



National 988 Lifeline Set to Launch July 16, Provident Behavioral Health is State and National Backup Call Center

July 5, 2022 (St. Louis, MO) — A transformative step forward in behavioral health support is set to take place on July 16 with the launch of the national 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline dialing code. Provident Behavioral Health, which manages one of the oldest and most-respected call centers in the country, will answer calls for Missouri as a local call center, and as the sole state backup center. Provident will also serve as one of only 12 backup centers for the national line.



“988 is more than just an easy-to-remember number – it’s a direct connection to compassionate, accessible care and support for anyone experiencing mental a health-related crisis like thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress,” said **Kevin Drollinger**, executive director of Provident. “People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need support.”

There are urgent realities driving the need for more easily-accessible crisis services.

US statistics:

- In 2020 alone, suicide claimed the lives of over 45,900 Americans; it was the second leading cause of death for people aged 10 – 34 years. ([Source](#))
- The national suicide rate has climbed nearly 30% since 1999. ([Source](#))

Missouri statistics ([Source](#)):

- In Missouri, 1,230 lives were lost to suicide and 219,000 adults had thoughts of suicide in the last year.
- 255,000 adults in Missouri have a serious mental illness.
- 68,000 Missourians age 12-17 have depression.
- 1,871,902 people in Missouri live in a community that does not have enough mental health professionals.
- 56% of Missourians age 12-17 who have depression did not receive any care in the last year.
- In Feb 2021, 39% of adults in MO reported symptoms of anxiety or depression. 28.8% were unable to get counseling or therapy.

“The good news is, the Lifeline works for people in distress, and the easy-to-remember 988 dialing code will make it simpler for people to access our services,” said **Lindsay Jeffries**, Provident’s director of clinical services. “Provident has been a trusted voice on the other end of crisis calls for over 60 years. We have a best-in-class program, with the experience and knowledge to help people through their most difficult moments.”

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The 988 Lifeline will be staffed by Provident's Crisis Services team, which provides suicide prevention and crisis intervention services 24 hours a day. Crisis Intervention Specialists complete over 80 hours of suicide prevention training before answering crisis calls. They answered 61,181 hotline calls in 2021, which equates to providing life-saving service to 168 people each day (almost seven per hour.)

Downloadable logos and supportive information are available [by clicking here](#).

About Provident Behavioral Health

Serving the St. Louis area since 1860, Provident Behavioral Health is an accredited, nonprofit, United Way member agency that builds brighter futures through exceptional behavioral health services, especially for those with the greatest need. They provide crisis intervention services, counseling for individuals, psychiatric services, and Afterschool programming. They partner with Mary Ryder Home to provide a safe place for low-income, older adult women with behavioral health needs. Visit providentstl.org for more information.

About the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Funded by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and administered by Vibrant Emotional Health, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a leader in suicide prevention and mental health crisis care. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides free and confidential emotional support and crisis counseling to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 180 local crisis centers, uniting local resources with national best practices. Since its inception in 2005, the Lifeline has engaged in innovative public messaging, development of best practices in mental health, creative partnerships, and more to improve crisis services and advance suicide prevention for all. suicidepreventionlifeline.org

About Vibrant Emotional Health

Vibrant Emotional Health is a non-profit organization that helps individuals and families achieve emotional wellbeing. For over 50 years, our groundbreaking solutions have delivered high-quality services and support, when, where and how people need it. We offer confidential emotional support through our state-of-the-art contact center and crisis hotline services that use leading edge telephone, text and web-based technologies and include the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, NFL Life Line and NYC Well. Through our community wellness programs individuals and families obtain supports and skills they need to thrive. Our advocacy and education initiatives promote mental wellbeing as a social responsibility. Each year we help more than 2.5 million people live healthier and more vibrant lives. We're advancing access, dignity and respect for all and revolutionizing the system for good. Visit vibrant.org. And follow Vibrant on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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