



988 - Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Mental health and crisis services are an integral part of California's efforts to strengthen the continuum of support for individuals experiencing behavioral health crises, notably through the implementation of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. In 2023, California established the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Program to support individuals in mental health crisis. The program is funded by the 988 State Suicide and Behavioral Health Crisis Services Fund, which is supported through fees assessed against phone access lines. Cal OES calculates the assessment rate necessary to fully fund 988 programs and associated appropriations included in the 2025-26 Budget Act.

The following section describes the 988 program's rate calculation and the surcharge methodology:

988 Rate Calculation - Calendar Year 2026

| Description | Amount |
|---|---------------|
| Appropriation* | \$ 62,824,000 |
| Amount Remaining from Prior Year* | \$ 45,223,000 |
| Difference - Revenue Needed for This Year | \$ 17,601,000 |
| Estimated Number of Access Lines | 47,533,701 |
| Surcharge per Month | \$ 0.05 |
| Projected Annual Revenue | \$ 28,520,221 |

* From the Fund Condition Statement on the Department of Finance's website.

988 Surcharge Methodology

California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) uses the following process, set in statute, to determine the surcharge rates for the 988 system:

1. The authorized appropriation is from the final Budget Act and the remaining fund balance information from the prior year is from the Fund Condition Statement posted on Department of Finance's website.
2. The revenue needed for the year is determined by subtracting fund balance from authorized expenditures.
3. The projected annual revenue is determined by multiplying the number of phone access lines provided by phone providers by the proposed surcharge, adjusting the surcharge until the amount of revenue generated is sufficient to cover the amount of revenue needed.
4. Determine sufficient fund balance, which is generally 10 percent of annual expenditures.
5. Adjust surcharge to maintain a sufficient fund balance.
6. The rate letter must be sent to the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration by October 1 every year.

Government Code Section

California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 41030 requires Cal OES to annually determine the 988 surcharge amounts imposed on telephone access lines. This revenue funds the state's 988 system.