

9-8-8 new hampshire

mental health, substance use and suicide response

What is 9-8-8?

9-8-8 is a new, three-digit number for mental health crisis, substance misuse and suicide response which will be launched nationally by July 2022. When implemented, calls to the new 9-8-8 number will be automatically routed to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's current network of local crisis call centers. A 9-8-8 crisis line that is effectively resourced and promoted will be able to:

- Help a person experiencing a mental health crisis by connecting them to counselors (via phone, chat or text) who can address their immediate needs and connect them to ongoing care.
- Create an environment where individuals feel safe, without prejudice or discrimination.
- Reduce healthcare spending with more cost-effective early intervention.
- Reduce use of law enforcement, public health, and other safety resources.
- Meet the growing need for crisis intervention at scale.
- Assess and assist with connecting with local resources as indicated.
- Help end stigma toward those seeking or accessing mental healthcare.

When you've got a police, fire or rescue emergency, you call 911.

When you've got a mental health emergency, you'll call 9-8-8.

Why do we need 9-8-8 in NH?

America is experiencing a mental health crisis and NH is no exception. The crisis is not irreversible.

- Approximately one in five people above the age of 12 has a mental health condition in the US.
- Individuals in a mental health crisis being boarded in Emergency Departments have risen dramatically since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- COVID-19 exacerbated mental health challenges as people delayed care, were socially isolated, children were out of school and social networks, and unemployment and housing concerns increased.
- Suicide is most often preventable. For every person who dies by suicide, there are 280 people who seriously consider suicide but do not go on to die by suicide. Over 90% of people who attempt suicide go on to live out their lives.
- 9-8-8 will give individuals in a mental health crisis or family members & caregivers an alternative to calling 911 or going to the Emergency Department.
- 9-8-8 calls will be answered by professionals trained in counseling services.
- 9-8-8 will assist with operationalizing the recommendations and goals of New Hampshire's 10-Year Mental Health Plan which was released in January 2019 which includes multiple recommendations to connect people to services in their communities including mobile crisis response teams.

NH can meet these challenges with the evidence-based crisis intervention that the 9-8-8 crisis line and crisis care infrastructure can provide.



Crisis lines work:



35% higher than the national rate

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crisis system changes

How is NH planning for this change?

To ensure the successful transition away from the current 10-digit (1-800-273-8255) crisis number towards the new three-digit number (9-8-8), NH was awarded funding from Vibrant Emotional Health to help meet certain standards of the planning process. NH developed a 9-8-8 Planning Coalition that is tasked with guiding and informing the development of the NH Department of Health and Human Services 9-8-8 statewide implementation plan. Priorities of the plan include:

- Developing clear roadmaps to address key coordination, capacity, funding, and communication strategies that are foundational to the launching of 9-8-8.
- Planning for the long-term improvement of in-state answer rates for 9-8-8 calls.

The final 9-8-8 implementation plan is due to the Lifeline and SAMHSA by December 2021.

How will NH fund this?

It is critical that appropriate funding for the Lifeline network, individual crisis centers, and the crisis continuum be allocated to serve more people in crisis. States across the US are looking at several models to adequately and sustainably fund crisis services. In NH, the 9-8-8 planning coalition will examine options which include a Medicaid payment mix, federal and state funds and a 911 funding approach. Many states across the country are investing in their behavioral health crisis response system utilizing state general funds and the federal government is also encouraging states to utilize block grant funding for the 9-8-8 system.

How can you support 9-8-8 and help NH residents in crisis?

You can attend a public listening session to learn more and provide feedback to inform the changes. You can assist in the public messaging and communication about the changes as the roll-out date approaches in July 2022.

You can participate in advocacy efforts for robust and sustainable funding for mental health, substance use and suicidal crises response in NH.

You can stay connected, ask & listen, know the signs and find help in NH for yourself and those around you. Visit www.dhhs.nh.gov/icare to learn more.

Change is coming, but planning takes time. 9-8-8 will be live July 16, 2022.

If you or someone you know is in crisis today, you can call

The Lifeline 24/7 at 1-800-273-(TALK) 8255



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