



Mandatory 10-Digit Dialing

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has adopted 988 as a new three-digit number to be used nationwide to reach the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline, starting July 16, 2022. Customers must continue to dial 1-800-273-TALK to reach the Lifeline until July 16, 2022.

In order for 988 to work in your area code, mandatory 10-digit local dialing must first be implemented. In Georgia, the 912 and 478 area code is included and you will be required to dial the area code to make a local call.

What areas will be affected?

Anyone that has a 912 or 478 area code will be required to use 10-digit dialing when calling a local number.

What is 10-digit dialing?

Ten-digit dialing requires the area code to be entered before dialing a local number. For your call to be completed, you will need to dial the **area code + telephone number**.

What this means for our BTC customers is, if you dial a local 7 digit number beginning with 458, 462, 473 or 778, you will be required to dial the 912 area code then the local phone number for the call to go through. (Example: to call our business office you will dial 912 – 462 – 5111)

When will this begin?

Customers may begin using 10-digit dialing now, however on October 24, 2021, ten-digit dialing will become mandatory. Any numbers that are dialed without the area code will not be completed, and a recording will play to inform you that your number cannot be completed as dialed.

How can I prepare for this change?

The best way to prepare is to start dialing ten digits now. Also, any equipment that is programmed to dial out 7 digits must be updated to 10-digit dialing by October 24, 2021 or they will not dial out. Some examples are: Medical monitoring devices, security alarm systems, fire/smoke alarms, fax machines, call forward settings, speed dialing, mobile device calling numbers and many others. In addition to equipment, you will want to make sure that anything with your contact information is updated with your area code - business and personal stationary, advertising materials, personal and pet ID tags, voice mail messages, etc.

Although your method of dialing will change, many things will stay 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.
- Local calls will remain a local call regardless of the number of digits dialed.
- Continue to dial 1+ area code + telephone number for all long distance calls.
- Dialing three digits to reach Relay Services - 711 and Emergency Services - 911
- Dialing services available in your community such as 211, 311, 411, 611, or 811.
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can still be reached at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

If you have any questions about these upcoming changes, please contact BTC at 912 - 462 - 5111, or visit the FCC website at <https://www.fcc.gov/suicide-prevention-hotline>