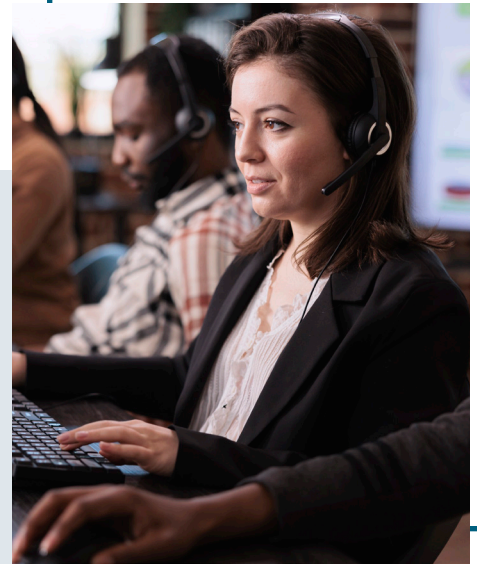




911-988
CONNECTION

911-988 CONNECTION QUICK START GUIDE

This guide helps Public Service Answering Points navigate common startup issues when adopting a protocol connecting them with Nebraska's 988 suicide and crisis line. The guide begins with the ten steps to set up, test, and implement warm transfers from 911 to 988. A "warm transfer" involves 911 staff staying on the line with a caller until the 988 crisis counselor answers and is briefed on the reason for the transfer.



10-STEP STARTUP SEQUENCE

1

Review the 911-988 standards.

2

Write/edit your own policy for transferring to 988 [model policy included in Appendix A of the 911-988 Connection Standards (see attached)].

3

Verify that your current technology can make warm transfers to 988.

- Can your center's 911 and non-emergency lines handle three-way conference calls?
- Can your center's lines perform transfers?
- If your system cannot handle both tasks, you will need to work with your service provider/IT department to achieve these capabilities before beginning transfers.¹

¹ Your administrative/non-emergency phone lines may not have the ability to perform transfers or conference calls, depending on your service provider and how the lines are set up. If this is the case, you will need to work with your IT department and service provider to achieve these capabilities before beginning to transfer calls to 988. Common causes for this include:

- Multiple projects/changes going into effect at once
- Issues with the firewall on the administrative lines not allowing conference calling
- Not being able to use the same button to transfer from both 911 and administrative lines

4

Perform internal testing of transfers/
conference calls.

5

Contact the 988 Program Manager
to acquire the direct phone line for
transfers – **this is not a public number.**

6

Enter the direct line to 988 into the call
center system.

7

Contact the 988 Program Manager to
set up time to test transferring from
phone lines to 988.

8

Test call system with 988 (usually
takes between 10 minutes to an hour).

- a. If prior testing has not been done
or if there is uncertainty as to how
well this will work, it may be helpful
to have an IT person there to help
with any problems that arise.

9

Determine how to roll out information/
training on 988 transfers to
telecommunicators.

- a. Other PSAPs have commented
that having some time for
telecommunicators to practice was
helpful for implementation.

10

Set start/go-live date with
988 Program Manager.

CURRENT 988
PROGRAM MANAGER²

Kyle Kinney
kyle.kinney@boystown.org
(531) 355-1970

² Boys Town is the current 988 provider. Contact the Public Service Commission if you are unable to reach the 988 program manager.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>If our PSAP uses a 3rd party external tech company/support, do they need to be there for phone line testing between the PSAP and 988?</p> | <p>No, though you are welcome to have them there if you would like. If you have done internal testing and are confident the lines will work, there's no need to have them there.</p> |
| <p>Do we need an MOU/data agreement with 988?</p> | <p>No, because Nebraska Revised Statutes 86-472 and 86-473 provide protections, an MOU is not necessary.</p> |
| <p>Can 911 telecommunicators be held liable for transferring calls to 988?</p> | <p>No, per Nebraska Revised Statute 86-473, telecommunicators "shall be immune from liability or the payment of damages in the performance of installing, maintaining, or providing such service, including providing interoperable connections between the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and the 911 service system."</p> <p>https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=86-473</p> |
| <p>How long do telecommunicators stay on the line?</p> | <p>Telecommunicators perform a warm transfer to 988 – they will stay on the line with the caller until the 988 crisis counselor connects, and will explain what the caller called in for to the crisis counselor, then disconnect from the line after the counselor confirms they have the call.</p> |
| <p>Who owns the call during transfer?</p> | <p>911 owns the call until the caller is connected with 988. If they disconnect during the transfer, 911 is the entity that calls them back.</p> |
| <p>What if 988 needs to escalate the call back to 911?</p> | <p>This is rare but does occasionally happen. If 988 needs to send a call back to 911, a supervisor will make the call to the PSAP's non-911 or administrative line while the crisis counselor remains on the line with the caller.</p> |
| <p>Does 911 go through 988's Interactive Voice Recording (IVR) system when transferring the call?</p> | <p>No, the direct line bypasses the IVR and puts the transferred call directly into the call queue.</p> |
| <p>How long do telecommunicators wait if there is a hold before being connected to a crisis counselor?</p> | <p>Previous PSAPs have set a 2-minute limit before disconnecting from 988 and retaining the call within 911.</p> |