

FCC introduces telephone changes

Written by gallupsun

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The Federal Communication Commission is adopting new rules for suicide prevention and mental health crisis assistance, veterans' crisis assistance and 10-digit dialing.



□ The FCC adopted rules to establish a new three-digit number for Americans in crisis.

Dialing 988 will direct callers to 1-800-273-TALK, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, which will remain operational even after the transition to the 988 in July 16, 2022 becomes effective.

The idea is to make the number easy-to-recall in hopes that more people in critical need will be able to access services immediately.

□ The Veterans Crisis Line is veteran-specific for suicide and crisis assistance and can be reached at 1- (800) 273-8255 and pressing 1, or by texting 838255. It is also available for those who wish to chat online at veteranscrisisline.net.

Access to these crisis lines will apply to all telecommunications carriers and all interconnected and one-way Voice over Internet Protocol service providers. They will provide for a two-year transition, reflecting the nature of this nationwide effort, including the need for network changes

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and providing time for the suicide lifeline to prepare for an expected increase in the volume of calls.

All covered providers will also be required to implement 10-digit dialing in areas that use seven-digit dialing and those that use 988 as the first three numbers in seven-digit telephone numbers.

□ Consumers are reminded to begin using 10 digits for all local calls. Although the calls will be connected if they only use seven digits, the FCC is transitioning and encourages use of area codes when dialing local calls. Beginning Oct. 24, seven-digit calls in local areas may not be completed.

In New Mexico (505) and (575) are the area codes that will be required to transition to 10-digit dialing.