

Florida Callers in 2018

to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline



In 2018, the Lifeline received
2.5 million
crisis calls from across the United States

127,976
calls were from Florida

Of the **127,976** callers, **39,689 individuals** pressed "1" to be transferred to the Veterans Crisis Line and **3,199** pressed "2" for Lifeline's Spanish Language Line.

Ideally, the remaining 85,088 calls in 2018 would have been answered by Lifeline call centers in Florida.

Of those, **only 66,797 calls (79%)** were able to be **answered in-state**.

Which meant **18,291 callers in crisis were unable to be answered** by a Florida call center.

Established in 2005

the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is the nation's most recognized suicide and mental health crisis line.

The Lifeline is not one large national call center. Instead, it is a network of 170 independently operated, independently funded local, regional, and state-level call centers. **Currently there are 12 Lifeline-affiliated centers in Florida.** They have the critical expertise and linkages to local resources that callers in crisis deserve.

To participate in the Lifeline network, centers operate to the highest standards of suicide care. They do an incredible job of de-escalating crisis situations, decreasing emotional distress, and reducing suicidality.

In the event local centers are unable to answer, **the Lifeline re-routes calls to backup centers in our network** (both in and out-of-state).

Why is this?

How can I help?



+59%

The number of Lifeline calls that needed answering by Florida call centers increased 59% from 2016 to 2018

The Lifeline is administered through Vibrant Emotional Health and funded by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



In 2019, there are **12** Lifeline network call centers in Florida



- 2-1-1 Heart of Florida United Way (Orlando)
- 2-1-1 Big Bend (Tallahassee)
- David Lawrence Mental Health Center, Inc. (Naples)
- 211 Brevard (Rockledge)
- 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares (Clearwater)
- Alachua County Crisis Center (Gainesville)
- Personal Enrichment through Mental Health Services (Pinellas Park)
- Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, Inc. (Tampa)
- Jewish Community Services of South Florida (North Miami)
- 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast, Inc. (Lantana)
- United Way 211 (Jacksonville)
- 2-1-1 Broward (Oakland Park)

Why were only 79% of 2018's Lifeline calls in Florida answered in-state?

Lifeline call centers in Florida set the hours and coverage areas for when and where they will take Lifeline calls. **They do this based on funding and staffing levels.**

Most Lifeline-affiliated call centers in the U.S. (including in Florida) answer calls on other helplines in addition to the Lifeline. **Despite their very best efforts, call volume can, at times, strain center capacity and callers may hang up while they wait for the next available counselor.**

When local call centers are unable to answer, the Lifeline pulls the call back and sends it out of state and into our national backup center sub-network.

When calls are re-routed to centers out-of-state, Florida callers in crisis wait longer, they receive fewer linkages to effective local care, and are more likely to abandon their calls.



Proven effective; needing support

Research shows the Lifeline is an effective, life-saving safety net for those in crisis (Gould et al., 2007, 2013, 2015, 2017; Ramchand et al., 2016). According to a 2018 survey of Lifeline centers, **almost 98% of the crisis calls are de-escalated such that costly, highly-restrictive responses from law enforcement and emergency medical services are not necessary.**

The Lifeline is federally funded to manage the call routing, best practice standards, public messaging, and technical assistance for its network. However, **the funds that sustain our network's centers come from state, county and local sources.** Many centers struggle to find enough funding to operate and grow.

These call centers are key components of Florida's behavioral health systems because they represent an entry point into other levels of coordinated care. They provide critical services for Florida residents at serious risk, especially those with nowhere else to turn.

Current Florida Lifeline centers need expanded support.

You can advocate for them.



Please join the cause!

Reach out to your local centers and decision-makers in Florida.

Learn more about the Lifeline as well as how to contact your centers in Florida by visiting:
<http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/our-network/>