

Illinois Updates

Implementing the Community Emergency Services
and Support Act & Supporting LGBTQIA+ Youth

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The State of Illinois Department of Human Services

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Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery

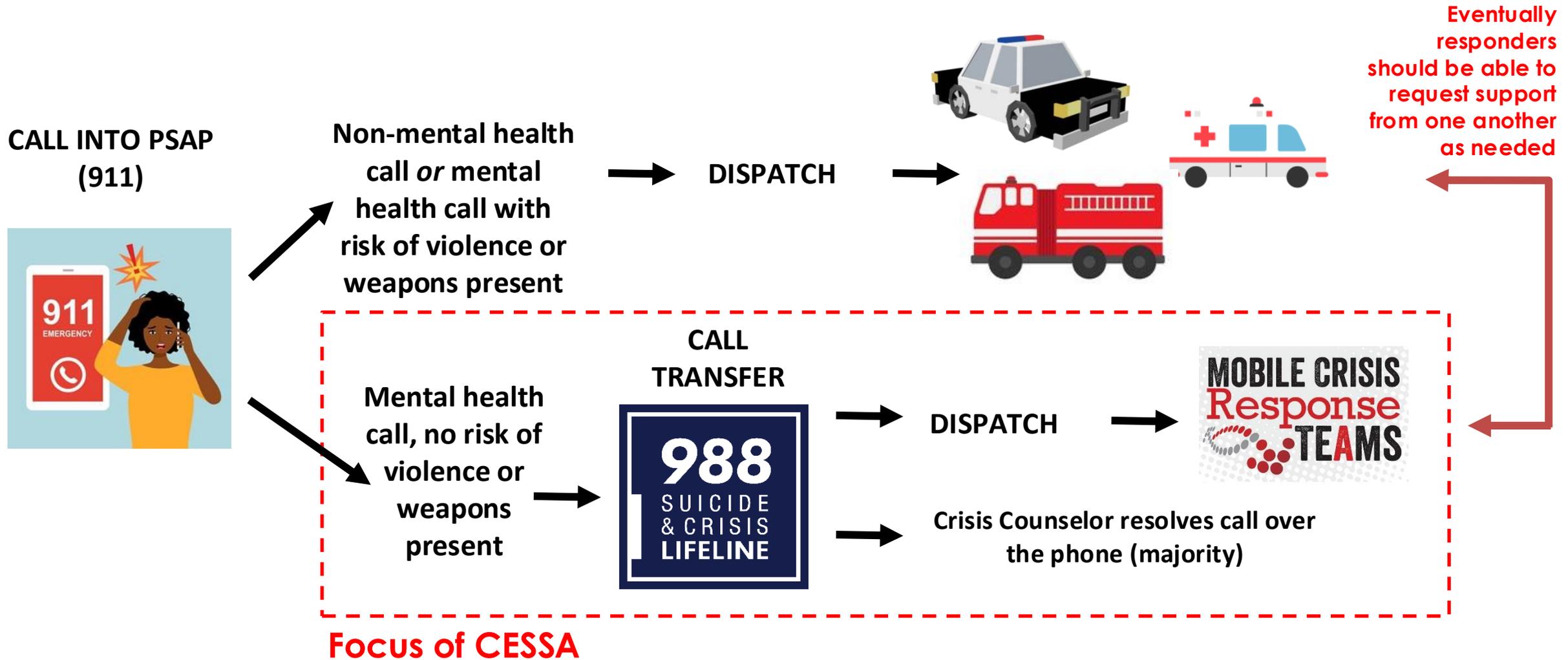
CESSA History: The Stephon Edward Watts Act

50 ILCS 754/1



- CESSA began with young Black and brown disability advocates who wanted to ensure people experiencing a mental health crisis got the most appropriate care to meet their needs
- These young people were influenced by the tragic experience of Stephon Watts, a Calumet City high school student
- CESSA directs PSAPs (911) to **provide callers seeking emergency mental and behavioral health response with mobile mental health services** when appropriate without engaging law enforcement unless there is ongoing criminal activity, a threat of violence, or assistance is needed for involuntary transports.

Adding New Response To Our Crisis System



Pilot Test

Pilot Sites

- Total Response = 9 PSAPs and 10 MCRTs
- Priority Dispatch = 10 PSAPs and 10 MCRTs

Location Types

- Urban, suburban, and rural locales across the state

Size/Complexity

- Small, medium, and large sites



Pilot Updates

Preliminary Call Transfer Status Update as of June 5, 2025

- 127 calls transferred from 911 to 988
- Includes individuals who called 911 more than once
- Majority of callers' concerns were addressed by 988 crisis counselors
- 5 calls transferred to MCRT for on-site response
- 5 calls were transferred back to 911

Preliminary Observations from Pilot-Testing

The pilots are doing what we've designed them to do

- Resulting in alternative responses to law enforcement for callers experiencing behavioral health issues
- Providing information about how the modified processes are working
- Identifying processes/procedures that may need tweaking or reworking as we move into full implementation
- Highlighting variability between pilot sites that impact implementation including data reporting and other processes

Continuing to Support LGBTQIA+ Youth



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Free, trained, confidential support.

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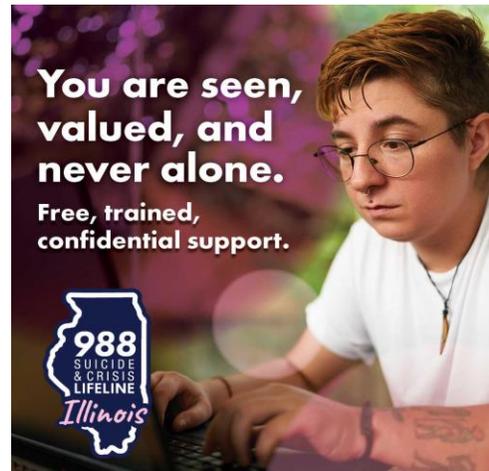
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- Illinois IDHS is committed to continuing to provide LGBTQIA+ individuals, in particular youth, with free, confidential, and culturally competent care 24/7/366
- Actions we are taking to ensure our 988 are providers are ready to support individuals who previously may have used the subnetwork:
 - Data collection
 - Provider support including training
 - External communication plan
 - Uplifting existing IDHS resources for supporting LGBTQIA+ individuals