

<b>FROM</b>	NAME & TITLE	Laura Larsen, Budget Director 	CITY of <b>BALTIMORE</b> <b>MEMO</b>	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Bureau of the Budget and Management Research Room 469, City Hall		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill 22-0127R – Informational Hearing – 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline		

DATE:

**TO**

The Honorable President and  
Members of the City Council  
City Hall, Room 400

October 24, 2022

The Department of Finance is herein reporting on City Council Bill 22-0127R, Informational Hearing – 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, the purpose of which is to call on various City agencies to discuss the implementation of the new 988 dialing code, which will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

The National Hotline Designation Act, enacted in 2020, established 988 as the new Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and Veterans Crisis Line. 988 was officially launched July 16, 2022 and aligns with the City’s recent launch of the Behavioral Health 911 Diversion Pilot Program.

The launch of 988 aligns with Baltimore City’s new 911 Diversion Pilot program, a behavioral health response initiative and partnership with Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB) and Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc. (BCRI). The program was established with the goal of reducing unnecessary police encounters with people in crisis by diverting certain mental health-related calls from law enforcement to experienced mental health professionals through the Here2Help hotline, run by BCRI. The Here2Help hotline is available 24/7, 365 days a year and is staffed by mental health clinicians. In addition, mobile crisis teams can be dispatched to respond in-person if the BCRI clinician deems it necessary.

The Maryland General Assembly appropriated \$10.5 million to support municipal and regional implementation and response efforts ahead of the launch of 988. In August, Mayor Scott announced \$1.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds to support the expansion of BCRI’s behavioral health response efforts.

The Department of Finance will attend the hearing on City Council Bill 22-0127R and answer questions.

cc: Michael Moiseyev  
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