

Township of Southgate
Administration Office
185667 Grey Road 9, RR 1
Dundalk, ON N0C 1B0



Phone: 519-923-2110
Toll Free: 1-888-560-6607
Fax: 519-923-9262
Web: www.southgate.ca

Staff Report HR2021-013

Title of Report: HR2021-013 – Support for 988 three-digit Suicide and Crisis Hotline
Department: Human Resources
Council Date: May 19, 2021

Recommendation:

Whereas the Federal government has passed a motion to adopt 988, a National three-digit suicide and crisis hotline; and

Whereas the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has increased the demand for suicide prevention services by 200%; and

Whereas existing suicide prevention hotlines require the user to remember a 10-digit number and go through directories or be placed on hold; and

Whereas in 2022 the United States will have in place a national 988 crisis hotline; and

Whereas the Township of Southgate recognizes that it is a significant and important initiative to ensure critical barriers are removed to those in a crisis and seeking help;

Therefore be it resolved that the Township of Southgate endorses this 988 crisis line initiative; and

That a copy of this resolution be sent to Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MP Alex Ruff, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MPP Bill Walker, Federal Minister of Health Patty Hajdu, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) and all municipalities in Ontario.

Background:

On December 11th, 2020, the House of Commons passed a motion introduced by Conservative MP Todd Doherty, through unanimous consent, to bring a national 3-digit suicide prevention hotline line to Canada.

Given that the alarming rate of suicide in Canada constitutes a national health crisis, the House calls on the government to take immediate action, in collaboration with our provinces, to establish a national suicide prevention hotline that consolidates all suicide crisis numbers into one easy to remember three-digit (988) hot- line that is accessible to all Canadians.

Staff Comments:

Studies indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified Canadians' feelings of stress and anxiety. The current 10 digit crisis line is thought to be long and hard to remember and the hope is that the new three-digit number will be a quick resource for people in crisis.

Financial Implications:

There is no financial impact as a result of this report.

Communications & Community Action Plan Impact:

This report has been written and presented to Council to communicate accurate information to the public.

Concluding Comments:

1. That Council endorse the 988 three-digit suicide and crisis hotline.
2. That Council direct staff to send a copy of this resolution to Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MP Alex Ruff, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MPP Bill Walker, Federal Minister of Health Patty Hajdu, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) and all municipalities in Ontario.

Respectfully Submitted,

HR Coordinator: *Original Signed By*

Kayla Best, HR Coordinator/Assistant to the CAO

CAO Approval: *Original Signed By*

Dave Milliner, CAO

Attachments:

None.