

Massachusetts State 911 Department

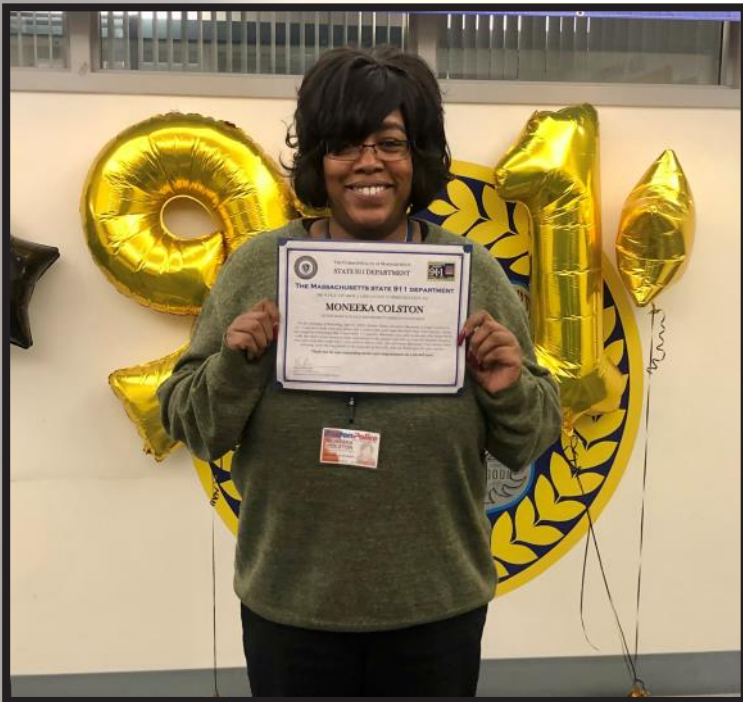
April 2022 Newsletter

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Issue 4

Volume 10

9-1-1 Spotlight: Call Taker Moneeka Colston Boston Police Department Operations Division



On the morning of Saturday, April 9, 2022, Boston Police call-taker Moneeka Colston received a 9-1-1 call for a male who had fallen into a void in the wall near the Back Bay Train Station. Using the mapping technology that is part NG9-1-1 system, Moneeka was able to provide first responders with the man's exact location while remaining on the phone with him for over 90 minutes keeping him calm until first responders were able to rescue him.

Job well done Moneeka.

Congratulations!

NEWS

Please be reminded, effective May 2, 2022 the APCO PST 5-day class will be held back in the classroom at State 911 Department training facilities.

Attention Massachusetts Dispatchers/Telecommunicators-please read! This is what you need to know about the critical role that you are responsible for in the testing process for MLTS!

Has this happened to you?

Scenario #1: Have you ever received a call from a hotel guest, needing the police, only to see the address and callback number for the front desk, not what room it came from?

Scenario #2: How about a call from the school for a medical emergency, only to see the address and callback number for the administration offices across town – not the elementary school where the call originated?

In both the scenarios above, the **best location information available may have been what the caller said**. But what if that caller was unable to speak and tell you where they were?

Imagine if the location information you received in the above scenarios could identify the exact hotel room and a callback number for the room, or the exact school or office/classroom the call came from, and a callback number?

How and why did that scenario happen?

Many of these larger facilities, such as hotels, office buildings, business complexes, municipal departments, schools, and college and university campuses, use **multi-line telephone systems (MLTS), traditional private branch exchanges (PBX) and Centrex phone systems**. These may be traditional phone technology or voice over IP (VoIP).

These phone systems are comprised on a primary phone control unit with multiple telephone extensions. The information associated with these phone systems are often linked to the location of that primary control unit. For many years, making just that centralized information available to 9-1-1 was enough. It no longer is.

Legislation for MLTS

Two statutes implemented by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in recent years– **Kari's Law and Ray Baum's Act** – focus is on assisting 9-1-1 callers, in these large facilities, with securing a direct call to 9-1-1 and having accurate location and callback information provided about the caller's whereabouts to telecommunicators.

In addition, the Commonwealth's version of Kari's Law 560 CMR 4.04(c) requires that all MLTS systems be capable of dialing 9-1-1 directly or have an instructional sticker attached to each device capable of making a 9-1-1 call to provide the caller assistance in dialing.

Each manufacturer, seller, installer, manager, or operator of a multi-line telephone system shall act in compliance with Kari's Law and Ray Baum's Act, and the Commonwealth's 560 CMR 4.04(c) to ensure that anyone, anywhere can reach emergency services.

What This Means to Telecommunicators?

As vendors and manufacturers work to become compliant, **test calls will be required with every PSAP**.

Every telecommunicator in the Commonwealth must be familiar with the test call process. We must help the MLTS ensure compliance by making sure the following requirements are met:

● **A more streamlined process for securing an outside line; Dial only 9-1-1 (no extra digits):**

All MLTS to allow 9-1-1 calls through without having to dial any additional digit, code, prefix, post-fix or "dial out" number, including any trunk-access code such as the digit 9. Allow for direct callback to the caller/telephone used to contact 9-1-1.

● **Provide a dispatchable location of the caller to the PSAP.**

Ensuring critical location data is provided with that call in accordance with 560 CMR 4.04(c). These can include anything to be quickly identifiable by first responders. This includes the following that must be transmitted with the call:

- If more than one building shares a common street address, then a building name or number.
- If any building has more than one floor, then a floor number or identifier.
- For large buildings, a suite name or number and/or a room name or number.
- If a building contains any residential suites and/or sleeping rooms, the suite name and/or room number.

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HOW CAN I HELP?

- Understand and be ready for incoming test calls. Review the MLTS Job Aid.
- Attend the two-hour information workshop.
- Spread the word about MLTS compliance.
- Answer and schedule test calls within your jurisdiction.

How Can I Help?

• **Understand and be ready for incoming test calls.** All telecommunicators should review and understand the test call process, using the MLTS job aid. It details the legislation, key terms to know, and the “to-dos” of the test call process. **The job aid is available for download on our website:** [mass.gov/e911](https://www.mass.gov/e911) under “Information for Call Centers” —> “View Upcoming E9-1-1 Classes.”

• **Attend the two-hour information workshop.** This online presentation is for [all telecommunicators and PSAP personnel](#). Available dates and times are on our website, and two hours of continuing education is available to attendees.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/view-e9-1-1-upcoming-classes>

• Topics of this workshop include what MLTS is and how it affects location information for 9-1-1 calls that route into our PSAPs; what needs to be done to remedy the MLTS issue and the assistance that we need from our PSAPs to make it successful; regulations both Federal and State; the PSAPs authority to conduct test calls with local businesses and the State 911 Department’s new MLTS compliance program.

• **Spread the word about MLTS compliance.**

Take the initiative to get some of your existing inaccuracies resolved by reaching out to MLTS organizations in your jurisdiction. Feel free to share our newsletter with town administrators and local officials, as well as private companies operating MLTS.

• **Answer and schedule test calls within your jurisdiction.**


Many vendors and manufacturers will be contacting your PSAP to schedule test calls. Make sure all your staff are prepared. They will generally provide a 15–30-minute window for test calls to occur. **Don’t hang-up on them!** These are essential to the success of MLTS. In addition, feel free to contact hotels, office buildings, business complexes, municipal departments, schools, and college and university campuses local schools, to **schedule test calls and ensure the BEST, most accurate information is made available.**

The image shows a 'Multi-line Telephone System (MLTS) Job Aid' document. It includes a 'Help Desk' contact (1-855-MA-9111, 1-855-626-4911) and a '911' logo. The main title is 'MLTS Test Call Answering Process for PSAPs'. It explains that usually, more than one test call will be placed and provides instructions for handling multiple buildings, floors, and sleeping rooms. It lists two main steps: 1. Direct Dial Confirmation (where the caller must identify themselves and their organization) and 2. Verification of Dispatchable Location Information (where the caller must provide address details). A 'Checklist of Key Questions to Ask When Verifying Location' is provided, covering address verification, building details, and facility type. The document also includes contact information for questions (MLTS911@mass.gov) and a version date (September 2021).

Resources to learn more:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/multi-line-telephone-system-mlts-regulations-information-and-resources>

<https://www.fcc.gov/mlts-911-requirements>




The State 911 Department continues its **virtual** workshops. Join us for these workshops to get a better understanding of eligibility under the different grant programs, the application process, and the reimbursement process.


●Applications Workshop – Thursday, May 12, 2022 at 10:30 a.m.

●Reimbursement Workshop – Wednesday, May 25, 2022 at 10:30 a.m.

Please note, each workshop runs approximately an hour and a half and is an opportunity to get your questions answered. Please e-mail 911DeptGrants@mass.gov to register or visit “Events” on the bottom of our website homepage to join.




As we spring into these final months of the fiscal year, now is the time to review your FY22 applications to ensure the list of certified personnel on the grants is complete and up to date. **Changes to these listings cannot be made after June 30, 2022. In addition, all goods and services must be received on or before June 30, 2022.** Please check in with your vendors to ensure they can meet this deadline.



PSAPs are reminded that reimbursements submitted under the Training Grant **must include** the following supporting documentation:

- Invoice;
- Proof of payment; and
- Certificates of Completion.



The FY 2023 guidelines and applications are available on our website (www.mass.gov/e911) as well as the annual certificate of compliance. **PSAPs are reminded that the annual certificate of compliance must be submitted and approved before awards under the FY 2023 grant program can be made.** PSAPs are encouraged to submit applications prior to this approval so the review process can begin but award will be held until such time as the annual certificate of compliance is approved.



If you have any questions, or require assistance—please contact Finance Director, Karen Robitaille at Karen.Robitaille@mass.gov.

Mysteries of Wireless

Tower location, number of antennas, topography (hills, trees, buildings), transmitter power, and carrier's network design and capacity affect how far a cell tower can be from a cell phone while still able to pick up its signal. In certain locations and circumstances, a carrier may set the transmitter to a lower power to ensure it doesn't interfere with other signals. You may have heard about 5G signals interfering with older aircraft altimeter indicator devices near airports. Carriers agreed to lower the power of their transmitters near airports. It is not uncommon for a tower to provide service up to 45 miles away. On a clear day, a phone in Quincy can be picked up by a cell tower in Salem! Cell antennas and towers are typically built in areas with high population densities. Some carriers choose to install cell sites so that their signals overlap which increases call volume capacity. If you find your phone doesn't have a signal, it could be because you're too far from a tower or because the phone signal has been decreased by hills, large buildings, or other structures. You may also lose your signal if a lot of people are attempting to use a cell tower at the same time which can lead to dropped calls, a common occurrence during catastrophic events. You could make a call at the same spot but on a different day of the week or the same day but different time and get a different call experience.



Communication Service Provider Updates

Intrado: In our December 2020 newsletter we reported that Intrado was unable to provide MSAG valid addresses causing misrouted calls. Unfortunately, the problem persists. Additionally, their MLTS services do not comply with provisions of Ray Baum's act either. We have made several attempts to get updates on their remediation activities to no avail. We continue to reach out to Intrado for updates.

Telematics:

Additionally, some Telematics calls are not displaying all the ALI due to an unprogrammed position source.

Vonage and Out of State Area Codes in ANIs: Vonage sometime uses an out of state ANI for calls that originate in Massachusetts 9-1-1 callers that do not have an assigned phone number are assigned a temporary ANI. This ANI allows for the caller to be called back directly but may not have a Mass area code. The company ID for Vonage are VNAGE and VNBS.

Update...

Updates from MassEDP

On Wednesday, March 23, 2022, Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program (MassEDP) Field Service Advisors (FSAs) Chris Murphy and Chris Plant presented a virtual in-service training for over 130 staff members from the Elder Services of Worcester Area (ESWA). Both spent the morning educating the staff members on the Silent Call Procedure, Text-to-911, MassEDP's program requirements, the application process, and the equipment offered. In addition, the staff members were educated about the Disability Indicator (DI) Program offered in Massachusetts.

If you, or your agency are interested in a MassEDP representative joining you for either an in-person, or a virtual upcoming outreach event, please email Katelyn Sylvia at

Katelyn.A.Sylvia@mass.gov.

MassEDP is excited to share that effective May 2, 2022 normal Program operations will resume. This includes: FSAs visiting clients homes to assist with equipment drop off/pick up, equipment installation, and equipment troubleshooting. If you are interested in learning more about the Program's application process, equipment that is available, or are interested in receiving public education MassEDP materials via mail, please email Program Manager Grant Harrison at

Grant.Harrison@mass.gov.

The image shows a printed application form titled "Application Part 1 - Applicant's Personal Information". The form includes fields for Name, Address, City, State, Zip Code, Home Telephone Number, Email, and Daytime Telephone Number. It also has checkboxes for "Person authorized to act on your behalf (optional)" and "Preferred Contact Method: Phone [] Email []". There are sections for "MCDHH" (Deaf, Vision, Motion, Hand off-hearing, Speech, Cognitive) and "MCB" (Legally Blind, Deaf). The form is signed by the applicant and dated. A small card for "Specialized Telephones for People with Disabilities" is also visible, showing the MassEDP logo and contact information: "Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program, 151 Campanelli Drive, Suite A, Middleborough, MA 02346, 800-300-5658 Voice/TTY".

MassEDP Phone Spotlight ~ iPhone XR

Features

- Wireless device, black in color
- 64GB memory
- 6.1' diagonal all-screen LCD multi-touch display
- Liquid retina HD display
- Face ID
- Long lasting battery
- Wireless Charging Capability
- Applications based on the applicant's disability

MassEDP is pleased to announce that we now offer the iPhone XR as the Program's first ever wireless device choice for our clients. The cell phone is pre-programmed with applications based on the applicant's disability.

Please note, MassEDP DOES NOT provide the cellular data plan.

