

**VA**U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# News Release

Office of Public Affairs  
Media RelationsWashington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7600  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 26, 2020

## VA supports 988 expansion for National Suicide Prevention Crisis Line and Veterans Crisis Line access

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today their support for the Suicide Prevention [988 expansion initiative](#), a new national three-digit emergency telephone number to access crisis call centers across the country for suicide prevention and mental health services, including the [Veterans Crisis Line](#), by July 2022.

VA is working alongside the [Federal Communications Commission](#), the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#), and the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) to implement and activate the 988 expansion.

“The 988 three-digit number will help Veterans and non-Veteran callers quickly access help in times of crisis and open the door to engage new individuals in life-saving care,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “The Veterans Crisis Line will continue to remain available 24/7, 365 days a year, by calling 1-800-273-8255 and pressing 1.”

Once activated, the 988 expansion will also grant VA the opportunity to collaborate with the suicide prevention community across the United States.

This initiative is aligned with the [President’s Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End a National Tragedy of Suicide \(PREVENTS\) program](#), a nationwide plan to raise awareness about mental health, connect Veterans and others at risk of suicide to federal and local resources.

If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive free, confidential support and crisis intervention available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, text to 838255, or chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](#).

###