

9-8-8 mental health hotline begins Saturday in KS

(KAIR)--Beginning Saturday, Kansans, 24-hours a day, seven days a week, can call three digits-9-8-8-to reach the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. The number can be dialed during any mental health and substance abuse emergency.

According to a release from Kansas Governor Laura Kelly, it was bipartisan legislation that made 9-8-8 the official three-digit dialing code.

Kelly, in January, announced that the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services received the Lifeline's 9-8-8 State Planning Grant through the nonprofit Vibrant Emotional Health to develop plans to build the infrastructure for and grow access to the Lifeline's new three-digit number.

In June, Kelly signed the related Senate Bill meaning that, in the future, \$10 million in state general funds, each July 1, will be appropriated to fund 9-8-8 with no access fee for Kansans.

Kelly, in the release, says that "just as every American know to call 9-1-1 in times of emergency, every American-and every Kansan-will soon known to call 9-8-8 when they or a loved one is facing a mental health or substance abuse crisis."

On July 11, Kelly ceremonially signed the Senate bill during a celebration at the Sedgwick County Courthouse.

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