

T-Mobile becomes first carrier to enable 988 number for mental health services

T-Mobile has added support for the 988 emergency mental health services number more than a year and a half ahead of the Federal Communications Commission's deadline, the company announced on Friday. T-Mobile customers who dial 988 will be connected to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL) and its network of crisis centers across the US. T-Mobile says it is the first carrier in the US to make 988 available to its customers.

T-Mobile chief technology officer Abdul Saad said in a statement that making the shorter emergency number available to customers was "a matter of urgency for us, particularly as the COVID-19 pandemic continues and the holiday season approaches."

In 2019, the FCC released a report suggesting a three-digit hotline number would make it easier for those seeking help. The FCC voted unanimously in July to make 988 the number to connect to the NSPL hotline, and it gave carriers until July 2022 to put it into effect. However, the 988 number isn't able to receive text messages, which FCC commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel said at the time was problematic. She noted that voice service is "not native for most young people."

People in need of mental health support can still contact the NSPL by calling 1-800-273-8255 (1-800-273-TALK) or by using online chats.

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/11/20/21580432/tmobile-988-numbe>

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