

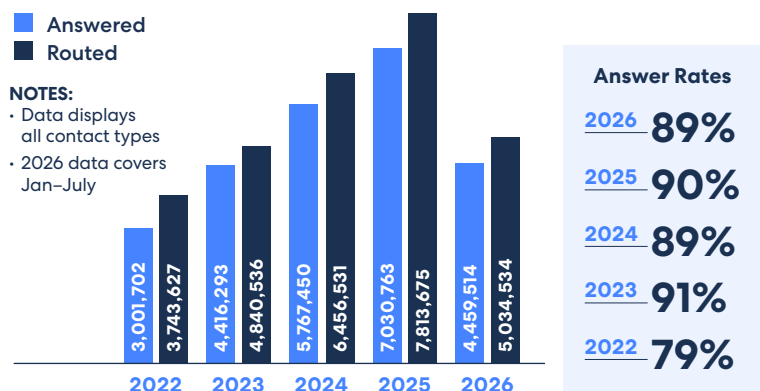
988 Lifeline Funding: Building Sustainable Crisis Response Systems

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline has expanded rapidly and continues to experience significant increases in demand for services.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

Since the July 2022 launch, the 988 Lifeline has received and routed more than 26 million calls, text and chats. (For the most current National performance data and operational metrics, visit the: SAMHSA 988 Lifeline Performance Metrics Dashboard)

Contacts Routed and Answered



As demand for 988 services grows, states are continuing to explore sustainable funding strategies to support 988 operations and the broader crisis continuum.

While federal investments helped launch the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, continued funding is needed to keep pace with increasing demand, workforce needs, and crisis response capacity.



THE CHALLENGE

Currently, many states rely on fluctuating state budgets, time-limited federal grants, and private donations.

Without Sustainable Funding

- **Local Crisis Centers** - Limited staffing, hours, staff support, and follow-up care reduce timely, quality responses.
- **Crisis Response Gaps** - Fewer mobile teams and stabilization services.
- **Localized Support** - Rural, populations with higher rates of suicide face the greatest risk.

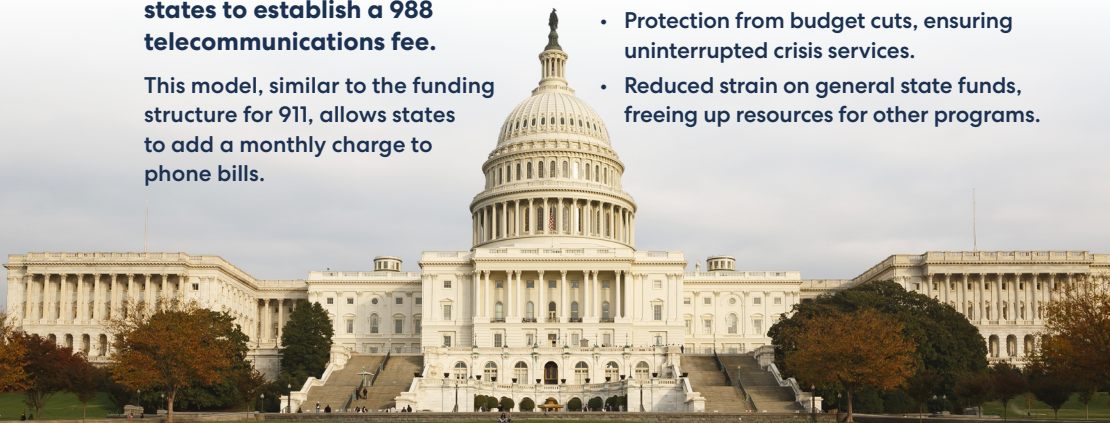
TELECOM FEES

Congress passed the **National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020**, allowing states to establish a 988 telecommunications fee.

This model, similar to the funding structure for 911, allows states to add a monthly charge to phone bills.

Advantages of a Telecommunication Fee

- Reliable, year-over-year revenue that doesn't depend on annual appropriations or one-time grants.
- Protection from budget cuts, ensuring uninterrupted crisis services.
- Reduced strain on general state funds, freeing up resources for other programs.



PUBLIC SUPPORT (NAMI/IPSOS POLL)

87%

- Percent of Americans support providing both state and federal funding for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline call-center operations and crisis response services. *National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) Poll of Public Perspectives on 988 and Crisis Response (2026)*

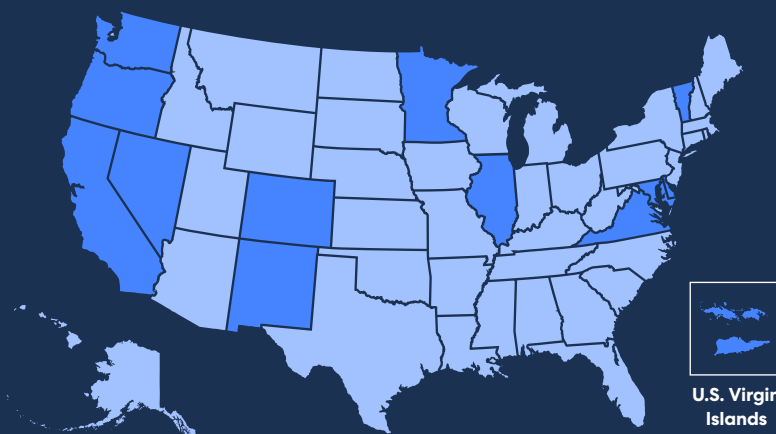
75%

- Three-quarters of people would be willing to pay at least something on their monthly cell phone bills to fund 988 when they learn that is similar to how they already contribute to funding 911 services.

40%

- In states where people already pay small 988 monthly fees, 2 in 5 would be willing to pay \$0.60 or more each month in support of these crisis response services. *National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Poll of Public Perspectives on 988 & Crisis Response (2025).*

What States Are Doing



■ = Passed 988 Telecommunications Fee Legislation

988 Telecommunications Fees

As of 2026, 13 states and territories passed 988 telecommunications fee legislation (California, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, U.S. Virgin Islands, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington) with per line/per month fees varying from \$0.05 to \$0.60.

To prevent misuse, revenue generated from 988 telecommunications fees is typically deposited into a dedicated 988 fund or trust, which can only be used to support 988 operations and crisis response services.

Additional Funding Strategies

States are also leveraging other funding sources to support the 988 Lifeline, including:

- State budget appropriations
- Federal/state grants
- Medicaid reimbursement
- Specialized fees