Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

State 911 Department



**State 911 Department**

**Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT)**

**Grant Guidelines and Application**

**July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026**

**Maura T. Healey**

**Governor**

**Terrence M. Reidy**

**Secretary, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security**

**Frank Pozniak**

**Executive Director, State 911 Department**

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[**www.mass.gov/e911**](http://www.mass.gov/e911)

**TERT GRANT SUMMARY**

The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, the State 911 Department and the Statewide Interoperability Coordinated endeavored to implement a Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) program within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The TERT program is designed to support 9-1-1 communications centers requiring assistance. TERT deployments assist public safety answering points that are stretched beyond their capabilities as the result of an unprecedented event. The TERT program helps provide much-needed relief to dispatchers.

As a means of moving this initiative forward, the Department sought the guidance of the Commonwealth’s Operational Services Division and the Office of the Comptroller. These oversight agencies advised that this program was best fit for a grant. The Department therefore has developed these guidelines to allow for the continued operation of the TERT program throughout the Commonwealth.

Further details relative to program requirements are contained within these guidelines.

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## I. Introduction

Governor Maura T. Healey, Secretary of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security Terrence M. Reidy, and State 911 Department Executive Director Frank Pozniak are pleased to announce the State 911 Department Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) Grant.

The State 911 Department is a department within the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security and is responsible for administering the State 911 Department TERT Grant. The TERT Grant has been established to support 9-1-1 communications centers requiring assistance. TERT deployments assist agencies that are stretched beyond their capabilities as the result of an unprecedented event. The TERT program helps provide much-needed relief to dispatchers.

The State 911 Department may, through an open enrollment period(s), invite eligible entities to submit applications under the State 911 Department TERT Grant. All information needed to apply is contained in these guidelines and application package.

The following guidelines have been developed for the State 911 Department TERT Grant and are applicable for the period beginning on July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026.

**The guidelines and funding levels will be reviewed by the State 911 Department and are subject to change, with Commission approval, with each funding cycle.**

***Note***: The TERT Grant will begin on July 1, 2023 and run through June 30, 2026. The “Effective Date” of the individual awards shall be determined in accordance with Section 1 of the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions, which provides as follows: “The effective start date of performance under a Contract shall be the date a Contract has been executed by an authorized signatory of the Contractor, the Department, a later date specified in the Contract or the date of any approvals required by law or regulations, whichever is later.” **There shall be no reimbursement for costs incurred prior to the Effective Date of the Contract, and all goods and services MUST be received on or before June 30, 2026**.

# II. Definitions

The following words and phrases, as used in this document and the related application package, shall have the following meaning, unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

Commonwealth: the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Department: the State 911 Department.

Enhanced 911 Telecommunicator: an individual who acts in the capacity of an enhanced 911 call taker.

Executive Director: the executive director of the State 911 Department.

Grantee: an eligible applicant that has contracted with the State 911 Department to receive funds under the State 911 Department TERT Grant. Only governmental bodies and municipalities are eligible to be grantees.

Primary PSAP: a PSAP equipped with automatic number identification and automatic location identification displays, and is the first point of reception of a 911 call. It serves the municipality in which it is located.

Regional PSAP: a PSAP operated by or on behalf of 2 or more municipalities or governmental bodies, or combination thereof, approved by the department, for the operation of enhanced 911 call taking and call transfer activities.  A regional PSAP may also be engaged in, by agreement, the dispatching or control of public safety resources serving some or all of the municipalities or governmental bodies that comprise the regional PSAP, including where services are provided by a private safety department. If the regional PSAP serves all such municipalities or governmental bodies for the operation of enhanced 911 call taking and call transfer activities and dispatch services including where some dispatch services are provided by a private safety department, it shall be considered a regional emergency communication center. The regional PSAP shall be equipped with automatic number identification and automatic location identification displays, as approved by the department, and is the first point of reception of a 911 call.

Regional Secondary PSAP: a facility operated by or on behalf of 3 or more municipalities or governmental bodies, or a combination thereof, approved by the department, that enter into an agreement for the establishment and provision of regional dispatch and coordination of either police, fire protection or emergency medical services, or any combination thereof. A regional secondary PSAP is equipped with automatic number identification and automatic location identification displays. It receives 911 calls only when transferred from a primary or regional PSAP or on an alternative routing basis when calls cannot be completed to the primary or regional PSAP.

Regional Emergency Communication Center or RECC: a facility operated by or on behalf of 2 or more municipalities or governmental bodies, or combination thereof, as approved by the Department, that enter into an agreement for the establishment and provision of regional dispatch and coordination of emergency services for all such municipalities or governmental bodies including, but not limited to, a regional PSAP that provides enhanced 911 service and police, fire protection, and emergency medical services dispatch, including services provided by a private safety department. The regional PSAP portion of the center shall be equipped with automatic number identification and automatic location identification displays, as approved by the department, and is the first point of reception of a 911 call.

Wireless State Police PSAP: a state police facility assigned the responsibility of primarily or entirely receiving wireless 911 calls and, as appropriate, dispatching emergency response services or transferring or relaying emergency 911 calls to other public or private safety departments or other PSAPs.

# III. Eligibility

All primary PSAPs, regional PSAPs, regional secondary PSAPs, RECCs and Wireless State Police PSAP may be eligible to receive funding under the State 911 Department TERT Grant.

Funding for the State 911 Department TERT Grant originates from a portion of the surcharge revenues received pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 6A, § 18H. This funding period shall be for a maximum term of three (3) years to begin on July 1, 2023 and run through June 30, 2026. The Department projects the annual cost of the TERT Grant to be $280,000, for a total projected cost of $840,000 for the noted three-year funding period.

Awards to grantees under the State 911 Department TERT Grant will be disbursed according to the successful credentialing of its employee(s) as a TERT team member and completion of training(s) or deployment(s).

# IV. Purpose

The purpose of the State 911 Department TERT Grant is to reimburse primary PSAPs, regional PSAPs, regional secondary PSAPs, RECCs and State Police Wireless Center for allowable expenses relating to the training and deployment of TERT team members.

The State 911 Department reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to adjust the amount awarded under the State 911 Department TERT Grant by the amount of available and unexpended funds under other State 911 Department grant programs.

A TERT Dispatcher is a specially trained individual capable of providing mutual aid response in the aftermath of major events or other special circumstances. TERT members/teams typically respond to a PSAP/ECC deployment when an agency needs a team due to a major event or special circumstances. The purpose of TERT is to provide relief to personnel of a communications center that has experienced a major event to augment the staffing of that center. TERT members can respond to a PSAP, an Emergency Operations Center (EOC), Mobile Command Post, or a backup center.

TERT can be activated in instances, which may include:

* Natural disasters such as hurricanes, large wildfires, tornados;
* Coverage for line of duty deaths;
* Augment staffing due to widespread illness in center;
* Staff relief after major events, including for Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM); or
* Other instances as approved by the Department.

At this point in time, the Massachusetts TERT team will only be deployed intrastate.

**Criteria for TERT Members:**

All members shall meet the following qualifications and skills taken from **APCO/NENA Standard ANS 1.105.2-2015**:[[1]](#footnote-2)

* A public safety background with a minimum of three (3) years of experience in dispatch operations.
* Pass a criminal background check performed by the Authority Having Jurisdiction
* Follow the vaccination/immunization guidelines outlined in the CDC guidance document titled "Immunization Recommendations for Disaster Responders."[[2]](#footnote-3)
* Have a signed letter from the agency director acknowledging/approving participation in TERT on file with the TERT State Coordinator (Renewed by January 1 of even-numbered years).
* Possess positive interpersonal communication and leadership skills.
* Possess an excellent working knowledge of the appropriate public safety emergency response operation and equipment as it relates to the member's role.
* Possess an ability to adapt and be flexible with different policies, procedures, equipment, and geographic areas.
* Possess an ability to adapt to poor environmental conditions such as no beds, cold meals, and no running water.
* Possess excellent people and teamwork skills inclusive of cultural diversity.
* Possess excellent documentation skills.
* Apply and be credentialed through the COMU program

**TERT Telecommunicators Requirements:**

In addition, all members shall have completed the following online courses from the FEMA/EMI website *Note: All ICS Courses should be the most current version (within the last 10 years)*:

* IS-100, Introduction to the ICS
* IS-144, Telecommunicators Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) Basic Course
* IS-200, ICS for Single Resources, and Initial Incidents
* IS-700, National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction
* IS-800, National Response Framework (NRF)

Further, all members shall have also completed the following courses:

* Basic Public Safety Telecommunications Class that lasts 40 hours
* Massachusetts E911 course and certification
* CPR Certification

All policies and procedures identified in the Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce Operations Standards/Policy Manual and the Massachusetts Communications Unit (COMU) Governance Policy and Procedure are applicable to this procurement, as TERT is a position within and managed under the EOPSS MA COMU. Both documents are attached for reference.

# V. Use of Funding

## Categories of Use of Funds

Grantees may only use grant funds for the purposes indicated below. Use of all grant funding shall be (a) related to the training of a credentialed TERT team members or related to the deployment of a credentialed TERT team member, and (b) approved by the State 911 Department. All wage reimbursements authorized under the Program shall be allocated by the grantee in adherence to applicable collective bargaining agreements. However, the State 911 Department is not bound by or required to adhere to grantee collective bargaining agreements when determining allocations or reimbursements.

A. Personnel Costs:

Funding may be authorized to defray the costs of salary of enhanced 911 telecommunicator personnel, including enhanced 911 telecommunicators who are emergency communications dispatchers or supervisors. In order to be eligible for such funding, a grantee shall show that the personnel costs to be reimbursed: (1) cover only personnel who are certified as an enhanced 911 telecommunicator in accordance with the requirements of the State 911 Department; and (2) except as otherwise approved by the State 911 Department, are solely for hours in which funding shall be assigned to specific identified personnel, and the funding shall be applied to the personnel costs associated with such specific identified personnel.

These costs may include:

* straight time or overtime expenses for participants or replacement/backfill[[3]](#footnote-4) but not both to cover participant class hours to attend TERT trainings as established by the State 911 Department;
* straight time or overtime expenses for participants or replacement/backfill but not both to cover participant’s deployment hours; and
* associated fringe benefits and/or indirect costs as applied by a municipality or the Commonwealth

Grantees will be reimbursed only for classroom hours or deployment hours for participant or replacement/backfill but not both and reasonable travel time for participant. Travel time, where applicable, will be verified utilizing a recognized mileage guide such as mapquest.com. Eligible travel time will be calculated by determining the round-trip travel time from the PSAP to the training/deployment location, rounded up to the nearest quarter hour.

B. Mileage:Funding may be authorized for the payment of mileage when an employee utilizes his/her personal vehicle for (a) travel to attend TERT trainings as scheduled by the State 911 Department or (b) for travel associated with a deployment as scheduled by the State 911 Department. Mileage, where applicable, will be verified utilizing a recognized mileage guide such as mapquest.com. Eligible mileage will be calculated by determining the round-trip mileage from the PSAP to the training/deployment location, rounded to the nearest mile. Other expenses associated with travel, such as tolls and parking, may also be eligible under the TERT Grant. All rates will follow applicable employment Agreements.

C. Lodging:Funding for lodging expenses may be authorized for participation on deployments that are scheduled for two (2) or more consecutive days and the distance of which is equal to or greater than forty-five (45) miles away from where travel originates. Lodging expenses may only be authorized for nights of stay that occur between consecutive deployment days, except with the prior WRITTEN approval of the State 911 Department *prior to travel* where (1) travel originates from the Islands of Martha’s Vineyard and/or Nantucket; or (2) in cases of extreme hardship; or (3) unless otherwise approved by the State 911 Department in its sole discretion. Travel distance for lodging will be calculated using the place of employment as the origination point and will be verified utilizing a recognized mileage guide such as mapquest.com.

Grantees are advised that failure to obtain prior express WRITTEN authorization from the State 911 Department may result in denial of reimbursement of any and all expenses associated with lodging.

D. Incidental Expenses: Funding for incidental expenses may be authorized for participation in TERT deployments as follows:

1. Meals may be authorized for participation on deployments that are scheduled for two (2) or more consecutive days and for which lodging has been authorized. Meals shall be reimbursed in compliance with employment Agreements; and
2. Other incidental costs may be authorized for participation on deployments with the prior written approval of the State 911 Department. Grantees are advised that failure to obtain prior express WRITTEN authorization from the State 911 Department may result in denial of reimbursement of any and all expenses.

**All goods and services shall be received on or before June 30, 2026 to be eligible for reimbursement under this State 911 Department TERT Grant.**

# VI. Application Process

All applicants shall submit to the State 911 Department one (1) original of the completed Communication Unit Application, Communication Unit Home Agency Certification, and TERT application (a letter from an authorized signatory approving employee(s)’ participation as a TERT team member and proof of all required certifications), a fully executed Commonwealth of Massachusetts Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing Form, including notary page(s) and completion of the highlighted areas of the Commonwealth’s Standard Contract Form signed by an authorized signatory for the grant.

**THE APPLICATION SHALL NOT BE DOUBLE SIDED.**

All applications shall be signed and submitted by an authorized signatory of the applicant.

All applications must be mailed, hand-delivered to the address below, or submitted via Commbuys (www.commbuys.com). No applications will be accepted via fax or email. Original signatures are required.

**State 911 Department**

**151 Campanelli Drive, Suite A**

**Middleborough, MA 02346**

**ALL GRANT APPLICATIONS SHALL BE RECEIVED BY THE STATE 911 DEPARTMENT NO LATER THAN 5:00 P.M. ON CLOSE DATE OF AN OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD.**

**The State 911 Department may implement the following open enrollment periods throughout this funding cycle:**

**January 2, 2024 – January 31, 2024**

**July 1, 2024 – July 31, 2024**

**January 2, 2025 – January 31, 2025**

**July 1, 2025 – July 31, 2025**

**January 2, 2026 – January 31, 2026**

The State 911 Department reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to modify the open enrollment schedule for acceptance of applications.

# VII. Grant Review and Selection Process

The State 911 Department staff will review all applications and make selection recommendations to the Executive Director or his designee. The State 911 Department staff will use its best efforts to review grant applications and to take the following action within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the grant application: 1) request additional information from the applicant in the event that the grant application is not complete; 2) recommend approval of the grant; or 3) recommend denial of the grant, in part or in its entirety. If the State 911 Department staff determines, based upon its review of the grant application, that the grant application is not complete, the State 911 Department will notify the applicant by telephone and/or e-mail of the need to provide additional information and will notify the applicant that such additional information shall be provided to the State 911 Department staff. If the applicant fails to provide the requested information necessary to complete the application, the State 911 Department may consider the application closed and return the application to the applicant. If the application is closed and returned to the applicant, the applicant may resubmit the application, in which case the application will be considered a new application, and the review period will begin again.

Any denial of a grant application, in whole or in part, may be appealed to the Executive Director, or his designee, with supporting documentation. The Executive Director will use his best efforts to respond to the appeal within five (5) business days. All decisions of the Executive Director are final.

The State 911 Department reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to modify or extend any of the above allocations or timelines.

Adherence to the conditions detailed within the grant application package and other factors will be considered. These factors include:

* + A reasonable and properly completed application;
  + Applicant’s adherence to filing requirements of the PSAP/RECC Annual Certification of Compliance;
  + Applicant’s submission of Emergency Communications Analysis; and
  + Applicant’s adherence to Grant Guidelines and Reporting Requirements.

# VIII. Grant Funding Process

Upon completion of the grant review and selection process, the State 911 Department will enter into contracts with approved applicants. After contract execution, the grantee can incur costs and seek reimbursement from the State 911 Department, provided that all award conditions have been satisfied.

* All funding is subject to the availability of funds.
* Grantees shall maintain and retain accounting and other records of Grant-related information as required by applicable state and local laws and regulations. Such records shall be subject to examination, audit and inspection by the State 911 Department and/or any other federal, state, or local agency that has appropriate jurisdictional authority.
* The State 911 Department reserves the right to withhold future grant funding and/or disqualify grantee from participating in future grant awards if any grant funds received by the grantee are not properly accounted for or if the grantee fails to meet reporting requirements, including without limitation, reporting and/or certification requirements set forth in regulations and/or standards established by the State 911 Department.
* Funding of reimbursement requests received three (3) months after TERT training or Deployment cannot be guaranteed.

The State 911 Department reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to modify or extend any of the above timelines.

All State 911 Department TERT Grant forms will be made available at [www.mass.gov/e911](http://www.mass.gov/e911).

## Reimbursement Process

### Reimbursement for Expenses Incurred

After contract execution, the grantee can incur costs and seek reimbursement from the Department. Approval of reimbursement at the time of contract execution is conditioned on the reasonableness of the request and adequacy of documentation at the time funds are to be released.

**Reimbursement requests should be submitted to the Department within thirty (30) days of the date on which the cost is incurred.** Failure to submit requests within the noted timeframe may result in a delay of the funding process as detailed above. Reimbursement requests must include expenditure and activity reports as well as supporting documentation, including but not limited to, copies of receipts, proof of payment, payroll records and/or employment Agreement supporting the requested costs. PSAPs are advised that the Department is unable to guarantee funding for reimbursement requests received three (3) months after the training/deployment for which costs are being requested.

For personnel costs, proof of payment shall include the individual name, pay period, pay date, rate of pay, number of hours paid and the total amount paid.   As an example, the supporting documentation may be a copy of the payroll register/report from the city or town or copies of pay advices for the employee.  Please note that the payroll register/report does not need to segregate the “grant” costs, it simply needs to show payment to the individual for at least the amount of the requested reimbursement.

For payments made to employee’s reimbursement of eligible expenses, proof of payment shall include the payor’s name, individual’s name, check/electronic funds transfer (“eft”) number, the date of payment, the amount of payment, and supporting documentation, such as receipts.  As an example, the supporting documentation may be a copy of the check, cancelled check, or check warrant report.  If the amount of the check is greater than the amount being requested, a breakdown of the payment should be provided to properly support the costs being requested.

For payments made to vendors on a TERT team member’s behalf, proof of payment shall include the payor’s name, check/electronic funds transfer (“eft”) number, the date of payment, the vendor’s name, and the amount of payment.  As an example, the supporting documentation may be a copy of the check, cancelled check, or check warrant report.  If the amount of the check is greater than the amount being requested, a breakdown of the payment should be provided to properly support the costs being requested.

Reimbursement forms shall be signed by grantee’s authorized signatory and submitted to the State 911 Department by mail. Electronic signatures or fax copies of these forms will not be accepted. Original signatures are required. Please be sure to notify your Municipal Treasurer’s/Finance Office as all payments will be issued to that office.

The State 911 Department staff will review all reimbursement requests and make selection recommendations to the Executive Director or his designee. The State 911 Department staff will use its best efforts to review reimbursement requests and take action within thirty (30) business days of receipt of the reimbursement request.

The State 911 Department will provide a letter of explanation with all reimbursement requests that are returned to a grantee. The State 911 Department will also notify, via e-mail, the authorized signatory(ies) for a grantee of all payments processed. In the event that a payment is processed for an amount less than that requested, the reason(s) for such reduction will be noted on the reimbursement forms that will be provided with the payment notification.

Any denial of a reimbursement request, in whole or in part, may be appealed to the Executive Director, or his designee, with supporting documentation. The Executive Director will use his best efforts to respond to the appeal within five (5) business days. All decisions of the Executive Director for reimbursement requests under the State 911 Department TERT Grant are final.

All State 911 Department TERT Grant reimbursement forms will be made available at [www.mass.gov/e911](http://www.mass.gov/e911).

### Release of Funding to Grantees for Anticipated Expenditures

The Department may disburse grant funds for anticipated expenditures as detailed below.

State Agencies: In compliance with Massachusetts finance law and regulations, funds may be disbursed upon execution of an intergovernmental service agreement (“ISA”) for state agencies hosting a PSAP, or other terms as agreed upon with the Office of the State Comptroller. State agencies shall be required to submit the same level of documentation as detailed in Section VIII “Grant Funding Process” subsection A “Reimbursement for Expenses Incurred.” Failure to submit documentation in compliance with these grant guidelines may result in suspension or cancellation of the ISA and/or delays in future funding. Expenses identified by the State 911 Department as ineligible under this grant shall be removed from the child account within ten (10) business days of receipt of notification of ineligible expenses.

**The State 911 Department reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to modify or extend any of the above timeframes.**

# IX. Assistance

For assistance, please contact the State 911 Department Grants Management Specialist, Cindy Reynolds, at 508-821-7299 or [911DeptGrants@mass.gov](mailto:911DeptGrants@mass.gov).

For additional assistance, please refer to the following State 911 Department contact list:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Resource** | **Contact Number** | **E-Mail** |
| Katrina Shamshak | Questions regarding the TERT | 978-801-4911 x4163 | [katrina.c.shamshak@mass.gov](mailto:katrina.c.shamshak@mass.gov) |
| Cindy Reynolds | Questions regarding application process | 508-821-7299 | [911DeptGrants@mass.gov](mailto:911DeptGrants@mass.gov) |
| Angela Pilling | Questions regarding eligibility and process for reimbursements | 508-821-7305 | [Angela.Pilling@mass.gov](mailto:Michelle.Hallahan@mass.gov) |
| **For more information on the Massachusetts TERT program, please visit** [**www.Mass.gov/TERT**](http://www.Mass.gov/TERT) | | | |

All applications shall be submitted to:

**State 911 Department**

**151 Campanelli Drive, Suite A**

**Middleborough, MA 02346**

**Or**

[**www.Commbuys.com**](http://www.Commbuys.com)

#### **ATTACHMENT A: COMMUNICATION UNIT APPLICATION**

 **ATTACHMENT B: COMMUNICATION UNIT HOME AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

#### ATTACHMENT C: EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER ANALYSIS

Completion of the required emergency communications center analysis can be done by clicking on the link below and completing and submitting the form.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Fh2GPrdIDkqYBowE2Bt7Kjl3aakdHodDsbQvqYqc_g9UOEpMTEJUWUc5RDY1TzU2S1pVVEJQSkNGViQlQCN0PWcu>

#### ATTACHMENT D: POLICY AND PROCEDURES

All policies and procedures identified in the Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce Operations Standards/Policy Manual and the Massachusetts Communications Unit (COMU) Governance Policy and Procedure are applicable to this procurement, as TERT is a position within and managed under the EOPSS MA COMU. Links to both documents are noted below.

TERT Operations Standards/Policy Manual

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/here-124/download>

COMU Governance Policy and Procedure

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-communications-unit-ma-comu-governance/download?_ga=2.28229621.877829010.1671470957-147679252.1621596937>

#### ATTACHMENT E: SAMPLE LETTER

Official Agency Letterhead (required)

Date

Frank Pozniak

Executive Director

State 911 Department

151 Campanelli Drive, Suite A

Middleborough, MA 02346

Dear Executive Director Pozniak,

I am sending you this letter in my official capacity and in such capacity, I wish to submit the following employee for consideration on the Massachusetts Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT).

[Insert Employee’s name] is in good standing and meets all certification requirements. Submitted along with this letter of recommendation are the required proofs of certifications, COMU application and COMU home agency certification. In addition, I can confirm that [insert PSAP name] has completed and filed its emergency communications center analysis.

Please feel free to contact me [insert contact information] should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

1. <https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.nena.org/resource/resmgr/Standards/APCO-NENA_ANS_1_105_2-2015_T.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/disease/responderimmun.asp> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Replacement/Backfill: Shall be a certified telecommunicator. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)