

March 1, 2021

Mandatory 11-Digit Dialing coming to the 209 Area Code

In preparation for the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) adoption of 988 as the new three-digit number to be used nationwide to reach the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline, starting July 16, 2022, 11-digit dialing is being implemented. However, customers must continue to dial 1-800-273-TALK to reach the Mental Health Crisis Lifeline until July 16, 2022.

In order for 988 to work in the 209 area code, 11-digit local dialing will begin being implemented on April 24, 2021. At that time, everyone in the 209 area code will need to change the way they dial local calls.

What will be the new dialing procedure?

To complete all local calls, you will need to dial **1 + area code + telephone number**. This applies to all calls within your area code that are currently dialed with seven digits, including to your neighbors. For example, you will dial 1-209-966-3636 to reach Sierra Tel.

Who will be affected?

Anyone with a telephone number in the 209 area code will need to make the change from 7-digit local dialing to 11-digit local dialing.

When will the change begin?

Beginning **April 24, 2021**, you should begin dialing 11 digits (1 + area code + telephone number) for all local calls. If you forget and dial just 7 digits, your call will still be completed.

However, beginning **October 24, 2021**, you must dial 11 digits (1 + area code + telephone number) for all local calls. On and after this date, local calls dialed with only 7 digits may not be completed, and a recording will inform you that your call cannot be completed as dialed. You must hang up and dial again using the 1 + area code and the 7-digit number.

Beginning **July 16, 2022**, dialing "988" will route your call to the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline.

What will remain the same?

- Your telephone number, including current area code, will not change.
- The price of a call, coverage area, or other rates and services will not change due to the dialing change.
- What is considered a local call now will remain a local call regardless of the number of digits dialed.
- You will continue to dial 1+ area code + telephone number for all long distance calls.
- You can still dial just three digits to reach 711 (relay services) and 911 (emergency services).
- Any 211, 311, 411, 511, 611, or 811 services available in your community can still be reached by dialing their three-digit codes.
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can still be reached by dialing 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Who may you contact with questions?

If you have any questions regarding information provided in this notice, please call Sierra Tel at 209-966-3636 or access www.SierraTel.com for more information. You can also visit the FCC website at <https://www.fcc.gov/suicide-prevention-hotline>.

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