National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and 988 Planning Grant Overview

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Behavioral Health Services
Agenda

• What is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline?
• The Lifeline in Texas
• 988 Planning Grant
  ▶ Grant deliverables
  ▶ Stakeholder coalition meetings
  ▶ Eight Core Planning and Implementation Considerations
  ▶ 988 implementation
• Questions
What Is The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline?

- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Lifeline) is a network of over 180 independent local and state call centers. It is not one large national call center.
- Funded by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
- Administered by Vibrant Emotional Health (Vibrant).
- Available 24/7. Provides confidential support to people in distress, suicide prevention and crisis resources, and best practices for professionals.
- Reached by calling 1-800-273-TALK.
Timeline

- Vibrant awarded HHSC the Lifeline Capacity Building Initiative grant.
- The National Suicide Hotline Designation Act was signed into federal law.
- Lifeline center starts expanding primary coverage.
- HHSC committed MHBG funds for Lifeline centers.
- HHSC submitted final 988 Implementation Plan to Vibrant.
- HHSC applied for the SAMHSA Cooperative Agreements Grant.
- 100% primary coverage in March 2022.
- 988 rollout on 7/16/22.

2019:
- • Vibrant awarded HHSC the 988 Planning Grant.
- • Texas 988 Stakeholder Coalition formed.
- • SAMHSA Grant ends.

2020:
- • Legislative session 2023.
- • Sustainability plan due 3/30/23.
- • 90% call in-state answer rate goal met by April 2024.

2021:
- • HHSC committed MHBG funds for Lifeline centers.

2022:
- • HHSC applied for the SAMHSA Cooperative Agreements Grant.
- • 100% primary coverage in March 2022.
- • 988 rollout on 7/16/22.

2023-24:
- • Legislative session 2023.
- • Sustainability plan due 3/30/23.
- • 90% call in-state answer rate goal met by April 2024.

What Happens When Someone Calls Lifeline?

“Local crisis center” and “local center” refers to Lifeline-affiliated call centers in Texas.

Source: Vibrant Emotional Health
Lifeline: Follow-Up Best Practices

• Vibrant requires a follow-up call for callers with current thoughts of suicide 24 to 72 hours after contacting Lifeline.
  ▸ About 15% of callers require follow-up
  ▸ Most Texas Lifeline centers report they conduct follow-up calls within 24 hours
Lifeline: Resources and Linkages

• Texas Lifeline centers have access to various resource listings
  ▸ 2-1-1
  ▸ Aunt Bertha/findhelp.org
  ▸ Network of Care

• Lifeline centers have written procedures for:
  ▸ Providing access to resources, making referrals for services, and
  ▸ Activating emergency services for callers outside the Lifeline center’s local service area.
Lifeline: Transfer to Local Crisis Services

• Lifeline centers have written procedures for providing access to resources, making referrals for services, and activating emergency services for callers outside the Lifeline center’s local service area.

• Callers requiring emergent or urgent care services are warm transferred to the crisis hotline of the local authority in their county of residence or current location.
Lifeline Network in Texas

- There are five Lifeline-affiliated call centers in Texas:
  - The Suicide & Crisis Center of North Texas
  - The Harris Center
  - Integral Care
  - Emergence Health Network
  - ICARE Call Center of MHMR Tarrant

- To be part of the Lifeline network, a center must:
  - Be certified, accredited, or licensed by an external body;
  - Follow specific standards for answering Lifeline calls;
  - Be willing to participate in Lifeline evaluation activities.
How Is 988 Different From 911?

988 is designated as the U.S. universal telephone number for the purpose of the national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system operated through Lifeline.

• Centralized network routing
  ▸ Backups and efficiencies
  ▸ Centralized quality assurance and operating standards

• Crisis care service
  ▸ Effectively reduces emotional distress and suicidality (free and accessible to all, 24/7/365)
  ▸ Can link to care, outreach services, and follow-up
  ▸ Care is grounded in a focus of least restrictive intervention possible
988 and Diversion

- 988 will support Texas’ current crisis services infrastructure.
- 988 may easily divert from law enforcement involvement in mental health emergencies due to the ease of remembering a three-digit number.
- 988 implementation planning efforts include outreach to 911/Public Service Access Points for telephone support and appropriate linkages to mental health services.
988 Planning Grant

The grant assists state agencies in planning for the implementation of a new, national, three-digit number (988) for mental health crisis and suicide response.

- Grant awarded to HHSC on February 20, 2021.
- Funds stipends for the Texas Lifeline call centers and contracting with a strategic planning consultant: Texas Suicide Prevention Collaborative.
- Grant period ended January 31, 2022.
988 Planning Grant Milestones

• **Goal 1**: Develop a clear roadmap to address key coordination, capacity, funding, and communication strategies foundational to launching of 988, which occurs on or before July 16, 2022.
  - Created and submitted the Final 988 Implementation Plan on January 21, 2022.

• **Goal 2**: Plan for the long-term improvement of 988 contacts in-state answer rates.
  - Created and convened a monthly 988 key stakeholder coalition workgroup; and
  - Developed strategies in alignment with Vibrant's eight core 988 planning and implementation considerations.
# Grant Deliverables

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landscape Analysis</td>
<td>April 16, 2021 (deadline extended)</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft Implementation Plan</td>
<td>September 30, 2021 (deadline extended)</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Implementation Plan</td>
<td>January 21, 2022 (deadline extended)</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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HHSC Priorities for 988 Implementation

1. Ensure 24/7 statewide primary coverage of Lifeline calls to meet Vibrant answer rate goals.

2. Develop plans to secure sustainable and diversified funding to support 988 implementation.

3. Ensure adequate workforce pipeline to meet projected call volume estimates.

4. Evaluate Texas Lifeline system for adherence to Vibrant best practices and ensure plans are developed to close any gaps in operating policies and procedures or service provision.

5. Ensure all Lifeline centers have access to appropriate, reliable, and accurate resources, referrals, and linkages to all Texans who contact 988.
1. Ensure statewide coverage for 988 calls, chats, and texts.

2. Secure adequate, diversified, and sustained funding streams for Lifeline member centers.

3. Expand and sustain center capacity to maintain target in-state answer rates for current and projected call, text, and chat volume.

4. Support crisis centers in meeting Lifeline’s operational standards, requirements, and performance metrics.
5. Convene a coalition of key stakeholders to advise on 988 planning and implementation.

6. Maintain a comprehensive, updated listing of resources, referrals, and linkages; plan for expanded services.

7. Ensure all state centers can provide best practices follow-up to 988 callers/chatters/texters.

8. Plan and implement campaign awareness for 988.
Keys to 988 Success

• Unify follow-up protocols
• Expand service delivery tracking

• Mental Health Block Grant funding through fiscal year 2024
• Cost model projections being developed

• **Primary Coverage:** Will reach 100% of all counties by March 2022
• **Backup Coverage:** Currently 10% of counties. Prioritize high call volume counties.

• Integral Care joining Chat/Text Subnetwork
• Infrastructure for chat and text, funding, and staff

• Greater than 90% call in-state answer rate
• Less than 10% rollover calls to the national backup centers

HHSC is working to address these priorities and focus areas with internal and external stakeholders.
988 Implementation

• By June 30, 2022 (988 pre-launch):
  ▶ States are to achieve and maintain an 80% or higher in-state answer rate for Lifeline calls; and
  ▶ Have sufficient capacity to receive and handle at least 50% of the projected chat/text volume.

• By June 30, 2023 (988 post-launch):
  ▶ States are to achieve and maintain a 90% or higher in-state answer rate for Lifeline/988 calls; and
  ▶ Have sufficient capacity to receive and handle at least 80% of the projected chat/text volume.

• 988 will launch July 16, 2022.
988 Implementation Barriers and Challenges

Possible delays to full implementation:

- **Local workforce:** Lifeline center staff turnover, hiring, and retention challenges for qualified professionals

- **Text and chat adoption:** Lifeline centers in Texas do not yet receive texts/chats and use the required Vibrant software.

- **24/7 coverage:** Ensuring 24/7 primary coverage for all counties and adequate backup coverage

- **Funding and sustainability:** Currently heavily reliant on federal block grant funding to subsidize operations

- **Expansion of 988:** Unknown scaling, growth, and public adoption of 988 including intersections with 911
Questions?
Thank you

Crisis Services Mailbox: crisisservices@hhs.texas.gov