



988 Minnesota Lifeline Legislative Report

ANNUAL 988 USAGE REPORT

JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2024

2024 Report to the Legislature

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As requested by Minnesota Statute 3.197: This report cost approximately \$1,810.00 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

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Public message: You Matter

If you, or someone you know, is in a mental health crisis or at risk of suicide, call or text 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is confidential and available 24/7.

No concern is too small. People call to talk about substance use, economic worries, relationships, mental and emotional health, physical illness, and more. When connected with 988, a trained 988 specialist will answer, listen, and provide support and resources if needed.

By starting the conversation and finding support for those who need it, we can prevent suicides and save lives.

Executive summary

The number and rate of suicide deaths in Minnesota has consistently increased since 1999; preliminary data from 2023 indicates 815 people died by suicide in 2023. This trend may be slowing, although health disparities persist. Minnesota Department of Health's (MDH) comprehensive public health approach to suicide prevention works to improve infrastructure, increase collaboration, and build capacity for local communities to work in upstream prevention, early intervention, crisis intervention, and postvention (support after a death by suicide). This includes strengthening access to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988 Lifeline).

Since the launch in July 2022, the 988 Lifeline has served as a vital national resource connecting people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis with trained specialists. Usage data demonstrate increased volume to the 988 Lifeline, reflecting public awareness and a growing need for mental health support. This report presents an overview of 988 usage trends within Minnesota from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024 and highlights the 988 service coverage in Minnesota, volume across calls, texts, and chats, in-state answer rates, disconnected contacts, and transfers to 911 emergency services.

Minnesota's five 988 Lifeline centers have experienced an increase in volume across calls, texts, and chats since the launch of the 988 services. There was an overall volume increase of 75% in 2024 compared to 2023. Capacity to answer 988 contacts in-state have improved statewide reflecting the investments in the 988 workforce and infrastructure.

Looking ahead, MDH remains committed to building a responsive 988 system that meets the needs of Minnesotans, supports local 988 Lifeline centers, and strengthens the infrastructure of the 988 Lifeline in the state.

Background

This legislative report provides an update on the usage of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988 Lifeline) in Minnesota for the 2024 calendar year. Minnesota Statutes, [section 145.561](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/145.561) (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/145.561>), requires the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to provide oversight of a 988 Minnesota Lifeline program that answers contacts from individuals accessing 988 within the state 24 hours a day, seven days per week.

The rate of suicide deaths in Minnesota has been steadily increasing over the last 25 years. Preliminary data shows that in 2024, 813 Minnesotans are estimated to have died by suicide. MDH's 2023-2027 State Suicide Prevention Plan identified the following populations most burdened by suicide in the state:

- American Indian communities
- Youth and Young Adults ages 10 – 24
- LGBTQIA+ communities
- Black/African Americans
- Middle-aged males
- People with disabilities
- Veterans

Too often, people experiencing suicidal thoughts or mental health distress go without the critical support they need. To address the increasing need for mental health support, the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020 was passed by Congress which designated 9-8-8 as the universal telephone number for providing life-saving support and resources for people in emotional distress. The 988 Lifeline, previously known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, offers 24/7 call, chat, and online chat mental health, suicide, and substance use support. People can also contact the 988 Lifeline if they are worried about a loved one who may need mental health support. The 988 Lifeline launched on July 16, 2022, with the purpose of expanding access for people to reach mental health support in the moment they need it.

In 2023, the state Legislature passed legislation to support 988 implementation in Minnesota. This dedicated resources to answer 988 calls, texts, and chats, while also ensuring collaboration and coordination across other related crisis services. Further, in 2024, the state Legislature established a fee on phone lines to sustain 988 implementation efforts in Minnesota.

This report provides data on the usage of 988 in Minnesota beginning January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

988 Minnesota Lifeline centers

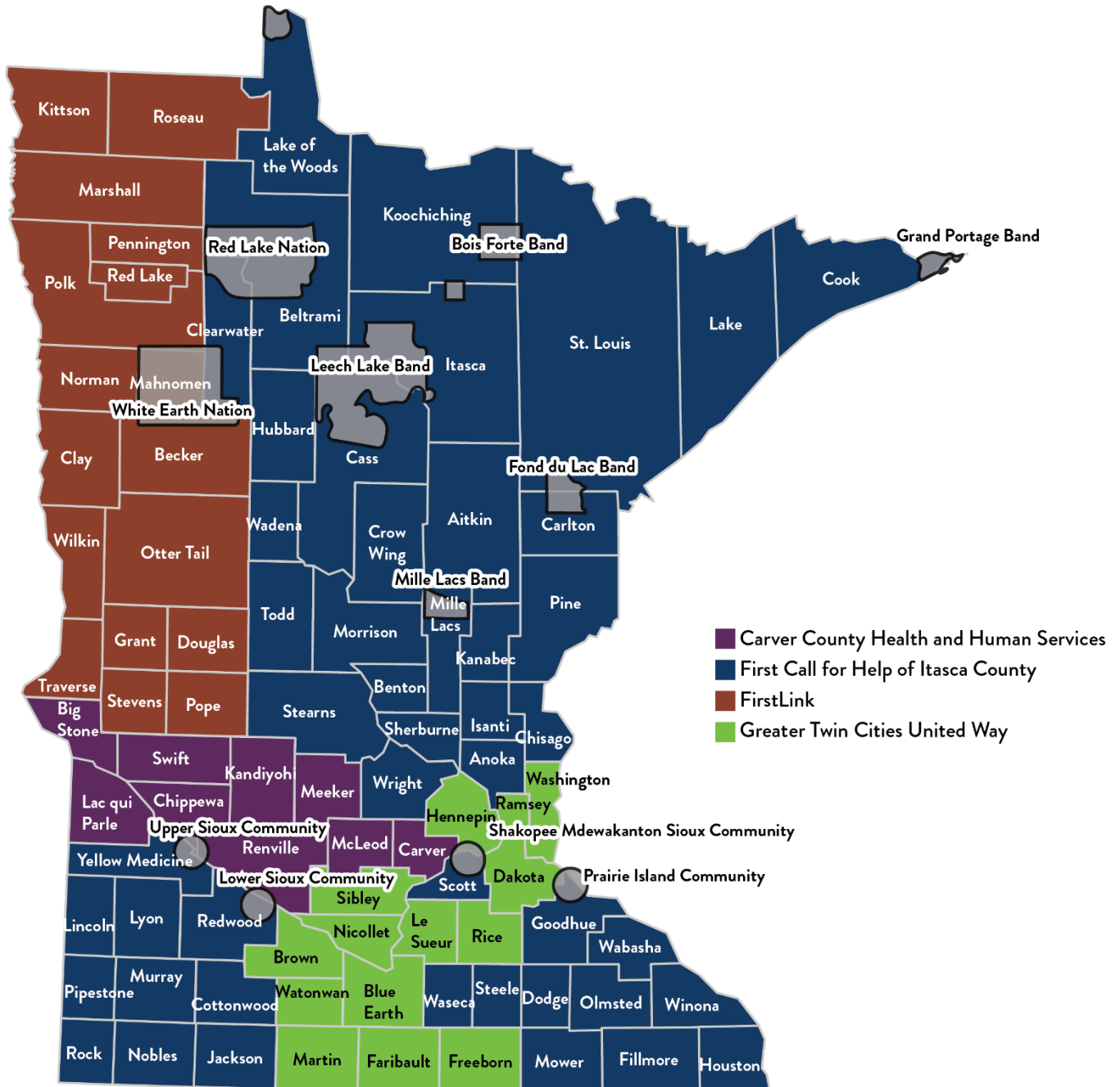
MDH holds the responsibility for the oversight and designation of a network of 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers to answer 988 contacts for the state. As part of this role, MDH provides funding to support the operations of each 988 Minnesota Lifeline center to ensure accessible and consistent access to 988 services. 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers have the option to select whether they will respond to 988 calls, chats, and/or texts.

Call and text coverage

In 2024, four organizations were designated as 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers to answer 988 calls in the state. Each center was assigned a primary coverage area based on county boundaries to ensure local responsiveness and collaboration. One center, First Call for Help of Itasca County, had an added designation as the in-state 988 backup center. An in-state 988 backup center helps ensure that calls originating from Minnesota remain answered in the state, promoting local support. The organizations designated as a 988 Minnesota Lifeline center are:

- Carver County Health and Human Services
- First Call for Help of Itasca County
- FirstLink
- Greater Twin Cities United Way

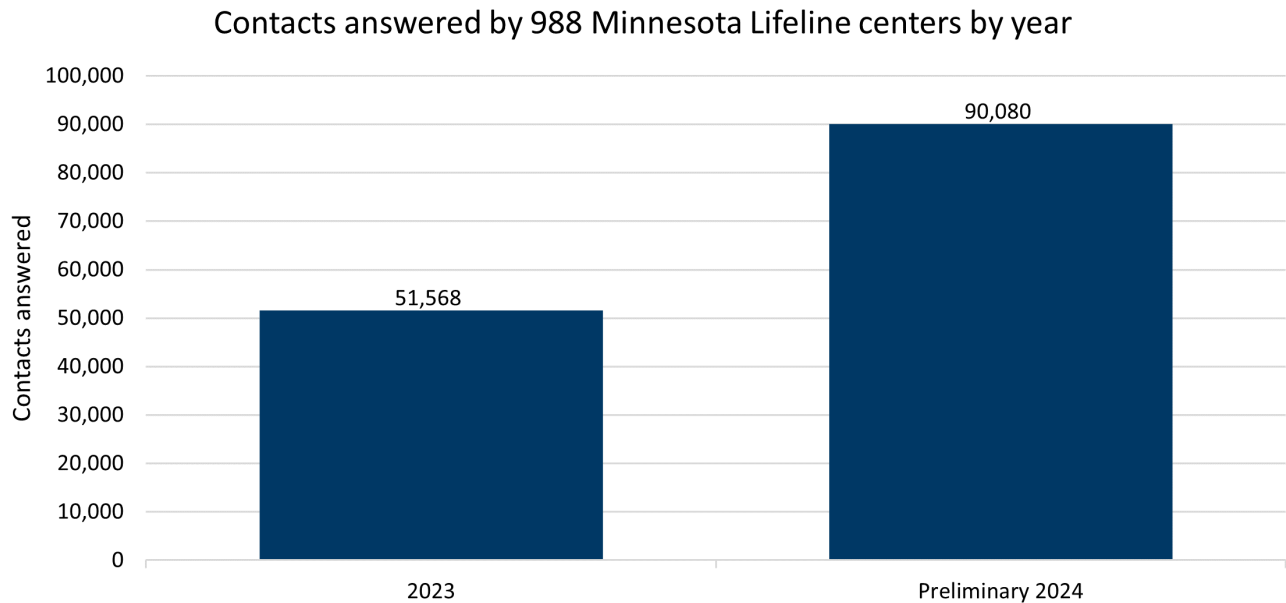
2024 988 Minnesota Lifeline Call coverage map



Statewide usage data

Volume demand

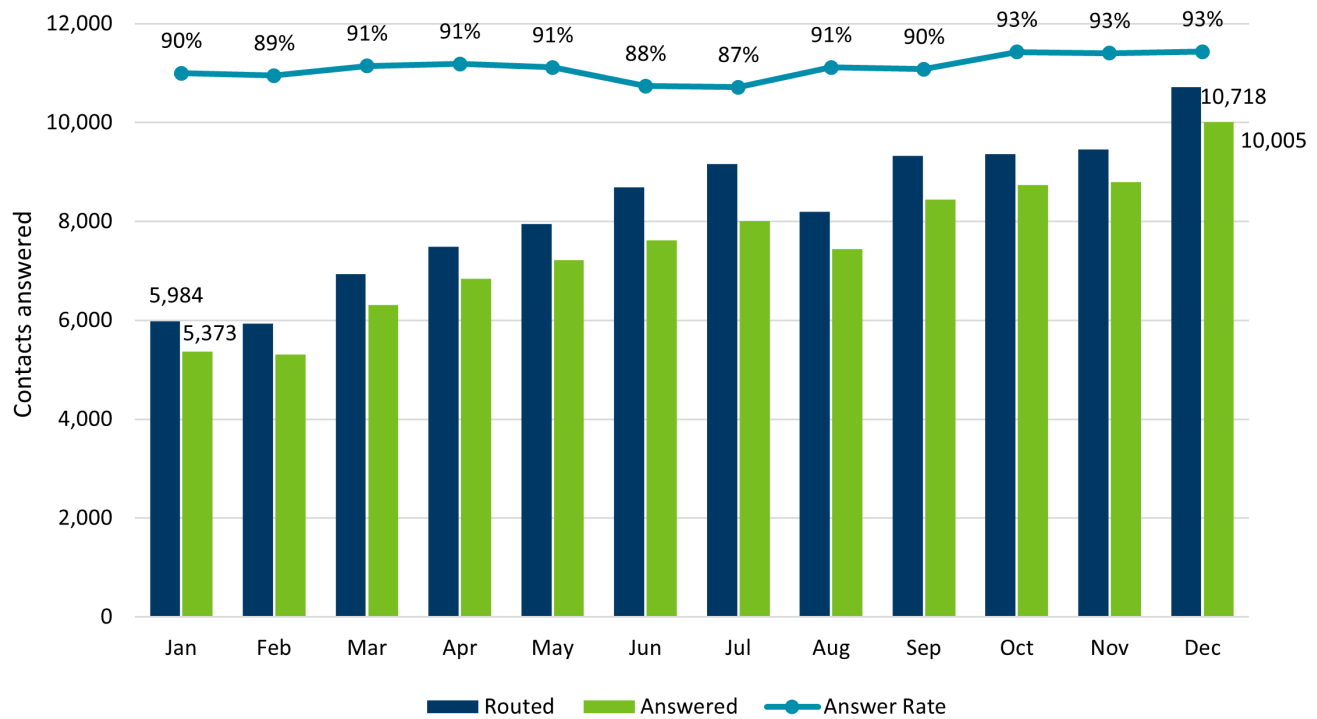
Preliminary 2024 data show that 988 Minnesota Lifeline Centers answered 90,080 contacts from the 988 Lifeline, a 75% increase from 2023.



Answer rates

988 Minnesota Lifeline centers have kept pace with the increasing volume as evident by their high monthly answer rate. The 988 Minnesota Lifeline program reached a new milestone in the last quarter of the year, achieving our state's highest monthly answer rate of 93%. These high answer rates are a result of investments to expand the 988 Minnesota Lifeline workforce.

988 Minnesota Lifeline monthly contact volume and answer rate in 2024



Disconnected contacts

Disconnected contacts, formerly abandoned contacts, are contacts where the individual has disconnected prior to their interaction being answered by a 988 Minnesota Lifeline specialist. Help-seekers may disconnect for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, testing the line or not being willing to wait for a response. In 2024, on average, 4.2% of contacts routed to 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers were disconnected. This meets the national target of less than 5% of contacts disconnecting.

Transfers to 911 emergency services

On average in 2024, 0.8% of contacts answered by 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers were transferred to 911 emergency services. This aligns with national research findings that 2% or less of 988 Lifeline contacts result in transfers to 911 emergency services¹.

1. Drapeau, C. W. (2024). *What happens when people are actively suicidal? An in-depth analysis of 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline imminent risk data*. Vibrant Emotional Health. <https://www.vibrant.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Imminent-Risk-Data-White-Paper-Final-Version.pdf>.

2024 988 Minnesota Lifeline usage data

| Month | Contacts Routed* | Contacts Answered* | Answer Rate* | Contacts Disconnected* | Contacts Transferred to Emergency Services^ |
|-----------|------------------|--------------------|--------------|------------------------|---|
| January | 5,984 | 5,373 | 90% | 304 | 47 |
| February | 5,933 | 5,303 | 89% | 315 | 40 |
| March | 6,936 | 6,311 | 91% | 367 | 45 |
| April | 7,492 | 6,842 | 91% | 330 | 52 |
| May | 7,952 | 7,213 | 91% | 345 | 59 |
| June | 8,688 | 7,615 | 88% | 396 | 58 |
| July | 9,157 | 8,008 | 87% | 343 | 61 |
| August | 8,198 | 7,439 | 91% | 303 | 72 |
| September | 9,331 | 8,439 | 90% | 313 | 69 |
| October† | 9,364 | 8,734 | 93% | 390 | 67 |
| November† | 9,453 | 8,798 | 93% | 348 | 63 |
| December | 10,718 | 10,005 | 93% | 405 | 48 |

*Data source: 988 Lifeline Administrator

^Data source: 988 Minnesota Lifeline Centers

†Preliminary numbers due to a data issue in the 988 Lifeline Administrators' data warehouse.

Conclusion

The 988 Lifeline has become a vital resource in providing immediate, life-saving support that is easy to access for people needing mental health support. Investment in the 988 Lifeline has allowed Minnesota to achieve national targets and increase mental health support, with highlights including:

- 75% increase in volume across 988 calls, chats, and texts in 2024.
- 91% in-state call answer rate across the four 988 Minnesota Lifeline call centers (up from 81% in 2023).
- Less than 1% of 988 interactions resulted in a contact to 911 for emergency services. Well below the national average of 2%.

As usage of 988 grows, MDH will continue to work in collaboration with 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers to enhance response capacity, strengthen coordination with local resources and partners, and ensure that Minnesotans continue to receive quality compassionate support.

Continued investment in the 988 Lifeline will be essential to building a statewide responsive system that saves lives and fosters long term wellbeing. Recommendations for investments and improvements include:

- Increase awareness, understanding, trust and ultimately use of 988 services through public awareness/communication campaigns, particular with communities who are at higher risk for suicide.
- Maintain workforce capacity at 988 Minnesota Lifeline centers to meet the anticipated increase in usage of 988 services.
- Strengthen partnerships across the crisis care continuum in Minnesota.
- Identify needs and gaps for culturally appropriate 988 services.

Appendix A

988 Lifeline Call Coverage

Carver County Health and Human Services: Big Stone, Carver, Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, McLeod, Meeker, Renville, Swift

First Call for Help of Itasca County: Aitkin, Anoka, Beltrami, Benton, Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Carlton, Cass, Chisago, Clearwater, Cook, Cottonwood, Crow Wing, Dodge, Fillmore, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Goodhue, Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Houston, Hubbard, Isanti, Itasca, Jackson, Kanabec, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Lincoln, Lower Sioux Indian Community, Lyon, Mille Lacs, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Morrison, Mower, Murray, Nobles, Olmsted, Pine, Pipestone, Prairie Island Indian Community, Red Lake Nation, Redwood, Rock, Saint Louis, Scott, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, Sherburne, Stearns, Steele, Upper Sioux Community Todd, Wabasha, Wadena, Waseca, White Earth Nation, Winona, Wright

FirstLink: Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Kittson, Mahnommen, Marshall, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Polk, Pope, Red Lake, Roseau, Stevens, Traverse, White Earth Nation, Wilkin

Greater Twin Cities United Way: Blue Earth, Brown, Dakota, Faribault, Freeborn, Hennepin, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Ramsey, Rice, Sibley, Washington, Watonwan

988 Lifeline Text and Chat Coverage in Minnesota

First Call for Help, FirstLink, and Mental Health Minnesota answer Minnesota 988 Lifeline texts and chats statewide.