

Four Years In, 988 Receives 100,000th Contact

Idaho Crisis & Suicide Hotline, 988, is fielding 84 calls per day as the state continues to post one of the highest suicide rates in the nation

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“

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Lee Flinn, Director of ICSH

[Hotline](#) (ICSH) has received more than 100,000 calls in its first four years of operating as Idaho 988 in the Gem State. According to [their first and second quarter reports](#), from January-June 2026, ICSH has heard from 15,260 contacts, averaging 84 calls per day, which is 14 percent higher than the same period last year.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IS A REALITY FOR THOUSANDS OF IDAHOANS

This year, 80% of ICSH contacts reached out with mental

health issues and suicidal thoughts as main concerns. Reasons for calls vary widely from relationship issues and divorce to financial concerns, bullying and harassment, housing stress, substance abuse, and more.

"When people in crisis reach out to 988, that's a good thing," Flinn said. "Our team works to support individuals and their families during their most vulnerable moments. This also creates real benefits for our community—it gives law enforcement and emergency medical services more capacity to respond to other critical health and safety needs."

Idaho's mental health [ranked 48th](#) in the country in 2025 according to Mental Health America. ICSH says the continued rise in contacts suggests more Idahoans now know the service exists.

THE HISTORY OF ICSH AND 988

Early crisis intervention reduces strain on law enforcement, emergency departments, and inpatient care systems. ICSH was founded nearly 14 years ago in 2012 as a grassroots volunteer effort to provide crucial intervention support for Idahoans. Today, they are a professionally staffed, statewide crisis response center. All of ICSH's services are confidential and available free of charge to every Idaho resident.

The National 988 Lifeline was established through federal bipartisan legislation in 2020. Since 2022, ICSH has been proud to be the hub of 988 in Idaho, ensuring that no one in the state has to face a mental health crisis alone.

That vision took fuller shape with the launch of the Idaho Behavioral Health Plan in July 2024. Since then, ICSH has expanded its service well beyond calls, texts, and chats—dispatching mobile crisis response teams for in-person intervention and facilitating easier admission to Idaho's Adult and Youth Crisis Centers.

HOW 988 WORKS

A call or text to 988 reaches a crisis responder directly. Approximately 87% of crises are addressed by 988 without higher levels of care. In many cases, a conversation is enough to de-escalate the situation, create a safety plan, and connect the individual with follow-up resources if needed.

MOBILE RESPONSE TEAMS PROVIDE CRUCIAL SUPPORT

When more intervention is warranted, ICSH dispatches a Mobile Response Team (MRT), staffed by behavioral health professionals from Benchmark Human Services and Community Bridges, Inc., to provide in-person support. MRTs operate statewide, 24 hours a day, at no cost to the person in crisis and are a critical part of the state's crisis care system.

ICSH is the only dispatcher of MRTs in Idaho. The service functions like a mental health equivalent of an ambulance dispatch, sending trained responders to a person's location rather than requiring them to travel to a facility or wait for law enforcement. Idaho's MRTs are a critical no-cost option for in-person support for people in acute crisis.

THE NEED FOR 988 PERSISTS

Addressing Idaho's mental health crisis requires more than one solution. ICSH connects people in crisis with immediate support. Together with Mobile Response Teams and crisis centers, the state of Idaho has created a comprehensive system: someone to call (988), someone to respond (mobile response teams), and somewhere to go (crisis centers).

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ABOUT THE IDAHO CRISIS & SUICIDE HOTLINE (988)

Idaho Crisis & Suicide Hotline is Idaho's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline center. Since 2012, ICSH has grown from a volunteer effort into a professionally staffed center that answers calls, texts, and chats 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and dispatches Mobile Response Teams statewide. ICSH is accredited through the International Council of Helplines. More information is available at idahocrisis.org.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, call or text 988, available 24/7 statewide at no cost. A person can call for themselves, or someone they care about. Idahoans may also call 988 to request support from a mobile response team. Those services are provided by Benchmark Human Services and Community Bridges Inc.

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