



May 2025

## 988 Contact Hub Designation and Application Process

Crisis centers can now apply to be considered for designation as 988 contact hubs. Designated 988 contact hubs will provide crisis support to Washington help-seekers 24/7/365. Services include crisis counseling, referrals, care coordination, and more.

[RCW 71.24.890](#) gave the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) legal authority to create rules to designate 988 contact hubs. The [Standards for Designation of 988 Contact Hubs rule](#) took effect January 1, 2025. The rule establishes minimum standards and a [process](#) for DOH to designate crisis centers as 988 contact hubs.

The application period runs from May 15, 2025 to July 31, 2025.

### Standards for hub designation

Crisis centers must meet the standards outlined in the rule for DOH to consider their application. To qualify for designation as a 988 contact hub, a crisis center must meet:

- Standards established in [WAC 246-350-001](#)
- [Federal requirements](#)
- [State-level minimum standards](#)

Existing 988 Lifeline crisis centers must also apply to be considered for hub designation. They won't automatically become 988 contact hubs.

DOH may designate up to 4 contact hubs without legislative approval. Designations will be valid for 5 years, but crisis centers can apply to have their designation renewed.

Designated contact hubs must enter into a contract and data sharing agreement with DOH. DOH may deny, suspend, or revoke the designation of any hub at any time if the hub doesn't comply with contracts or meet the minimum standards listed above.

During the designation process, [DOH must seek recommendations](#) from the Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organizations (BH-ASOs) to determine which 988 contact hubs best meet regional needs. [BH-ASOs must comply](#) with the recommendation process set by DOH to recommend a crisis center for hub designation.

## Implementation

After hub designation, an implementation period will begin in 2026. Timelines for implementation will be determined after hub designation and will depend on which crisis centers are designated as 988 contact hubs.

- **Accreditation:** If a crisis center not already part of the 988 Lifeline Network is designated as a 988 contact hub, they will need to become accredited and onboard with Vibrant Emotional Health (the national 988 administrator). This process can take up to a year.
- **Funding:** Hubs will also need funding for staffing and infrastructure to meet the 90% in-state answer rate and other requirements. DOH will work with the designated hubs to determine their budgets and request funding from the Legislature.
- **Regional coordination:** BH-ASOs will establish coordination within the behavioral health crisis response system in each regional service area. This includes setting up comprehensive protocols for dispatching mobile rapid response crisis teams and community-based crisis teams. DOH and HCA will support BH-ASOs in developing these protocols if requested.

## How to apply

Download an application from the [DOH hub application webpage](#). This webpage also has more information about the process and answers to frequently asked questions. If you have questions during the application process, please send them to [988programinfo@doh.wa.gov](mailto:988programinfo@doh.wa.gov).

Submit your completed application and all required attachments by July 31, 2025. Email your completed application to [988programinfo@doh.wa.gov](mailto:988programinfo@doh.wa.gov).

DOH will review completed applications between August 1 and October 31, 2025. Check your email for communications from DOH during this time. DOH may request additional information during the review process by contacting you at the email address on your application.

[RCW 71.24.890](#) requires DOH to designate 988 contact hubs by January 1, 2026. You will receive a notification of the decision by the end of 2025 at the email address you provide in your application. DOH will notify all applicants.



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