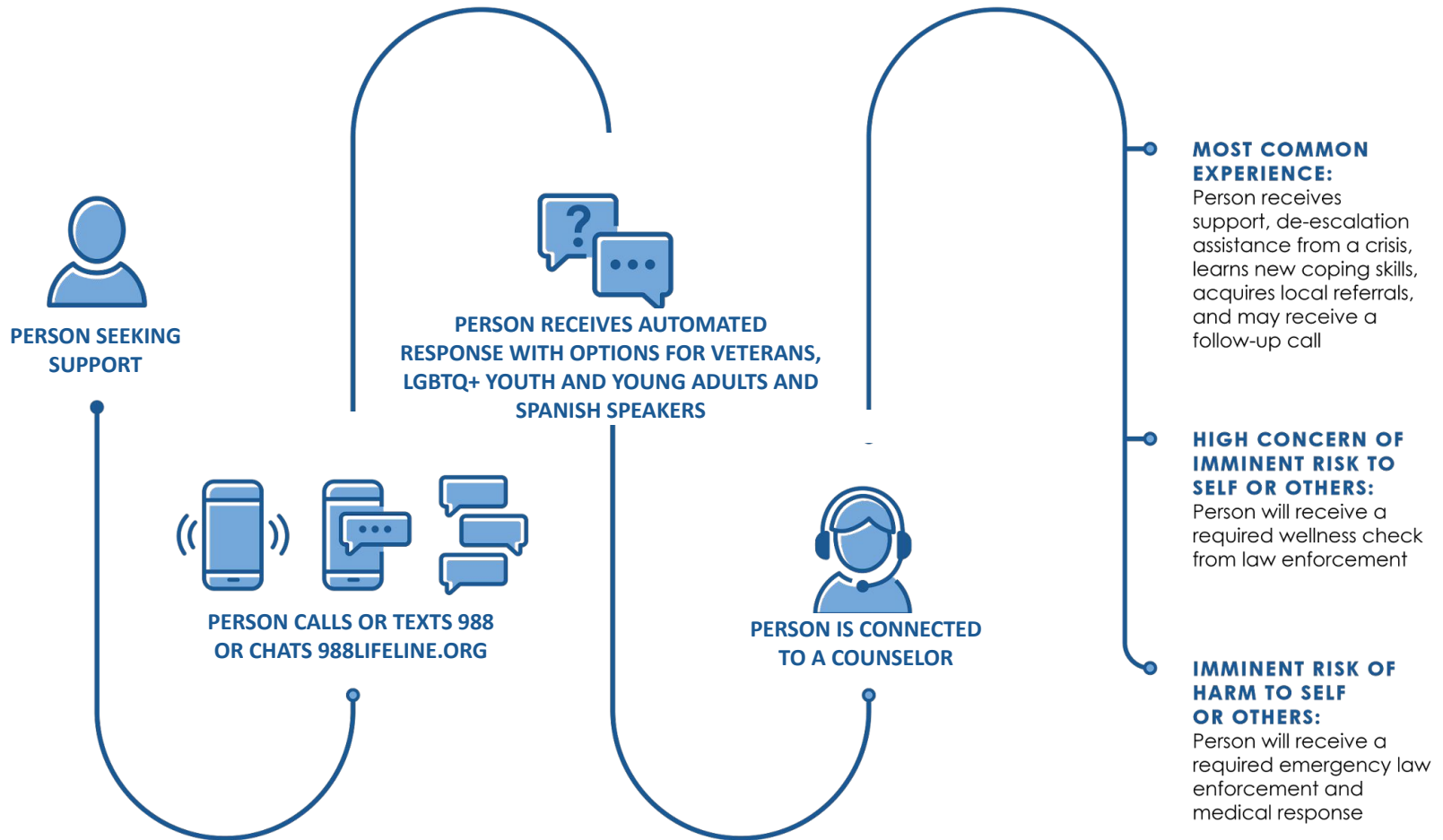
IS 988 A NEW SERVICE?

No. In July 2022, the long-standing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (a 10-digit phone number) transitioned to a new name, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, with a three-digit phone number, as well as text and chat options.

988 FOR WISCONSINITES

- Wisconsin has one 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline center located in Green Bay called the 988 Wisconsin Lifeline.
- The 988 Wisconsin Lifeline is operated by a behavioral health organization, Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CONTACT 988?



COUNTY COLLABORATION DATA

In July 2024, out of 6,586 calls:

- 46 were transferred to a county crisis program.
- 30 welfare checks by law enforcement were requested.
- 5 required a rescue squad for a medical emergency.

COUNTY COLLABORATION

While speaking with county crisis programs, we are asking:

- Mobile crisis availability, hours it is offered, and any limitations
- Business vs. after hours contact numbers
- What the hospitalization landscape looks like in that county (including transportation)
- How they prefer welfare checks be called in and what number to call

COUNTY COLLABORATION

- While speaking with county crisis centers, we are asking:
 - How/if they prefer to be notified of welfare checks
 - Any other information pertinent to 988
- This information is entered into a database that our counselors use as they navigate contacts.

COUNTY COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS

Additionally, we are asking each county for a signed collaboration agreement. This agreement establishes:

- What 988 can and cannot do
- What 988 is asking of county crisis systems
- What will happen during collaboration

COUNTY COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS

988 WI Lifeline will:

- Provide 24/7 phone counseling free of charge
- Offer follow up calls
- Work collaboratively with crisis systems, law enforcement, and public safety answering points
- Follow call center requirements set forth by



24/7 CALL TEXT CHAT

Vibrant

COUNTY COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS

988 WI Lifeline will:

- Maintain compliance with state and federal guidelines in areas such as client rights, confidentiality, and case records
- Offer warm handoffs to ensure connection and transparency for the caller
- Provide any necessary feedback to county crisis systems

COUNTY COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS

988 WI Lifeline will not:

- Provide a mobile response or conduct individual assessment
- Meet callers in person
- Approve Chapter 51 or emergency detentions
- Have access to county documentation

COUNTY COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS

988 WI Lifeline will not:

- Be a replacement for any county crisis phone lines or any DHS 34/35/75 requirements

COUNTY COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS

County Crisis System will:

- Accept referrals from 988 for callers who may require further assessment for services available in that county under DHS 34
- Inform the caller of any costs associated with using county crisis services
- Share 988 information with appropriate parties

COUNTY COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS

County Crisis System will:

- Provide any feedback on interactions with 988
- Share collaboration and coordination policies with the appropriate county staff

COUNTY COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS

During collaboration

- 988 will use a 3-way calling procedure to ensure connection between the caller and crisis system
- 988 counselor will provide:
 - Name they have been given
 - Phone number
 - What has transpired on the call up to the point of transfer

COUNTY COLLABORATION AGREEMENTS

During collaboration

- 988 will also provide any additional demographic information they've been given. However, because some callers remain anonymous, that information may not be available.

COUNTY COLLABORATION UPDATES

- As of 8/30/24, 988 has established signed agreements with 43/72 counties.
- Feedback on 988 has been overwhelmingly positive!
- Outreach builds relationships with counties by offering trainings, providing materials, and attending events.

FEDERAL FUNDING AND DHS GFO

DHS received a 988 Improvement Grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) in 2023. One focus of this grant is connecting 988 with local systems.

FEDERAL FUNDING AND DHS GFO

SAMHSA's project requirements:

“Enhance the state or territory's capacity to ensure referral connections post-988 contact, including all referrals for those imminent danger or referred for mobile crisis support or crisis stabilization services.”

GFO AWARDEES

- Dane County
- Milwaukee County
- Taylor County
- Racine County
- Waukesha County

AWARDEE PROJECT GOALS

- Create a process to ensure high-acuity 988 callers/texters/chatters who need local support are provided with resources and follow-up.
- Improve collaboration and partnership with 988.
- Educate staff and community crisis partners about 988.
- Identify options for project/position sustainability.

DANE COUNTY

- Establish a memorandum of understanding consistent with HIPAA that reflects the goals of Journey Mental Health Center and 988 for sharing the protected health information of individuals who contact 988 and require further local support.
- Establish and implement a standardized process for law enforcement and other first responders to refer individuals to Journey Mental Health Center for crisis follow-up services.

DANE COUNTY

Develop educational materials (such as a one-pager, information card, and/or pamphlet) addressing the respective roles of 988 and Journey Mental Health Center in providing crisis services to people in Dane County.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY

- Collaborate with 988 to find HIPAA-allowable processes to gather contact information for high-acuity individuals who require local services.
- Disseminate lethal means safety supplies to high risk and hard-to-reach 988 transfers.
- Provide 988 education and outreach to community partners and internal agency staff.

RACINE COUNTY

- Create a HIPAA-compliant process that reflects the goals of Racine County and 988 for sharing the necessary information of individuals who contact 988 and need further local support.
- Collaborate with 988 to discuss referral process, staff training, and key data points to collect to ensure both parties understand the other's desires/needs.
- Provide training and outreach materials.

TAYLOR COUNTY

- Identify crisis staff who are liaisons to 988 and maintain regular communication with them.
- Educate law enforcement and emergency departments.
- Educate agency staff about 988 in the broader crisis continuum.

TAYLOR COUNTY

Create policies and procedures in conjunction with 988, and approved by the county board, to share information regarding people who need local services and provide follow-up.

WAUKESHA COUNTY

- Build a mental health unit as an agency in computer-aided dispatch software at Waukesha County Communications Center.
- Enhance mobile infrastructure in the crisis program to increase in-person response on a 24/7 basis.

WAUKESHA COUNTY

- Develop a referral workflow with 988 Wisconsin Lifeline for both in-person response and follow-up by the crisis team.
- Educate law enforcement, schools, and community members about 988 and local crisis services.

WAUKESHA COUNTY

Create informational/educational bimonthly meetings with 988 and invite key partners as appropriate, such as Waukesha County Communications Center leadership, crisis resource center supervisor, Waukesha Police Department Crisis Response Unit, Waukesha Memorial Hospital and other emergency rooms, and NAMI Southeast Wisconsin.

FUTURE 988 AND COUNTY COLLABORATION

- Apply GFO projects across the state in county crisis programs.
- Strengthen and refine 988 and county crisis collaboration over time.
- Reduce gaps within the crisis system.

NAMI: LIVED EXPERIENCE PERSPECTIVE

- NAMI promotes and advocates for 988 at the national, state and local level.
- We envision seamless access to crisis services: that anyone, anywhere at any time will have someone to call, someone to come and a safe place to be in a crisis.
- In Wisconsin, we encourage all counties to collaborate with 988.
- We anticipate that processes from the 988 improvement project will inform all counties.

CONTACTS

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