

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

MA 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
Business Analysis and Planning

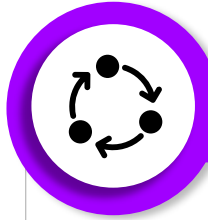
988 Commission Presentation

August 15, 2024



Overview of State Legislation from All 50 States

Majority of states have passed legislation to provide operational improvements to their 988 Lifeline or develop sustainable funding for the program.



Operations

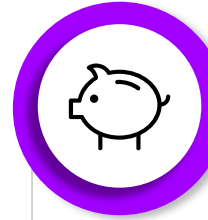
Operational support funding helps 988 address stakeholder needs. Examples:

Services Expansion

Insurance Coverage

Physical Infrastructure

Youth Programs



Revenue

Revenue generation tools help 988 Lifelines sustainably grow. Examples:

Line Surcharge Fees

Trust Fund

State General Appropriation

Sustainable Revenue Legislation Best Practices

As modeled by other states, fee-per-line models and trust funds give 988 programs consistent long-term revenue to operate and grow capabilities.



Surcharges

Fee Per Line systems provide consistent revenue for 988

- **Flat rate monthly surcharges** usually fall between \$0.06 - \$0.60
- Differences between how fee is transferred from consumer to state for prepaid and postpaid lines
- Relies on service providers as the middle-man






Trust Funds

Trust Funds provide secure long-term funding through their perpetuities

- Needs a **large fund** to be allocated in the beginning
- **Continues to generate revenue** as money is withdrawn from the fund

Financial Sustainability Options

Other states have legislated for revenue structures that aim to fulfill a sustainable funding need for 988 programs

Category 	Legislation Implementation 	Impact 
Surcharges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates a 988 fee that is included in customers' bills and collected by telecom providers• Funds are then remitted to the state• Legislation specifies the fee amount and outlines how these funds will be utilized	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides sustainable funding for 988 hotlines• Amount can be adjusted through additional legislation to grow alongside the program• Funds are protected through federal legislation which mandates that funds are used for 988• Operates similarly to 911 surcharges which has proven success in Massachusetts
Trust Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishes a 988 trust fund where contributions are derived from various sources (i.e., grants, private donations, state appropriations)• Fund enables contributions from and dedicated revenue streams, such as telecom fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides a reliable source of funds for 988 hotlines• Funds within the trust grow over time through investment strategies and replenishment from fund sources• Ensures the continuity and effectiveness of crisis support services over time• Some states use their Trust Fund to provide reimbursements for costs associated with designating and maintaining 988 Lifeline

Surcharge to Fund 988

A surcharge fee passed by Commonwealth legislation would allow Massachusetts to adopt a consistent funding structure for 988 programs that already exists for 911 operation.

Fund Design

- 988 surcharge should be modeled off the pre-existing 911 surcharge
 - 911 is currently set at \$1.50 per line, monthly
- **Minimal initial set-up** as current service provider partnerships can be leveraged

Program Support

- Revenue is reserved for 988 Programs and their operating costs
 - Similarly to 911, funds are mandated via state legislation and pooled into trust fund

Existing Public Buy-In

- When surveyed, **78%** of Americans are **willing** to pay for a surcharge on their monthly phone bill for **988** after learning on average \$1.00 per month goes to 911

Source: National Alliance on Mental Alliance
[Poll on Public Perspectives on 988 & Crisis Response \(2023\)](#)

Estimated Revenue from 988 Surcharge

State Name	988 Fee	988 Fee (Average)	Annual Fee (Average)	Total Lines (Wireless + Wired)	Estimated Total 988 Revenue	State Population	Average 988 Cost Per Resident
Minnesota	\$0.00-0.25	\$0.13	\$1.56	7,077,935	\$10,616,903.13	5,737,915	\$1.85
Pennsylvania	\$0.06	\$0.06	\$0.72	16,275,063	\$ 11,718,045.05	12,961,683	\$1.26
California	\$0.08-0.30	\$0.19	\$0.96-3.60	49,853,056	\$113,664,966.67	38,965,193	\$1.28
Virginia	\$0.12	\$0.12	\$1.44	9,339,115	\$13,448,325.61	8,715,698	\$1.54
Washington	\$0.24	\$0.24	\$2.88	9,361,812	\$26,962,019.18	7,812,880	\$3.45
Delaware	\$0.60	\$0.60	\$7.20	1,341,213	\$9,656,734.12	1,031,890	\$9.36
Vermont	\$0.72	\$0.72	\$8.64	839,000	\$7,248,960	647,464	\$11.20



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 988 collection is continuing to develop but it is still in its early stages
- Colorado, Virginia, and Washington collected revenue funding from a fee-based phone surcharge funding in the last FY
- Many states like California, Delaware, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Vermont will be collecting a statewide surcharge this FY
- New York, Ohio, Colorado, Nevada, and Oregon are charging a surcharge at the municipality level
- Minnesota has imposed a phone fee range, with exact amount to be recommended by the Health Commissioner

Massachusetts 988 Fee Models

988 Fee	Total Lines Charged	Estimated Total 988 Revenue
\$0.05	9,160,075	\$5,496,044.79
\$0.10	9,160,075	\$10,992,089.59
\$0.15	9,160,075	\$16,488,134.38
\$0.20	9,160,075	\$21,984,179.17
\$0.25	9,160,075	\$27,480,223.97
\$0.30	9,160,075	\$32,976,268.76
\$0.35	9,160,075	\$38,472,313.55
\$0.40	9,160,075	\$43,968,358.34
\$0.45	9,160,075	\$49,464,403.14
\$0.50	9,160,075	\$54,960,447.93



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Customizable:** States using 988 fees can largely fund the program by aligning the charge to match their costs, with the ability to change it to meet needs over time
- **Affordable:** A \$0.05 increase in the monthly fee creates an estimated difference of \$5,496,045 in revenue → the fee can remain affordable while providing a significant impact
- **Sustainable:** Revenue from the surcharge can grow with demand and be saved for later use as 988 volume rises