



988 Minnesota Lifeline Legislative Report

ANNUAL 988 USAGE REPORT

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2025 Report to the Legislature

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Executive summary

The 988 Minnesota Lifeline represents significant advancement in improving access to mental health support by providing an easy to remember number that connects Minnesotans to 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers 24/7. Through calls, text, and chats people can now connect to a trained 988 specialist for mental health support in the moments they need it.

In 2025, volume to the 988 Minnesota Lifeline increased by 48% compared to 2024. This reflects a growing demand for 988 services and expanded capacity of 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers to answer and respond to contacts.

This legislative report provides an update on the volume demand and usage of the 988 Minnesota Lifeline for the 2025 calendar year. Minnesota Statutes, [145.561 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/145.561) (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/145.561>), require the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to provide oversight of a 988 Minnesota Lifeline system that is responsive to answering incoming contacts to the 988 Minnesota Lifeline.

Key highlights

- **Increased demand for 988 service:** The 988 Minnesota Lifeline has expanded access to immediate mental health support. In 2025, there was a 48% increase in the number of 988 contacts answered by a 988 Minnesota Lifeline center compared to 2024.
- **Maintained in-state response metrics:** 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers achieved a 91% in-state answer rate, exceeding the national target of 90%.
- **Contacts to 911 emergency services align with national average:** Less than 1% of 988 contacts required connection to 911 emergency services compared to the national average of less than 2%. The use of 911 services remains infrequent because most 988 contacts can be supported through non-emergency interventions with a trained 988 specialist

Background

On July 22, 2022, the United States launched a new three-digit dialing code, 988, that connects people to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988 Lifeline) for mental health support 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This nationwide change made it possible for more people to easily access mental health support in the moments they most need it.

The 988 Lifeline operates through a national 988 Lifeline Administrator, which is funded through the federal agency Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The role of the 988 Lifeline Administrator is to maintain the 988 Lifeline technology, infrastructure, and platforms, provide clinical training standards for 988 specialists, evaluate the effectiveness of the 988 Lifeline, and oversee the networks of designated 988 centers across all 50 States and U.S. Territories.

The national 988 network, overseen by the 988 Lifeline Administrator, includes:

- Veterans Crisis Line (operated through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs)
- Local 988 centers (independently operated with State oversight)
- National 988 backup centers
- Spanish language 988 centers
- Videophone 988 services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing

State implementation

Although the 988 Lifeline is a national network, states are individually responsible for maintaining and sustaining a local 988 system that is responsive to incoming 988 contacts (calls, texts, chats) originating from within their jurisdiction. States are also responsible for building a robust 988 system that collaborates with other local services such as 911 emergency services to respond to 988 contacts that may require it.

In 2023, legislation was passed designating the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) as the state agency to oversee the Minnesota 988 system. Minnesota's 988 system includes a network of four local 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers that respond to 988 calls, texts, and chats that originate from the state. In addition, MDH monitors statewide demand and usage of 988 services and ensures appropriate collaboration with other local crisis service systems. Maintaining a local 988 system is important for ensuring contacts are answered by 988 Minnesota Lifeline specialists with knowledge of regional resources tailored to the needs of Minnesotans, strengthening effective coordination with community partners across the state.

Connecting to the 988 Minnesota Lifeline

There are three ways people can contact 988 – calling, texting, or chatting online. Regardless of modality, each contact is routed through the 988 Lifeline Administrator before routing to a local 988 Minnesota Lifeline center.

When a person dials 988 on their phone, they will hear a message with options to connect to different available 988 services:

- Press 1 will connect to the Veterans Crisis Line
- Press 2 will connect to a national Spanish language 988 center
- Press 0 or no selection will route a person to the 988 Minnesota Lifeline center

If a caller presses '0' or remains on the line, they will be routed to one of the 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers either by the caller's area code or by georouting. Georouting routes wireless calls based on the caller's approximate geographic location. This allows callers to have their call routed to a 988 Minnesota Lifeline center if they are physically located in the state but do not have a Minnesota area code phone number.

A person can text directly to 988 on mobile devices that can send and receive text messages. Texts to 988 are routed based on the area code of the person's phone number. All Minnesota-based area codes are routed to 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers. Georouting for 988 texting is currently not available.

To use 988 chat, a person must have connection to an internet browser and access 988lifeline.org. Before being connected to a 988 specialist, the person will be asked to enter a zip code. Minnesota-based zip codes will be routed to a 988 Minnesota Lifeline center.

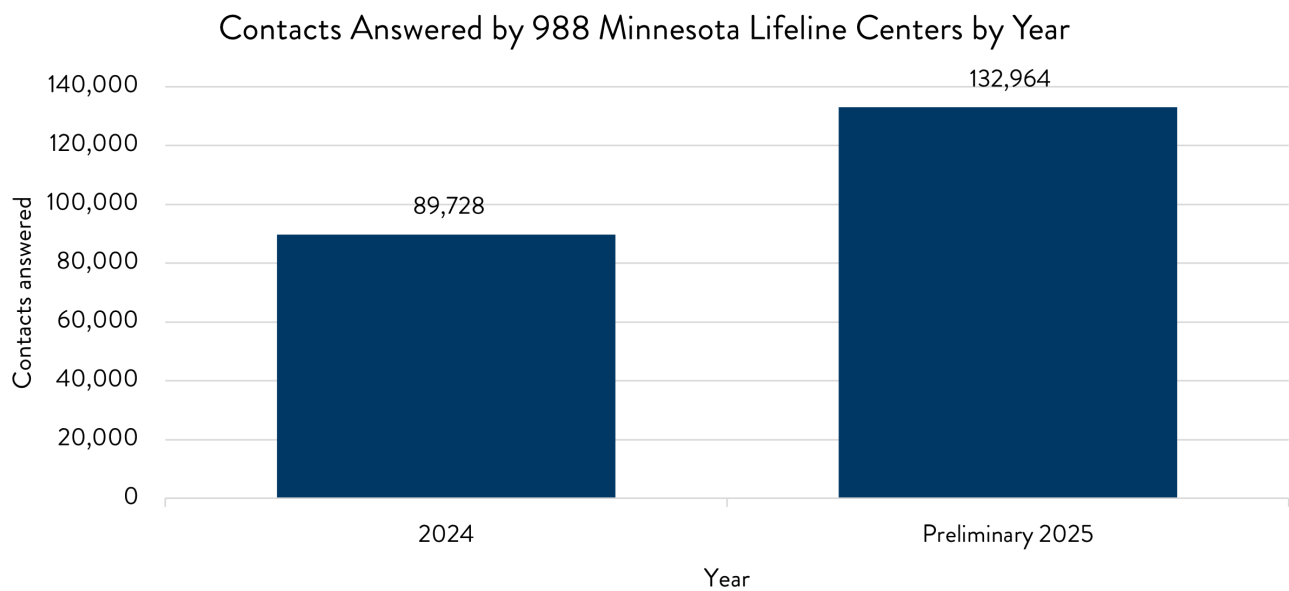
Once connected, a 988 specialist will assess for risk of suicide and determine the level of support needed. In cases where a person is determined to not be at immediate risk of suicide, the 988 specialist will listen and provide a space for the person to share what they are experiencing. During this time, the 988 specialist may help the person identify manageable next steps to reduce emotional intensity and provide information to local community resources and services, as appropriate. In situations where a person is at immediate risk for suicide or has already attempted suicide, a 988 specialist may contact 911 for emergency services.

Statewide usage data

The data provided in this legislative report includes information about the usage of 988 in Minnesota beginning January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025. This data reflects information related to 988 contacts that are answered by 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers only and excludes contacts answered by the Veterans Crisis Line, Spanish Language 988 Centers, National 988 Backup Center, or 988 Videophone services.

Volume demand

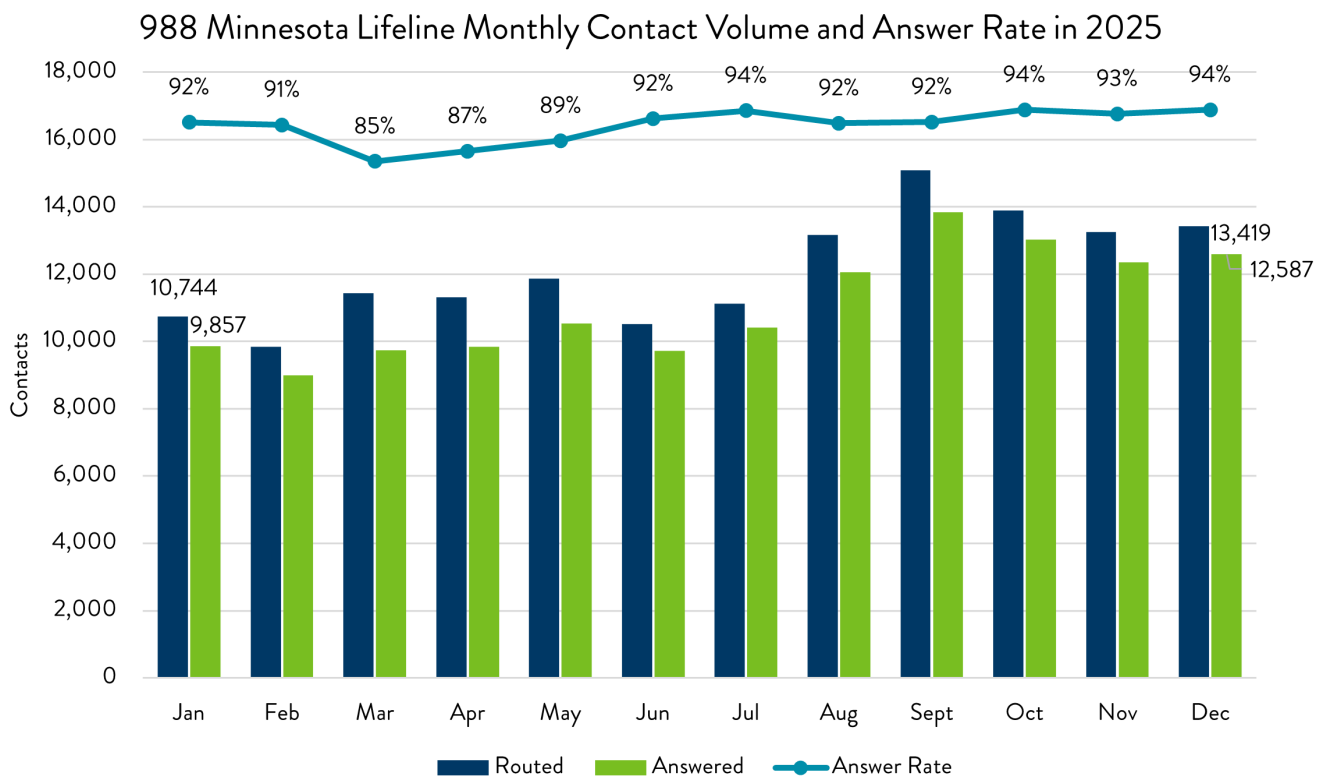
Preliminary 2025 data show that 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers answered 132,964 contacts from the 988 Minnesota Lifeline compared to 89,728 contacts in 2024, a 48% increase. The growth in volume may be attributed to multiple factors including demand for mental health support, increased awareness about services, and expanded capacity across the 988 Minnesota Lifeline system to respond to incoming contacts. It is anticipated that volume to the 988 Minnesota Lifeline will continue to increase year-to-year as more Minnesotans become aware of this service.



In-state answer rates

A performance metric that is tracked at the national and state level is the in-state answer rate. The in-state answer rate is calculated by taking the number of 988 contacts answered by 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers divided by the total number of 988 contacts that were offered to 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers. The national standard target is a 90% or higher in-state answer rate. In 2025, 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers achieved a 91% in-state answer rate.

A monthly breakdown of the in-state answer rate demonstrates that 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers were able to maintain a high answer rate, achieving the state’s highest monthly answer rate of 94% in July, October, and December 2025. These high answer rates continue to be a result of investments MDH has made in expanding the 988 Minnesota Lifeline workforce.



Disconnected contacts

Disconnected contacts happen when the person has ended the contact before a 988 Minnesota Lifeline specialist is able to answer. People may disconnect for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, changing their mind about getting support or not being willing to wait for a response.

In 2025, 6% of contacts routed to 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers were disconnected before a 988 Minnesota Lifeline specialist was able to answer. This exceeds the national target goal of having less than 5% of contacts disconnect. Disconnected contacts were higher this year due to test calls from AT&T that occurred in March and April when the carrier was activating georouting. When suspected AT&T test calls are excluded, 5% of contacts disconnected. It should be noted that disconnected contacts also impact the in-state answer rate.

988 and 911 emergency services

In 2025, 0.4% of contacts answered by 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers were connected to 911 emergency services. According to [What Happens When People are Actively Suicidal? An in-depth Analysis of 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Imminent Risk Data \(https://www.vibrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Imminent-Risk-Data-White-Paper-Final-Version.pdf\)](https://www.vibrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Imminent-Risk-Data-White-Paper-Final-Version.pdf), this aligns with national research findings that 2% or less of 988 Lifeline contacts result in transfers to 911 emergency services

Transfers to 911 for emergency services happen infrequently and are made in situations where 988 Minnesota Lifeline specialists have determined that there is an imminent risk of suicide or a suicide attempt in progress has been identified.

2025 988 Minnesota Lifeline usage data by month

Month	Contacts Routed*	Contacts Answered*	Answer Rate*	Contacts Disconnected*	Contacts Transferred to Emergency Services^
January	10,744	9,857	92%	534	39
February	9,844	8,990	91%	422	46
March	11,428	9,746	85%	1,239	37
April	11,313	9,840	87%	1,141	41
May	11,876	10,532	89%	854	50
June	10,519	9,713	92%	359	36
July	11,121	10,415	94%	445	39
August	13,166	12,058	92%	643	56
September	15,085	13,846	92%	698	47
October	13,897	13,033	94%	616	38
November	13,256	12,347	93%	667	51
December	13,419	12,587	94%	616	42

*Data source: 988 Lifeline Administrator

^Data source: 988 Minnesota Lifeline Centers

Conclusion

The implementation and growth of the 988 Minnesota Lifeline system continues to strengthen access to mental health support for Minnesotans experiencing mental and emotional distress. Over 132,000 contacts to the 988 Minnesota Lifeline were handled by local 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers in 2025, demonstrating the critical role this service continues to play in meeting the rising need for immediate mental health support.

For many Minnesotans, reaching out to the 988 Minnesota Lifeline represents their first experience of accessing mental health support. It serves as a space people can turn to for compassionate nonjudgemental help and an entry point to be connected to local community-based resources and services. As usage of the 988 Minnesota Lifeline continues to grow, investments in the 988 Minnesota Lifeline system and infrastructure will be necessary to sustain a strong 988 Lifeline operation that prioritizes quality care and support, maintains collaboration with partners across the crisis care system in Minnesota, and ensures that all Minnesota residents have access to 988 services when they need it most.

If you or someone you know needs mental health support or is at risk of suicide, you are not alone, and help is available. You can call or text 988 to reach the 988 Minnesota Lifeline or chat online at 988lifeline.org. Trained 988 Minnesota Lifeline specialists are available to provide confidential support 24 hours a day, seven days a week.