



California 988–Crisis Policy Advisory Group Quarterly Update

July through September 2024

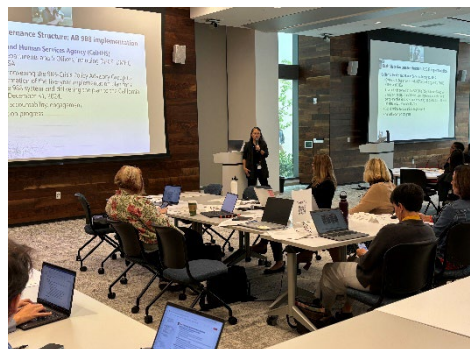
The California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) is collaborating with partners to draft recommendations for a comprehensive 988 system for all Californians. As stipulated by the Miles Hall Lifeline and Suicide Prevention Act (AB 988), CalHHS will submit a Five-Year Implementation Plan to the California State Legislature in December 2024. To develop recommendations for this plan, CalHHS is facilitating meetings of the 988–Crisis Policy Advisory Group (PAG) and seven topical workgroups. CalHHS has also undertaken a community engagement process designed to gather input from individuals and families with lived experience in the behavioral health system, with particular focus on historically marginalized communities.

This update summarizes activities and accomplishments from July to September of 2024 and briefly describes upcoming activities.



Meetings of the 988–Crisis Policy Advisory Group

The 988–Crisis Policy Advisory Group met on August 14 and September 18 of 2024 to discuss the recommendations that emerged from four workgroups: 988–911 Behavioral Health Crisis Care Continuum Integration (Workgroup 3), Data and Metrics (Workgroup 5), Funding and Sustainability (Workgroup 6), and the Peer Supporters Workgroup. Workgroup co-chairs, who also serve as members of the PAG, presented the recommendations to the PAG to initiate a discussion with the group.



Policy Advisory Group members gathered at the Allenby Building in Sacramento on September 18, 2024

During the **August 14 PAG meeting**, members discussed the draft recommendations and implementation activities related to statewide infrastructure and technology, high-quality 988 response, and the integration of 988 and the service continuum. Members also discussed the outcomes of the 13 focus groups, which the project team conducted in spring 2024 with individuals with lived experience. The PAG learned about focus group members' suggestions on how to make the crisis response system more accessible, safe, timely, and equitable. At the end of the meeting, a panel of four 988 Crisis Counselors from the Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services 988 Crisis Center shared reflections on their experiences working on the crisis line.

The August meeting [summary](#)—with [presentation materials](#) and [recording](#)—are available on the CalHHS PAG website.

The September 18 PAG meeting provided an opportunity for PAG members to share early reactions to the draft Five-Year Implementation Plan. This included focused discussion

of three “cross-cutting recommendations,” which affect all the goals in the plan: equity, funding and sustainability, data and metrics, and peer support. The PAG members that served as workgroup co-chairs shared opening comments to guide the PAG’s review of these cross-cutting recommendations and related implementation activities. Members also discussed revised recommendations from other parts of the Plan, which the project team had updated based on PAG input during past meetings.

The September meeting [summary](#), [presentation materials](#), and [recording](#) can be found on the CalHHS PAG website.

The final PAG meeting will be held on **November 20, 2024**, and is open to the public.



Policy Advisory Group Meeting at the Clifford L Allenby Building in Sacramento on September 18, 2024



988-Crisis Workgroups

The project team organized seven 988-Crisis Workgroups to support the development of recommendations for the Five-Year Implementation Plan. Six of these workgroups were organized based on the AB 988 legislation recommendation areas, and the seventh focused on the role of Peer Supporters in the crisis care continuum. Four workgroups, including the Peer Supporter Workgroup, had their final meetings between July and September 2024. The following summarizes key topics and next steps from each of those meetings.

<i>Workgroup #3: 988-911 Behavioral Health Crisis Care Continuum Integration</i>	<i>Meeting Dates</i>
Summary , Presentation , Video	July 30, 2024

The 988-911 Behavioral Health Crisis Care Continuum Integration Workgroup sought input on recommendations related to statewide infrastructure, technology, and the integration of 988 and the continuum of behavioral health crisis services. The Workgroup had its final meeting (the fifth of five meetings) on July 30. To anchor its discussion, the Workgroup reviewed input from the previous Workgroup meetings as well as draft recommendations and implementation activities. Workgroup members stressed the importance of coordination between behavioral health and cross-system partners. They emphasized the need to provide guidance for calls between 988 Crisis Centers and mobile crisis dispatch, to be cognizant of 988 Crisis Center capacity, and to build upon learned best practices from the field. Workgroup members also stressed the need for funding of ongoing care, including care options with lower barriers to entry. The Workgroup co-chairs shared key findings from this discussion at the August 14 PAG meeting.

<i>Workgroup #5: Data and Metrics</i>	<i>Meeting Dates</i>
Summary , Presentation , Video	July 31

The Data and Metrics Workgroup focused on data standards, collection, and analysis to monitor the performance of 988 and the behavioral health crisis care continuum. The Workgroup had its second and final meeting on July 3. At this meeting, Workgroup members reviewed input from the Workgroup’s first meeting in May 2024, feedback from the June 26 PAG Meeting, and public dashboards from other states. Workgroup members also discussed performance measures that a public 988 data dashboard could include. They expressed interest in seeing data and metrics that provide can support system accountability and oversight. They raised considerations around confidentiality during and following calls and elevated the need to consider how these data strategies align with those of other State initiatives. Workgroup members also discussed how to account for substance used disorder-related contacts. The Workgroup co-chairs shared its findings at the September 18 PAG Meeting.

<i>Workgroup #6: Funding and Sustainability</i>	<i>Meeting Dates</i>
Summary , Presentation , Video	July 29
Summary , Presentation , Video	September 3

The Funding and Sustainability Workgroup met twice between July and September 2024 to discuss 988 State Suicide and Behavioral Health Crisis Services Fund utilization and criteria. In the first meeting, staff from the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) presented an overview of the 988 Surcharge and Fund Condition Statement. An ensuing conversation focused on how 988 surcharge funds could best be used to ensure an effective, equitable, and accessible crisis response system. In the final meeting, CalHHS provided an overview of its Crisis Reimbursement Workstream. Workgroup members also provided feedback on draft implementation activities that aim to support sustainable crisis systems. Members discussed the connection between 988 and broader behavioral health transformation efforts, including statewide efforts to achieve equitable

reimbursement for behavioral health services across all insurance types. The Workgroup co-chairs shared this Workgroup’s input at the September 18 PAG Meeting.

<i>Peer Supporters Workgroup</i>	<i>Meeting Dates</i>
Summary , Presentation , Video	August 6

The Peer Supporters Workgroup convened for the second and final time on August 6. Workgroup members discussed peer supporter roles that already exist in the crisis continuum and opportunities for expanding their responsibilities. Members also discussed how the State can play a role in advancing the integration of peers across the crisis continuum. The Workgroup co-chairs shared this Workgroup’s findings at the August 14 PAG meeting.



Your Voice Matters

CalHHS is inviting public comment on the draft AB 988 Five-Year Implementation Plan from November 4 to November 14, 2024. The draft Five-Year Implementation Plan will be available on the [CalHHS 988-Crisis Policy Advisory Group website](#) on November 4, 2024. You are invited to learn more about the draft plan at an informational webinar on November 4, 2024, from 12:30 pm–2:00 pm PST. We invite you to send written comments to AB988Info@chhs.ca.gov before November 14, 2024. (Comments typed in a Word document or PDF format may be included as an e-mail attachment.)

Members of the public are also encouraged to join the November 20, 2024, PAG meeting and are invited to make a public statement by attending or sending comments to AB988info@chhs.ca.gov. Meeting information and recordings are posted on the [988-Crisis Policy Advisory Group landing page](#), along with the list of Policy Advisory Group members, and other relevant information.

Resources



[988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Site](#) and [988-Crisis Policy Advisory Group Site](#)



[CalHHS Behavioral Health Crisis Care Continuum Plan, May 2023](#)



[California Office of Emergency Services \(CalOES\) Technical Advisory Board](#)



For more information or to be added to the AB988 Mailing List, please email AB988Info@chhs.ca.gov.