



# General Order

## Department of Fire & EMS

G.O. 08-12-22



### 988 Dialing Code Available for Mental Health Assistance

**Westminster, MD, Thursday, August 11, 2022** – Today in Open Session, the Carroll County Board of Commissioners and Department of Citizen Services Director Celene Steckel discussed how a new three-digit dialing code, **988**, has been designated as the new National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. The goal of the new help line is to prevent suicide and provide quality emergency mental health care across the state.



The launch of a 24/7/365 help line addresses the growing need for emergency mental health support and promotes community emotional well-being. The help line, which Maryland residents can reach by dialing 988, connects callers to local centers providing free, safe, supportive, confidential and professional care. Call, text or chat functions are all available.

988 differs from 911 in that 988 was established to improve access to crisis services in a way that meets our country's growing suicide and mental health related crisis care needs. 988 will provide easier access to the Lifeline network and related crisis resources, which are distinct from 911 (where the focus is on dispatching Emergency Medical Services, fire and police as needed).

"Mental health is a critical issue in all communities and launching the national 988 Lifeline is a potential life saver for Carroll County residents, strengthening their connection to life-saving services," said Commissioner Dennis Frazier, District 3. "The easy-to-remember code links anyone experiencing a crisis and needing assistance or someone with concerns about a loved one, with quality help and support, allowing easier and faster access to our local community services. If you have concerns, please call this number."