

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Votes To Designate 988 As Three-Digit Dialing Code For National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

by Dalus Ben Avi
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An early supporter of 988, Centerstone applauds FCC leadership for this monumental decision

WEST FRANKFORT — Today at its monthly Open Commission Meeting, the FCC voted to designate 988 as the three-digit dialing number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, which connects callers to life-saving suicide prevention and mental health crisis services. This vote establishes rules which require all telephone service providers to direct 988 calls to the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by July 16, 2022.

Suicide has ranked as the tenth leading cause of death in the U.S since 2008 and claims the

lives of tens of thousands of Americans each year. Establishing an easily-remembered three-digit telephone number, similar to 911, will make it easier for Americans in crisis to connect with mental health professionals and access the services they need.

“As the nation remains in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we know more and more Americans are struggling with mental health and substance use disorders. We are anticipating that these issues will only worsen the longer this pandemic lasts,” said David Guth, chief executive officer of Centerstone. “That is why Centerstone applauds today’s announcement by the FCC to implement a nationwide three digit telephone hotline for mental health emergencies, 988. Today’s historic decision is a giant step toward breaking down barriers for Americans struggling with mental illness and providing those in need with immediate access to lifesaving supports. All of us at Centerstone thank the FCC for their leadership to advance mental health for all Americans and now look forward to the full implementation of the 988 National Suicide Prevention Hotline over the next two years.”

During the transition to 988, those who need mental health help should continue to contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by calling 1-800-273-8255.

About Centerstone

[Centerstone](#) is a not-for-profit health system providing mental health and substance use disorder treatments. Services are available nationally through the operation of outpatient clinics, residential programs, the use of telehealth and an inpatient hospital. Centerstone also features specialized programs for the military community, therapeutic foster care, children’s services and employee assistance programs. Centerstone’s Research Institute provides guidance through research and technology, leveraging the best practices for use in all our communities. Centerstone’s Foundation secures philanthropic resources to support the work and mission of delivering care that changes people’s lives.

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