

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

988

Business Education & Awareness Toolkit



Public Health

**DURHAM COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

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How to Use This Toolkit



This toolkit was designed to assist Durham businesses in promoting employee and community mental health by promoting 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

This toolkit will help you understand:

- **What is 988?**
- **How 988 can help**
- **When to contact 988 and how**
- **How to promote mental health awareness in the workplace**
- **And so much more!**

What is 988?



988 is the nationwide Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, offering **24/7**, **free**, and **confidential** support for anyone experiencing:

- Emotional distress
- Suicidal thoughts or ideation
- Mental health or substance use crises
- Concern for someone else experiencing emotional and mental challenges

988 Lifeline is accessible by **CALL**, **TEXT**, or **CHAT** by dialing 988

The lifeline is operated by **trained crisis counselors** who can provide immediate support and connect individuals to local resources.

Available in **English** and **Spanish**, as well as offerings for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.



IMAGE FROM [988 PARTNER TOOLKIT](#)

NOTE: 988 is not a replacement for 911.

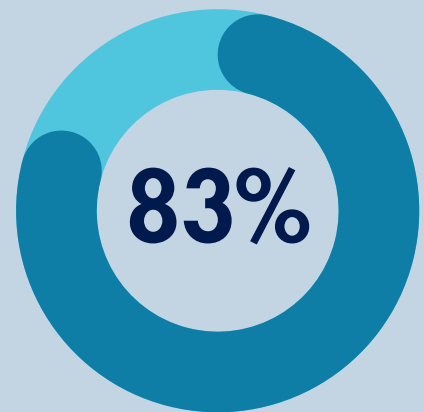
If you are concerned about safety for yourself or others, including medical or safety emergencies, please contact 911 emergency services.

Why Should Businesses Use 988?

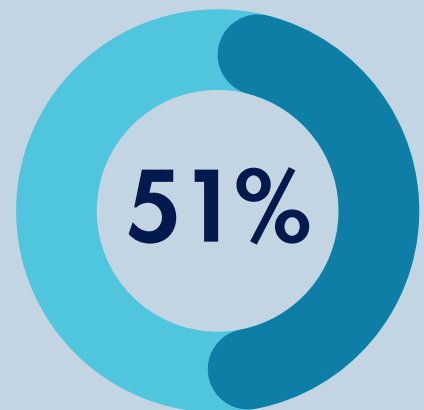


According to the 2024 National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Workplace Mental Health Poll:

83% of employees agreed that mental health and well-being training is, or would be, important in creating a positive culture in the workplace.



51% of people polled said they would use a free, independent, confidential mental health resource if that type of support was offered by their employer.



By sharing information about 988 in your establishment, your business can support the mental health of both employees and customers, improving the well-being of everyone in Durham County.

How Can Businesses Help?



A) Promote Behavioral Health Resources

- Share information about available behavioral health resources, like 988, in your communication materials.
- Consider adding information about 988 to your employee handbook and onboarding materials, as well as any newsletters, employee bulletins, or digital platforms.
- Normalize conversations about mental health.

B) Post Resources in Visible Locations

- Display 988 posters or stickers, provided for free by the Durham County Department of Public Health, in breakrooms, restrooms, or common areas.
- Place a 988 window-cling, provided for free by the Durham County Department of Public Health, by the entrance of your workplace.
- Include free 988 info cards on community bulletin boards or at your desk.
- Add 988 information to your email signature.

How Can Businesses Help?



C) Host An Employee Education Event

- Facilitate educational sessions for employees on how to recognize signs of mental distress and break mental health stigma.
- Encourage employees to learn about 988 or participate in a local mental health training like Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) or Applied Suicide Intervention Skills (ASIST).
- Talk about 988 during employee wellness events or staff meetings.
- Bring in the Durham County Department of Public Health for a free Employee Wellness event or training.
(DCoDPH.gov/Wellness)



988 hosts a business toolkit that offers free downloadable and printable promotional materials in English and Spanish. To learn more, go to 988ga.org/business



How to Talk About 988

A) Conversation Starters for Supervisors:

It's important to consider relationship dynamics when discussing mental health. The following are some ways a supervisor might mention 988 to a supervisee.

"I've noticed some changes in your behavior lately. I'm concerned and wanted to offer some resources in case you would find it helpful to talk with someone trained on these issues. Have you heard about 988?"

"It seems like there's been a lot on your mind lately. I want to check in and offer the opportunity to chat. You don't have to talk with me, so I also want to share some resources that you may not be aware of. Do you know about 988?"



How to Talk About 988

B) Conversation Starters for Peers:

Talking about mental health can be hard. Below are some ways you could begin a conversation about 988 with the people in your life.

“Have you heard about 988?
It’s a free, confidential
mental health support line.”

“If you’re feeling
overwhelmed, have you
thought about calling,
chatting, or texting
988?”

“You can talk to a trained
crisis counselor by dialing
988.”

“I feel like you might
be struggling. Have
you considered calling
988 to talk with
someone?”



How to Talk About 988

C) Email Signature:

Consider using one of the examples below in your email signature.



“Feeling overwhelmed or in crisis?
Call or text 988, or chat at
988lifeline.org — 24/7, free and
confidential.”

“[Our organization] cares about
you. Call, text, or chat the 988
Suicide and Crisis Lifeline,
anytime.”

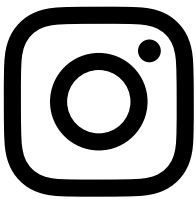




How to Talk About 988

D) Social Media:

Share information about 988 on your social media channels.



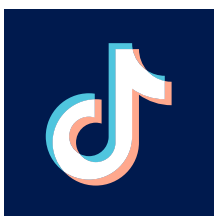
**"988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:
Call or Text 988 or chat at
988lifeline.org/chat"**



**"988 is more than a number - it's a
lifeline. Call, text, or chat 24/7."**



**"Struggling? You're not alone. Dial
988 for support anytime."**



**"988 is for everyone. It's always
available if you are in emotional
distress, need support, or have
thoughts of suicide. Learn more at
www.988Lifeline.org"**



Other Durham Mental Health Resources



- Alliance Health: alliancehealthplan.org
- Carolina Outreach Behavioral Health Urgent Health Care: carolinaoutreach.com
- Duke Regional Hospital Behavioral: dukehealth.org
- Durham Crisis Response Center: thedcrc.org
- Durham Network of Care: mentalhealth.networkofcare.org/Durham-nc
- Durham Wellness Center – Recovery Innovations: riinternational.com/listing/recovery-response-center-durham
- El Futuro: elfuturo-nc.org
- FindHelp: auntbertha.com
- LGBTQ Center of Durham: lgbtqcenterofdurham.org
- NCCARE360: nccare360.org
- NC 211: nc211.org
- Partnership for a Healthy Durham: healthydurham.org/resources
- Radical Healing: radicalhealing.co

This informational packet was created by the Durham County Department of Public Health, 2026.

For questions and inquiries, please contact the ACEs and Resilience Coordinator by calling (919) 430-8462 or visit DCoPublicHealth.org



Public Health