

Public Safety – Regional Dispatch/Public Safety Answering Points

Statutory Reference: [MGL Ch 6A, §18A-18J](#) and [Ch 166, §14A](#)

Summary - Allows governmental bodies to create a regional public safety emergency communication center or a public safety answering point.

Creation – With the approval of the state 911 department in the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, two or more governmental bodies may, by agreement, create a regional emergency communication center or public safety answering point (PSAP).

Governance – There is no specific direction regarding the agreement to be reached by the participating governments. Presumably, this is to be accomplished through an inter-municipal agreement under MGL Ch 40, §4A which allows for flexibility in determining governance structure and allocation of costs.

Finances – Though state funding is available through the 911 department to foster the development of regional PSAPs and emergency communications centers, there is no language establishing any financing parameters for governmental bodies that agree to form a regional emergency communication center or PSAP. As with governance, any finance issues regarding a regional dispatch operation are to be worked out in the agreement reached by member municipalities.

Employee Rights – Again, there is no direction on employee rights. It is likely that the member communities would have to resolve any labor issues prior to moving forward with their agreement.

Other – State funding to support regional dispatch operations comes from the 911 surcharge on phone service. Funding is allocated to foster regional approaches to dispatch, to train enhanced 911 personnel, purchase or upgrade of telecommunications equipment, as well as network and database development, operation and maintenance.