



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Quarterly Providers Meeting

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

March 9, 2023

PRESENTER:

Mary Jean Weston, LCSW

Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services



988 Review

On July 16th, 2022, 988 became the national three-digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL).

- Help is available through 988 to anyone having thoughts of *suicide, a mental health or substance use crisis, or any kind of emotional distress*
- 988 responds to calls, chats and texts **24 hours a day, every day of the year** across the U.S. and its territories.



In NJ, there are 5 Lifeline centers that respond to 988 calls, chats and texts

- DMHAS is working with currently contracted Lifeline centers to build their capacity to meet the increased volume in 988 contacts

What Happens When I Call 988?



You'll hear an automated message featuring additional options while your call is routed to your local 988 Lifeline center.

Press 1 for the *Veterans Crisis Line*

Press 2 for the *Spanish Line*

Press 3 for the *LGBTQIAS+2 Line*



We'll play you a little music while you're connected.

A skilled, trained call specialist at your local center will answer the phone.



The call specialist will listen to you, understand how your problem is affecting you, provide support, and connect you to specialized local resources.

988 Managing Entity

On January 3, DMHAS posted an RFP for a 988 Managing Entity

- The Managing Entity will be responsible for overseeing activities and data collection of the contracted 988 Lifeline crisis centers in New Jersey.
- The Managing Entity will also be responsible for dispatching Mobile Crisis Response Teams once they are operational.
- A Preliminary Award for the Managing Entity has been made. The Final Award is scheduled to be made on March 14, 2023.

Mobile Crisis Response Program

- **DMHAS plans to post an RFP for Mobile Crisis Response Teams**
 - Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MCRTs) are designed to respond to non-life-threatening mental health, substance use or suicidal crises in the community. MCRTs will work in coordination with the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline crisis centers after a trained crisis counselor decides an in-person intervention is necessary.
 - The staffing goal for these Teams is to have mental health professionals and trained peer specialists co-respond.
 - MCRTs will respond without Law Enforcement when it is deemed safe to do so.
 - DMHAS held 3 public listening sessions to hear comments and concerns regarding the Mobile Crisis Response Program. Many of the ideas will be addressed in the RFP.
- **911 will continue to dispatch emergency responders when someone is in immediate danger, when someone requires emergency medical services, or when a crime has been committed.**

Crisis Receiving and Stabilization

- **Stabilization services are already available in New Jersey and can be accessed by individuals or by someone concerned for a person in crisis. These services include:**
 - Designated Screening Centers (Psychiatric Emergency Services)
 - Early Intervention Support Services (Mental Health Urgent Care)
 - Crisis Residential Services Programs (Residential Respite Programs)
 - Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (Behavioral Health and/or Substance Use Treatment)
- **DMHAS is developing Crisis Receiving and Stabilization Centers which will be located throughout the state.**
 - These Centers will offer community-based services in a facility designed to meet the immediate needs of people experiencing a suicidal, mental health or substance use crisis.
 - The goal is to staff centers with mental health and substance use disorder and peer professionals.

Public Messaging Campaign

- **DMHAS has received federal funding for public messaging**
 - DMHAS is planning a statewide 988 messaging campaign later this year.
 - Messaging strategies being considered include:
 - Radio ads or Billboards
 - Social media messaging
 - Digital advertising
 - Posters, pamphlets, flyers, and wallet cards

988 in NJ continues to expand.

An update will be coming soon.

[Department of Human Services | 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline \(state.nj.us\)](#)

[988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline | SAMHSA](#)

**Please direct questions to
988questions@dhs.nj.gov**