



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, July 31, 2026

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**In Allentown, Governor Shapiro and DHS Secretary Dr. Arkoosh
Highlight Historic Mental Health Investments Secured in the 2026-27
Budget**

Governor Shapiro secured \$10 million in first-ever dedicated state funding to support the 988 lifeline and \$5 million to maintain walk-in behavioral health crisis stabilization centers.

The 2026-27 budget builds on the Shapiro Administration's progress to strengthen Pennsylvania's integrated crisis response system, ensuring people experiencing a mental health crisis can get help quickly.



Allentown, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** and **Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh** visited the Lehigh County Crisis Intervention Center with counselors and elected leaders to highlight the historic investments in mental health services that the Governor secured in the [2026-27 budget](#).

Building on three years of investment in student and community mental health, this year's budget delivers **\$10 million in first-ever dedicated state funding** to support 988, the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, in addition to **\$5 million** for walk-in behavioral health crisis stabilization centers — prioritizing regions with limited access to immediate, in-person care.

"I've listened to Pennsylvanians tell me how important it is to have someone to talk to when they're struggling, no matter what time of day or where you live," said **Governor Josh Shapiro**. "In my Administration, we're treating mental health with just as much care as physical health – and we've supported county mental health services and

expanded student mental health resources in nearly 800 schools across Pennsylvania. This year, we secured more funding for 988 and walk-in behavioral health crisis centers – two more of my mental health budget priorities – to help fill critical gaps in funding and build on the progress we’ve made to ensure our loved ones, our neighbors, and our communities can access the help and support they need, when they need it.”

This year’s investment for the 988 National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline will allow DHS to **double the number of centers that can respond to chat and text messages** from three centers to six; **provide administrative support to counties** so that 911 operators can perform a warm-handoff for callers in need of crisis services; **allow all 988 centers to maintain 24/7/365 coverage** in Pennsylvania; and continue to **support the increased demand for 988**.

“The Shapiro Administration has intentionally built a robust mental and behavioral health system continuum that works to provide rapid support and treatment for anyone in a mental health or substance use crisis, anywhere in the Commonwealth. With these new investments, we have the opportunity to make our system even stronger,” said **DHS Secretary Dr. Arkoosh**. “And we are dedicated to ensuring that all Pennsylvanians have access to immediate behavioral health crisis care — in the least restrictive and the most therapeutic environments available.”

The Lehigh County Crisis Intervention Center is one of 14 individual 988 call centers throughout the Commonwealth. The Center provides 24/7 support for individuals experiencing a behavioral health or mental health crisis through additional services including telephone crisis counseling, walk-in services, and mobile outreach.

“County governments are on the front lines of providing relief to those experiencing crisis and hardship. We’re a source of certainty and stability for our neighbors, friends, and families who struggle with invisible battles and unseen anguish — and nowhere is our work more visible and tangible than Lehigh County’s 988 and crisis response services,” said **Lehigh County Executive Josh Siegel**. “Governor Shapiro has not just delivered for the Lehigh Valley, but he has also never stopped showing up for it, and this year’s budget builds on previous historic investments in mental health.”

In 2025, Lehigh County worked on more than 6,400 crisis cases — and over the last year, their 988 lifeline received approximately 3,500 calls.

“Statistics will show you that 99 percent of calls into our center are resolved without the need to dispatch police or first responders, and without the need for that individual to attend a hospital. This gives us confidence as operators that, if you can help to guide us into your situation, we can help to guide you out,” said **Craig Taylor, a crisis counselor for 988**. “As providers, we are proud to offer this service, but as residents, we are elated that this level of funding and support will allow this safety net to be even stronger for everyone we care about. Thank you, Governor Shapiro, for your time and your continued support of mental health initiatives.”

By dedicating the first ever state funding to 988, this **\$10 million investment** allows counties like Lehigh County to continue providing 24/7 service through 988 and ensure those experiencing a crisis can receive the support they need at any time of day.

“Expanding awareness and long-term support for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline has been a priority of mine, including introducing legislation that would require the 988 hotline be printed on PA college student ID cards,” said **Senator Nick Miller, PA’s 14th Senate District**. “This budget, thanks to Gov. Shapiro’s leadership, makes a historic investment in the mental health of Pennsylvanians through \$10 million in dedicated funding for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline for the first time. The additional funding will strengthen access to trained crisis counselors, ensuring Pennsylvanians have timely access to support when they need it most.”

“988 is a proven method for improving mental health, reducing suicide, and saving lives. This \$10 million commitment from the Governor will ensure that the funding can hire the staff and build the infrastructure necessary to save lives. It also builds on our collective work to improve mental health across the Commonwealth,” said **Representative Mike Schlossberg, PA’s 132nd House District**. “I’m thrilled that the Governor chose to prioritize 988 in this year’s budget and look forward to working with him in the future on these efforts.”

“The 988 Lifeline provides a critically important service for people going through a mental or behavioral health crisis, it is the number to call 24/7 to get the help and support at the time when it is most needed,” said **Representative Peter Schweyer, PA’s 134th House District**. “To know there is a voice at the other end of the line and help and resources are available can make a real difference. This investment will help ensure 988 continues to serve Pennsylvanians and I am pleased to join Governor Shapiro and my legislative colleagues today for securing this funding in this year’s budget.”

From day one, the **Shapiro Administration** has worked to strengthen Pennsylvania’s integrated crisis response system, ensuring people experiencing a mental health crisis can get help quickly:

- In October 2024, **Governor Shapiro** [established a Behavioral Health Council](#) to increase accessibility of behavioral health services across the Commonwealth.
- In the FY23-24 and FY24-25 budgets, the Governor secured a total **\$40 million increase** in funding for county mental health programs — **the first increases since 2008** — and continued delivering **\$222.4 million** in county base rates in FY25-26 and FY26-27.
- Since taking office, the Shapiro Administration has helped **nearly 800 schools** expand mental health services, including the hiring of **more than 200 mental health counselors**.

The [2026-27 budget](#) also doubles funding for rape crisis centers throughout the Commonwealth – for a total of **\$24.17 million** – and continues providing **\$100 million** in annual mental health and school safety funding for Pennsylvania’s K-12 schools.

As part of today's visit in Allentown, the Governor ceremonially signed the General Appropriations Bill.

Read more about Governor Shapiro’s [2026-27 budget](#), view the Governor’s remarks as prepared [here](#), or watch the Governor’s delivered remarks [here](#).

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