



RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

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County Executive

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Rensselaer County
Unified Family Services
Veterans Service Agency

99 Troy Road
East Greenbush, NY 12061

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What is 988

The Veterans Crisis Line's new number—988 then Press 1—helps make it easier to remember and share the number to access help in times of need. Signed into law in 2020, the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act authorized 988 as the new three-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. As part of the law, all telephone service providers in the U.S. had to activate the number no later than July 16, 2022.

Veterans can use this new option by dialing 988 and pressing 1 to contact the Veterans Crisis Line. Veterans may still reach the Veterans Crisis Line with the previous phone number—1-800-273-8255 and Press 1—by text (838255), and through chat (VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat).

Frequently Asked Questions

How did 988 impact the Veterans Crisis Line?

The 988 expansion directly addressed the need for ease of access and clarity in times of crisis, both for Veterans and non-Veterans alike.

Have 988 personnel been trained specifically for Veterans?

Veterans Crisis Line responders are continuing to support Veterans, service members, and their families via 988. Responders are trained in crisis intervention and military culture.

What happens when Veterans Press 1?

To reach the Veterans Crisis Line, Veterans need to Press 1 after dialing 988. Veterans and service members who Press 1 are routed to the same trained Veterans Crisis Line responders, 24/7. The Veterans Crisis Line is also available by chat (VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat) and text (838255). The Veterans Crisis Line's 800 number remains operational for anyone utilizing the 10-digit number option.

Is the Veterans Crisis Line text number changing?

No, the Veterans Crisis Line text number remains the same—Veterans can text 838255 to reach responders.

What happens to Veterans overseas?

The Veterans Crisis Line's 800 number is partnered with SAMHSA's Lifeline network and is, therefore, a Continental United States (CONUS)-based toll-free number that remains active. As such, some international calls may incur a charge, depending upon the caller's location and network provider. Regardless, a Veteran overseas may contact the Veterans Crisis Line via the chat modality at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat. If the Veteran prefers a phone call, they can request this within the chat venue. A Veterans Crisis Line responder will call them at the number they provide at no charge to the Veteran.

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Van Transportation...

- * Don't drive and need to get to the Albany VA Medical Center ?
- * We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC for *most morning* medical appointments.

For more details call:
270-2760.



PLEASE NOTE:

Rensselaer County
Veterans Service
Agency is now at a
new location:

99 Troy Road
East Greenbush, NY

The phone number and
fax number has
remained the same
(please see top of page).

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For active-duty personnel (VeteransCrisisLine.net/ActiveDuty.aspx), the Veterans Crisis Line is available:

In Europe, call 00800 1273 8255 or DSN 118.

In Korea, call 080-855-5118 or DSN 118.

In Afghanistan, call 00 1 800 273 8255 or DSN 111.

In the Philippines, call #MYVA or 02-8550-3888 and press 7.

How It Works

The Veterans Crisis Line is free and confidential. When you call, chat, or text, a qualified responder will listen and help. You decide how much information to share. Support doesn't end with your conversation. Our responders can connect you with the resources you need.

When to Call

Veterans and service members in crisis aren't alone. If you're thinking about hurting yourself, having thoughts of suicide, or becoming self-destructive, we're ready to help.

Contact us immediately if you or the Veteran or service member in your life is showing signs of crisis, such as:

- Talking about feeling hopeless
- Experiencing anxiety or agitation
- Increasing risky behaviors or substance use

What to Expect

Call the Veterans Crisis Line: How It Works

1. A recording will alert you that you've reached the Veterans Crisis Line.
2. There will be a brief pause while the call is connected to a qualified responder ready to listen and help.
3. The responder will ask a few questions, such as whether you or the Veteran or service member you're concerned about may be in immediate danger or at risk for suicide.
4. Your call is free and confidential, and you decide how much information to share.
5. If you or the Veteran or service member you're concerned about is in danger, the responder will help you get through the crisis and then connect you with the services you need, either from your local VA medical center or elsewhere in your community. If you decide to share contact information, the suicide prevention coordinator at the nearest VA medical center will contact you by the next business day.
6. If you or the Veteran or service member you're concerned about is in crisis but not at imminent risk for injury or suicide, the responder will listen, offer support, and help you make a plan to stay safe.
7. Afterward you may be connected with your local suicide prevention coordinator, who will contact you the next business day for continued support.

Chat with the Veterans Crisis Line: How It Works

1. Go to VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat. Click the button to start your confidential chat.
2. A new screen will appear, asking for your first name or a nickname so the responder will know how to address you. Click "Send" to start the chat.
3. A chat box will appear with either a responder ready to chat or a window letting you know that someone will be right with you.

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4. The responder will ask a few questions, such as whether you or the Veteran or service member you're concerned about may be in immediate danger or at risk for suicide.
5. Your chat is free and confidential, and you decide how much information to share.
6. If you or the Veteran or service member you're concerned about is in danger, the responder will help you get through the crisis and then connect you with the services you need, either from your local VA medical center or elsewhere in your community. If you decide to share contact information, the suicide prevention coordinator at the nearest VA medical center will contact you by the next business day.
7. If you or the Veteran or service member you're concerned about is in crisis but not at imminent risk for injury or suicide, the responder will listen, offer support, and help you make a plan to stay safe.
8. Afterward you may be connected with your local suicide prevention coordinator, who will contact you the next business day for continued support.

Text the Veterans Crisis Line: How It Works

1. Send a text to 838255. You can say as much or as little as you like to get the conversation started.
2. You will receive a text back that reads: "VA Crisis Center: I'm here to help. If in danger, call 911. For more info, call 800-273-8255. (Press 1). Please keep msgs under 160 characters. STOP to cancel."
3. The responder will ask a few questions, such as whether you or the Veteran or service member you're concerned about may be in immediate danger or at risk for suicide.
4. Your text is free and confidential, and you decide how much information to share.
5. You may text STOP at any time to end the conversation. If you do, you will receive this free message in response: "Free Msg: VA Crisis Center: You have successfully unsubscribed and will receive no more messages. More info email VHA.SuicideHotlineStaff@va.gov. Conversation ended, this text dialogue has been deleted. For more help, call 1-800-273-8255 and press 1."
6. If you or the Veteran or service member you're concerned about is in danger, the responder will help you get through the crisis and then connect you with the services you need, either from your local VA medical center or elsewhere in your community. If you decide to share contact information, the suicide prevention coordinator at the nearest VA medical center will contact you by the next business day.
7. If you or the Veteran or service member you're concerned about is in crisis but not at imminent risk for injury or suicide, the responder will listen, offer support, and help you make a plan to stay safe.
8. Afterward you may be connected with your local suicide prevention coordinator, who will contact you the next business day for continued support.

Privacy and Security

The Veterans Crisis Line is a confidential and secure resource.

When you contact the Veterans Crisis Line, you decide how much information to share. If you'd like support from a local VA suicide prevention coordinator, the responder may ask for your name and some personal information to help set up a meeting.

If you're in imminent danger or at risk of harming others, the responder will coordinate a dispatch of emergency services with local officials.

Information you provide to the Veterans Crisis Line won't be shared unless you give a responder permission to share it or indicate you would like to receive care after the call, chat, or text session.

View the full VA Privacy Policy on [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov/privacy).



Rensselaer County Honor A Deceased Veteran Program

This ceremony is a reflection upon the life of a deceased Rensselaer County Veteran.

The ceremony is one hour long and is held in the Chambers of the Rensselaer County Legislature.

Local Veterans and government officials gather with the honoree's family to celebrate the Veteran's life.

Recognition is made not only to their military career and accomplishments, but also to their civilian life as well.

A pamphlet is prepared in the name of the honored Veteran. The County Executive presents the family with a proclamation. The Chairman of the Legislature reads a complete biography of the honoree to all in attendance.

Both Congressional Districts within the County are represented and present the family with a flag that was flown over the United States Capitol in the Veteran's honor.

Local County Legislators present proclamations in honor of the Veteran to the family; the Honor A Deceased Veteran Committee presents the family with a plaque in honor of the Veteran and the Veteran's service to their country.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, everyone proceeds outside for the flag raising in memory of the Veteran. The flag will fly for the next 30 days and will then be cleaned and returned to the family.

If you are interested in having a Veteran honored by the HADV Committee, please complete the attached application and return it to the address listed.

RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY
99 TROY ROAD, EAST GREENBUSH, NEW YORK 12061
(518) 270-2760

The nation that forgets its defenders will itself be forgotten - Calvin Coolidge -



Upcoming Events:



Call us at (518) 270-2760 to have your event listed in the newsletter.

April 10th...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers at 99 Troy Road, East Greenbush, NY, at 8:30 a.m., *John J. King—USA, PFC-WWII*