



## **AETNA BETTER HEALTH® OF VIRGINIA**

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Use “988” for Mental Health Support*

Starting **July 16, 2022**, dialing **988** has replaced the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, formerly **1-800-273-8255**, to meet the nationwide demand for access to urgent and emergent mental health care.

988 elevates early intervention and suicide prevention to the same level emergency medical services has in addressing life threatening illness or physical injury.

### **How 988 works**

- It is similar to the “National 911 Program” for emergency services.
- Calls are routed to a local crisis center based on the caller’s location.
- Special routing is available for veterans and Spanish-speaking individuals.

### **What you need to know**

- The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is available in three formats, including:
  - Dialing **988** on any phone.
  - Texting to **988**.
  - Chatting on **988lifeline.org**.
- If you have referred in the past to National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, or have it listed in resource directories, make sure to update it to **988** on **July 16, 2022**, or as soon as possible thereafter.
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline temporarily remains in effect after July 16 to ease the transition; all calls will be routed to **988**.
- **988** aligns with our commitment to make mental health services more accessible and less complicated.

**988** is a major step toward a transformed crisis care system in America. Detailed information about the new Suicide and Crisis Lifeline can be found on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration website at **[www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988](http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988)**.

Aetna Better Health of Virginia