



© 19 April 2021, 15:00 (ChST)

Guam carriers team up to inform customers of new 10-digit dialing procedure

Tamuning, Guam (April 19, 2021) – Guam carriers team up to inform customers of new 10-digit dialing procedure.

- The Federal Communications Commission has designated 988 as the service number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline effective July 16, 2022.
- As a result, starting October 24, 2021, all local phone calls on Guam must include the 671 area code.

When it comes to suicide prevention and mental health aid, every second matters. Right now, if a loved one wanted to take the courageous step to ask for help, they would have to dial 1-800-273-8255 to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. A number too long to remember in times of crisis. Beginning July of next year, when you have an urgent mental health need, you will call just three digits - “988”; similar to “911” for police, fire, or rescue emergencies.

To make this possible, all area codes within the United States that have phone numbers beginning with “988” will now require the area code be dialed first, followed by the local telephone number (for example: 671-988-XXXX). This prevents calls to the National Suicide Lifeline from being automatically triggered and placed. Guam is amongst 82 area codes that need to make this local call transition. By October 24, 2021, all phone numbers will remain the same, but “671” will need to be entered in the beginning.

In a joint effort, all Guam’s service providers will supply constant reminders through in-store flyers, social medial content, and notices on subscribers’ upcoming billing statements.

Some helpful tips to navigate through this change:

- Go through your contact list and add “671” in the beginning of all local phone numbers.

- Reprogram all numbers on life safety systems or medical monitoring devices, PBXs, fax machines, internet dial-up numbers, fire or burglar alarms and security systems or gates.
- For business customers: Be sure to check websites, personal and business stationery, advertising materials, personal and business checks for contact information and other such items to ensure the area code is included.

For more information on the 988 project at Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center, you can contact Joleen Respicio, Project Director, at 671-482-7679.

“Mental health is a big issue that affects our island. We know there will be some initial frustration with the 10-digit dialing at first, but the benefits of a short code “988” in times of crisis will outweigh that on many levels. Your Island Carriers will be combining our resources and working together to make the transition seamless.”

— Roderick Boss, Chief Executive Officer, DOCOMO PACIFIC

“Uniting with our local telecom providers to educate our island about mandatory 10-digit dialing is critical. It gives customers adequate time to check and reprogram electronics and other equipment to incorporate 10-digit phone numbers. The permissive dialing period given by all local telecom companies here on Guam also allows customers to become acclimated to dialing 10-digits instead of 7 and ensures that our community is fully prepared for the significant change this year. The implementation of ‘988’ as the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline is a positive step for our community and further connects them to life-saving resources.”

— Andrew Gayle, Chief Operating Officer, GTA

“Our partnership with Docomo and GTA is instrumental for helping all our subscribers adjust to the new dialing procedure, as well as for educating the community about the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline that will be operational next year. It’s a testament to the strength of our community that we can unite to help our island thrive. We stand hand in hand to elevate awareness of the resources available for mental health.”

— Jim Oehlerking, Chief Executive Officer, IT&E

About DOCOMO PACIFIC

DOCOMO PACIFIC is a wholly owned subsidiary of NTT DOCOMO, Japan's leading mobile operator. Headquartered in Tamuning, Guam, DOCOMO PACIFIC is the largest provider of personal, residential, enterprise connectivity and entertainment services in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. Named Guam's most reliable network, based on GWS' 2019 OneScore ranking. We are also the 5-time winner of Pika's Best of Guam and 4-time winner of Best of The Pacific. DOCOMO PACIFIC is dedicated to bringing you and your family closer to the things that matter most. Get to know more about what makes us "Better Together" at www.docomopacific.com.

About GTA

GTA provides complete communications services in Guam. These include local and long-distance telephone service, 3G and LTE mobility service, High Speed Internet Access, Dedicated Ethernet, Carrier-Class High Capacity Services over SONET and SDH networks, and advanced television, or IPTV.

GTA operates a data center on Guam offering a secure, managed environment for customers who need an alternative site for business data storage. The company also runs Guam's first locally owned Cable Landing Station completed in 2017 and the recently completed the Gateway Network Connection in Piti.

Based in Tamuning, Guam, GTA is a U.S. and locally owned company and locally managed. The company's website is www.gta.net.

About IT&E

IT&E has been serving the communities of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands for more than 35 years. It is a leader in wireless, broadband, voice and data solutions in the region, serving more than half of the population with one or more of its services. Its major shareholders include Citadel Pacific Ltd., SK Telecom and Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan. The IT&E story began in the late 1970's, when operators still connected calls manually via switchboard. Today, we have the widest and most advanced network in Guam and the Marianas and continue to serve with an unrelenting focus on customer satisfaction. For more information visit ite.net.

ABOUT BETTER TOGETHER

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