



ADVANCING
BRAIN HEALTH
POLICY &
INSPIRING
LEADERSHIP



Year One 988 Implementation Budget

Last year, Congress unanimously passed, and the President signed legislation establishing “988” as the new three-digit number to increase access to suicide prevention and mental health crisis services. Existing California National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Centers (California Crisis Centers) will become the operators and counselors for 988. California must work to set up 988 ahead of the national “go-live” date of July 2022. The services the national legislation promises to callers with 9-8-8 have significantly expanded beyond the current scope of Suicide Prevention Crisis Centers without additional funding to do so.

Without necessary funding to prepare for this increase, people in crisis will sit on hold and calls will go unanswered preventing people in crisis from accessing lifesaving care. *It is no exaggeration to say that in these crises, every second matters and without proper funding people will die.*

Year 1 Budget Needs: California Crisis Centers estimate it will cost **\$50 million in year 1** to sufficiently provide suicide prevention and mental health crisis response to all 9-8-8 callers beginning July 1, 2022.

Skyrocketing Call Volumes in the First Year of 988: In just the first year of 988, California Crisis Centers anticipate a three-fold increase in calls, texts, and chats for four reasons:

- (1) When services are more accessible more people access them. Replacing a ten-digit “1-800” number with an easy-to-remember three-digit number will make accessing resources easier than ever.
- (2) The anticipated three-fold increase in contact volume driven by 988 comes on top of exponential volume increases in recent years. California Crisis Centers have seen a 67% increase in call volume over the last 5 years. One California Crisis Center even saw a 30% increase in call volume year-over-year. This rise in call volume has been further exacerbated by COVID-19 with many California Crisis Centers seeing a 30 - 40% increase over just the past 18 months.
- (3) National publicity is getting the word out about a new number and new services. Promoting 988 will also raise public awareness about the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline leading to an increase in calls. This, coupled with the number being publicized as a “mental health crisis line,” will draw a wider array of people and significantly higher volume of people than a hotline publicized as a “suicide prevention hotline” or even “disaster distress hotline.” In addition, intentional or not, 988 will draw people seeking alternatives to 911.

- (4) The long-term behavioral health impact of COVID-19 is just beginning to show. People have started to emerge from nearly two years of isolation, and California Crisis Centers anticipate significant impacts from untreated mental health conditions, substance use disorder conditions, and significantly altered interpersonal dynamics.

Why California Must Fund California Crisis Centers This Year: California Crisis Centers have been planning for this increase and are ready and able to respond but have not been provided funding to scale up their operations, implement their response strategies, or sustain their services in the years ahead. To date, zero dollars have been appropriated or allocated to crisis centers to operate 9-8-8 when they start answering calls on July 1, 2022.

California 988 First Year Cost Model for Crisis Centers		
Crisis Center Contacts		
Number of centers		13
Crisis Center Staffing		
Total FTEs		508
Counselors FTEs		305
Supervisors FTEs		52
Quality Assurance FTEs		8
Program Manager FTEs		13
Workforce Manager FTEs		13
Resource Specialist FTEs		13
Staffing & Scheduling FTEs		13
Non-dedicated FTEs*		91
Average annual salary per counselor FTE		\$ 65,000
Cost per Contact		
	<i>Volume</i>	<i>Cost per Contact</i>
Total	664,400	\$ 74.84
Inbound calls	376,900	\$ 60.22
Outbound calls	18,800	\$ 37.64
Chat	253,800	\$ 100.37
Text (dedicated labor time)	14,900	\$56.46
Total Projected Costs		
		\$ 49,723,346
Shared capital		\$ 1,674,868
Shared management		\$ 8,922,411
Shared expense		\$ 2,553,485
Dedicated capital		\$ 82,230
Dedicated expense		\$ 1,518,376
Dedicated personnel		\$ 34,971,976

* Non-dedicated FTEs are apportioned at 50% of the following positions: Contact Center Director, Contact Center Manager, HR Manager, Accountant, Recruiter, Trainer, and IT support.