

## City joins 988 Crisis Lifeline program

Written by Staff Reports

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**24/7 Lifeline for Emotional,  
Mental or Substance Use Distress**

Gallup officials have joined the state Human Services Department's 988 Crisis Lifeline program for mental wellness. The program provides mental health resources which are easily accessible through calling or texting the number 988.

There are three ways to connect to the support services, either by calling or texting 988 or chatting with a crisis center by visiting <https://988lifeline.org/chat/>. The 988 Crisis Line also has a Veterans Crisis Line and Spanish subnetwork. Gallup Police Department Chief Erin Toadlena-Pablo believes this is a great tool to add to the array of strategies her department uses to address mental health crises.

"We believe this is a great tool for community members to access mental health support before the situation escalates into something more dire," Toadlena-Pablo said. "Our officers receive training on how to deal with these matters, but it is better to be proactive and address a situation amongst friends, family, and your medical providers."

The 988 program will connect people with "one-on-one support from a caring, understanding and non judgmental person to help you get through the moment," according to [988nm.org](https://988nm.org). Common issues discussed on the line include family or relationship issues, work or school

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stress, anxiety about housing or money, alcohol or drug misuse, grief, loss, loneliness, and self-harm. Since the program's inception, approximately 43,000 New Mexicans have gotten help.

There is no cost to participate in the program. All communications with the program are private, confidential and available 24/7.

The City also plans to launch an informational campaign to promote the program. This campaign will include social media posts, a billboard, radio ads, and flyers. The City's Behavioral Health Division also hosts an annual event to recognize Suicide Survivors Day in November.

"We will work with community partners to distribute the 988 information and make sure that the community is aware of the services available," Debra Martinez, City of Gallup Behavioral Health Division, added.

The Behavioral Health Division works with Evaluator Sindy Bolaños-Sacoman to organize and promote the program. Sacoman has provided 988 training across the state and tribal communities. She encourages anyone to contact 988 for "anything that is worrying them" before a situation gets worse.

***For more information about the program, visit the 988 website or contact Martinez at (505) 726-2604 or [dmartinez@gallupnm.gov](mailto:dmartinez@gallupnm.gov).***

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