

# 988: The New and Easy-to-Remember Crisis Resource Number

By: Student Counseling Services



September marks National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. This year, UTHealth Houston Student Health and Counseling Services want to honor this month by discussing some of the warning signs for suicide and sharing the crisis resources available to you.

Are you or a loved one experiencing any of these warning signs?

- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself or talking about wanting to do so
- Looking for ways to kill oneself by seeking access to firearms, available pills, or other means
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide when these actions are out of the ordinary for the person
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling rage or uncontrolled anger
- Acting reckless or engaging in risking activities—seemingly without thinking
- Feeling trapped—like there’s no way out
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from family, friends and society
- Feeling anxious, agitated, or unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Experiencing dramatic mood changes
- Seeing no reason for living or having no sense of purpose in life

On July 16, 2022, **988** was officially launched nationwide as the newly designated three-digit dialing code for urgent mental health support. No longer will callers need to remember the former 10-digit phone number to receive free and confidential crisis care 24/7. Now callers are able to simply dial 988 from any cell phone or landline to be routed to a network of over 200 crisis centers operated by the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (now known as the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline). And the best part is that you can text the same 3-digit number (988) for support too!

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline was originally launched in 2005 and has been an invaluable crisis resource for millions. In 2021 alone, the Lifeline received 3.5 million calls, chats, and texts (SAMHSA, 2022). The new 988 Lifeline, which also links to the Veterans Crisis Line, follows a three-year joint effort

by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to put crisis care more simply and effectively in reach for people in need. It is now accessible to all individuals nationwide.

If you or someone you know is going through a hard time, experiencing a mental health crisis, or expressing thoughts of harming oneself, please get help. UTHealth Houston students continue to have access and are equally encouraged to use the free IMUT Crisis Hotline 24/7 via 713-500-IMUT (4688) as an alternative to 988. Local emergency departments are also options in emergencies.

And of course, Student Counseling Services continues to be available for on-going in-person and telehealth therapy and medication management appointments. We are conveniently located in the UT Professional Building and are available Mondays through Fridays, from 8 AM to 5 PM. Please call 713-500-5171 to schedule an appointment.

You are not alone.

---

Student Counseling Services is part of the UTHealth Student Health Clinic located at 6410 Fannin St, Ste. 130, Houston, TX 77030. We provide comprehensive and confidential outpatient medication management and individual psychotherapy to current students at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit us at [www.uth.edu/studenthealth](http://www.uth.edu/studenthealth) or call us at 713-500-5171 (8AM-5PM, M-F). In-person and virtual visits are offered.