



# COUNTY OF YOLO

Office of the County Administrator

**Gerardo Pinedo**  
County Administrator

625 Court Street, Room 202 ▪ Woodland, CA 95695  
[www.yolocounty.org](http://www.yolocounty.org)

John Fout, Public Information Officer  
John.Fout@yolocounty.org

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Contact: John Fout  
Email: John.Fout@yolocounty.org

## Dial 988 for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

**(Woodland, CA)** – Starting July 16, 2022, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number transitioned to an easy-to-remember and quick to dial 3-digit number – 988. The 988 Lifeline allows anyone experiencing a mental health or substance use related crisis to call or text 988 or chat at [Lifeline](https://www.988lifeline.org) (988lifeline.org) and connect with trained counselors.

988 Lifeline offers 24/7 access to counselors who are trained to listen, provide support, and connect callers to resources. They can also assist family and friends of someone who may be considering suicide or needs crisis support. There is tremendous need, given:

- In 2020, about 1 in every 8 calls to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline originated in California.
- In 2020, the U.S. had one death by suicide every 11 minutes.
- For people ages 10–34, suicide is a leading cause of death.
- From April 2020 through April 2021, over 100,000 people died from drug overdoses.

Behind each of these data points, there are people, families and communities who have been impacted. Yet, in the face of these urgent realities, there is hope. The 988 Lifeline helps thousands of struggling people overcome mental-health related distress every day. When Californians dial 988, they will be directed to one of 13 Lifeline crisis call centers based on the caller's area code. If a local crisis center is unable to take the call, the caller is automatically routed to a national backup crisis center. [Suicide Prevention of Yolo County \(SPYC\)](https://www.spyc.org) is Yolo County's local Lifeline call center and has provided critical crisis support services for Yolo County and beyond since 1966. Each year, SPYC provides immediate phone support to more than 5,000 callers who are contemplating suicide or experiencing severe psychological distress. These numbers are anticipated to increase with the implementation of 988.

“Over the last two years, Covid-19 and the impacts of the pandemic, economic struggles, violence, and political tensions have placed additional strain on the mental health of our community. Having an easy to remember hotline enables those experiencing mental health and substance abuse crises to reach out sooner, and the results can be lifesaving,” said Interim Mental Health Director Karleen Jakowski. “We are incredibly fortunate to have SPYC serving as Yolo County's local Lifeline call center. Over time, the intention is to have the Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency's array of crisis services link seamlessly with SPYC, 988, and local dispatch to ensure callers receive the services and supports they need during times of crisis.”

While this is an exciting time to reimagine how we provide crisis services, the full vision of a transformed crisis care system with 988 at its core will not be built overnight. Timely access to appropriate services and supports is critical and has at times become increasingly challenging as the behavioral health workforce experiences unprecedented shortages, particularly for underrepresented populations. Transformation of this scale will take time, and we must all work together to make it happen.

If you want to help spread the news about 988, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) created a one-stop shop, the [988 Partner Toolkit](#), at [samhsa.gov/988](https://www.samhsa.gov/988).

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