

Massachusetts State 911 Department August 2022 Newsletter



Issue 8

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9-1-1 Spotlight: Jordan Dunham

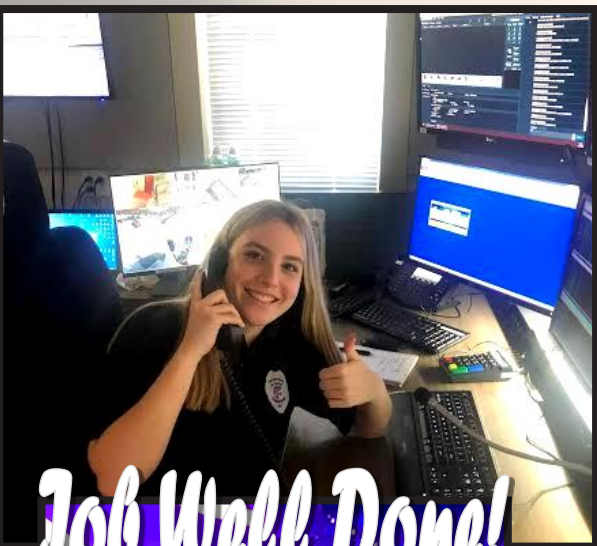
Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School Wilbraham Regional Emergency Communications Center (WRECC)

In June of this year, Jordan Dunham graduated from the Criminal Justice Program at Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School in Northampton, MA (SVAHS). During her senior year, as part of a newfound partnership between the Massachusetts State 911 Department and SVAHS, Jordan became a certified 9-1-1 telecommunicator by successfully completing the APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator 5-day course and the 2-day NG9-1-1 equipment's certifications. Both of which are required to become employed as telecommunicator in Massachusetts.

After graduating from SVAHS and participating in a Massachusetts level competition, Jordan travelled to Atlanta, GA where she won a National SkillsUSA Gold Medal in Criminal Justice. SkillsUSA is a national nonprofit organization in which career and technical competitions highlight “the best students in the world” ([skillsusa.org](https://www.skillsusa.org)). In the Criminal Justice competition, “Contestants are scored on their knowledge and application of U.S. Constitutional Law, written and verbal communications skills, and their ability to handle an entry-level law enforcement position” ([skillsusa.org](https://www.skillsusa.org)).

Jordan and the judges attributed part of her victory to her State 911 Department certifications and training as well as her time spent at the WRECC where she interned and now holds a part-time position.

Jordan said her experience with WRECC helped her greatly at the National Competition. She said, “my dispatching experiences enabled me to have a more in-depth understanding in the Skills USA competition scenarios, such as asking for more units and knowing what information I needed to relay to dispatch”. “The internship also taught me important questions to ask when taking calls, which helped me when questioning subjects during the scenarios and collecting the primary or crucial information. The Criminal Justice Program has been a wonderful educational experience and the internship with WRECC gave me the opportunity to gain additional hands-on experience”.



Massachusetts TERT Program Being Developed and Actively Recruiting

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) and State 911 Department are pleased to announce the implementation of Massachusetts Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) program. This program is being developed in partnership with the Statewide Office of Public Safety Interoperability (SIEC), and the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association (MassNENA).

WHAT IS TERT?

- The MA TERT program is a team of certified and credentialed public safety telecommunicators who respond, relieve, assist and/or augment PSAPs affected by manmade or natural disasters.
- A TERT dispatcher is specially trained to provide mutual aid response in the aftermath of disasters and other special circumstances.
- A TERT dispatcher is different than an INTD (Incident Tactical Dispatcher). TERT teams typically respond to PSAP/ECC deployments when an agency needs a team due to a disaster or unusual occurrence. A tactical or incident dispatch team is typically a field deployment.
- The purpose of TERT is to provide relief to personnel at a PSAP or communications center that has experienced a significant incident to augment the staffing of that center. TERT members can respond to a PSAP's building, an EOC, Mobile Command Post, or a backup center.

HOW WILL THIS WORK?

- The MA program operates under the authority of EOPSS and the State 911 Department. TERT is a part of the Communications Unit Program (COMU), which is overseen by the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC).
- TERT members are required to have a signed letter from the agency director acknowledging/approving participation in the TERT program, complete a TERT application, provide proof of required certifications and complete a COMU application. The member's home agency is responsible and liable for the member.
- Once members are credentialed, they will be assigned to a team. Teams will be Massachusetts geographic by region: Northeast, Central, Southeast, and West
- The State 911 Department will enter into a three (3) year contract with the PSAP who employs the TERT team member to provide funding for deployments, incidental expenses and other approved costs, with an option for the TERT team member to opt out at anytime during that period. Costs will be reimbursed by the State 911 Department.

WHEN WOULD DEPLOYMENTS HAPPEN?

- The TERT program's mission is to support PSAPs needing assistance. TERT deployments occur when agencies are stretched beyond their capabilities or are experiencing an unprecedented event. The TERT program helps provide much-needed relief to dispatchers.
- TERT can be enacted for instances including but not limited to:
 - ⇒Natural disasters such as hurricanes, large wildfires, tornados.
 - ⇒Coverage for line of duty deaths.
 - ⇒Augment staffing due to widespread illness in the center.
 - ⇒Staff relief after major events, including for CISM.



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WHO CAN JOIN TERT?

•Qualifications Needed:

- Minimum of 3 years' experience in dispatch operations
- Have a signed letter from agency director acknowledging/approving participation in TERT on file with the TERT State Coordinator (Renewed by January 1 of even-numbered years)
- Basic Public Safety Telecommunications Class that lasts 40 hours
- Massachusetts E911 course and current certification (listed on the agency's certificate of compliance)
- Current CPR certification

•Certifications Needed:

- 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)

•TERT Team Leader Certifications:

Candidates for TERT Team Leader must have completed the following courses in addition to that of a TERT member:

- ICS-300, Intermediate Incident Command System (ICS) for Expanding Incidents.
- ICS-400: Advanced ICS Command and General Staff-Complex Incidents
- ICS-1200: TERT Team Leader Course

WHAT IS THE COMMITMENT OF A TERT MEMBER?

- Members are expected to attend virtual and in-person continuing education training regularly and must respond to communications routinely. The level of demand for callouts is dependent on the need. Once activated on a call out, the member is expected to act professionally, representing the TERT program and their home agency.

HOW DO I ASK MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM?

- Contact the MA TERT State Coordinator Katrina Shamshak at MA.TERT@mass.gov.

HOW DO I JOIN?

- Complete an application!
- See www.mass.gov/service-details/tert-application for an application!

REMINDER

The 53rd Public Safety Communications Academy is being held October 3—November 4, 2022 in Maynard, MA! Visit www.mass.gov/service-details/view-e9-1-1-upcoming-classes for an academy application!



Signatures: PSAPs are reminded original (not stamps or facsimile) signatures are required on applications and reimbursement requests.



In addition, please note only authorized signatories named on the grant application can sign reimbursement requests. Please review those signatures prior to submitting requests to avoid delays in payment. Should a PSAP experience changes in personnel that impact the FY 2022 authorized signatory list, the municipal official can sign the requests. FY 2023 authorized signature listings can be updated through June 30, 2023. Please e-mail 911Deptgrants@mass.gov for instructions and required forms.



The FY 2022 grant cycle closed on Thursday, June 30, 2022. As the contracts are no longer active, PSAPs are unable to make changes to their FY 2022 grant.



The FY 2023 grant cycle is well underway. Grant guidelines and applications can be found on our website www.mass.gov/e911. **Apply Today!!**



Workshops: To register, email 911DeptGrants@mass.gov to register. Please note, you can also join through “Events” noted on our website.

- **Application workshops** are hosted on the third Monday of the month.
- **Reimbursement workshops** are hosted on the third Wednesday of the month.

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



Generator Test

We're coming up on power outage season. Please be sure to test your generator's functionality under **full load** to ensure it supplies power to the 9-1-1 equipment as well as the PSAP. This requires cutting street power and thus using the generator exclusively. This test not only verifies the proper sizing of the generator, it also validates the proper operation of the transfer switch. Following these recommendations helps to ensure your PSAP's operation is not affected when utility power is lost. Please note that the 9-1-1 equipment is protected by a UPS that supplies power for minimum of 30 minutes. Should the generator fail to supply power to the 9-1-1 equipment, Comtech will route your calls to your alternate PSAP. Please notify the Help Desk before doing this test so that they're ready to assist should the need arise.



Protect your PSAP from Ransomware

The Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency has published a poster explaining many ways bad actors attack PSAPs. PSAPs are high value targets because of their role in public safety. You may download the poster at <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/next-generation-911>.

Highway Exit Names

So, we all know that each exit has a number, like Exit 23. Did you know each "ramp" has a name, they are simple and provide some clarity on the direction of the ramp...

- RAMP "Road A" <Direction> To "Road B" <Direction>
- RAMP I95NB To I495WB RAMP I95NB To RT1NB
- RAMP I90WB To Memorial Drive or for the on-ramp RAMP Memorial Drive To I90EB

Instances where there is both a Numerical and Name, the most commonly used name will be used (i.e., I495 NOT Blue Hill Memorial Parkway).



From AT&T: In accordance with a 2019 FCC Order, AT&T is required to send more accurate device location including altitude (i.e., Z-Axis) information for text messages to 9-1-1. AT&T delivers Z-Axis and altitude uncertainty data when it is provided by the handset. However, AT&T has learned that various ESINets, text control centers (TCCs) and 9-1-1 text/call-handling systems were not able to display this information properly or were filtering out location and/or altitude information entirely. As a workaround solution while these ESINets, TCCs, and 9-1-1 call-handling solutions come into compliance with the appropriate industry standards, Intrado (with concurrence from AT&T) is inserting an additional system generated text message that will contain all the detailed location information. This system generated text message will be inserted immediately after the first text message from the 9-1-1 text caller for all AT&T text calls that have altitude information.



State 911 Department Summer Interns

Robert Lee, Sarah Cahill, & Christopher Flynn,

On Friday, August 26, 2022, Sarah and Robert completed their last day of internship at the State 911 Department; Chris will be with us until the end of the year. The day was celebrated with pizza and cupcakes. **THANK YOU** Sarah, Chris, and Robert for all of your help and contributions to the Department throughout the summer months. On behalf of Executive Director Frank Pozniak and all of the State 911 Staff we wish you all well in all of your future endeavors. Stay in touch and be well!



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www.mass.gov/e911



OUTREACH



On Friday, August 5, 2022, State 911 Department staff along with our Mobile PSAP unit attended the Carver National Night Out 2022 event. Department staff spend the evening educating the event's attendees on the Silent Call Procedure, Text-to-911, MassEDP, and providing tours of our Mobile PSAP unit. Questions were answered and connections were made. Thank you to Dispatcher Mike Shaw and the Carver Police Department for inviting us to attend your event. A fun time was had by all!

Kingston National Night Out

On Tuesday, August 2, 2022 State 911 Department Public Education Coordinator Katie Sylvia and MassEDP Field Service Advisor Melanie DaRosa celebrated National Night Out 2022 and participated in the very well attended event put on by the Kingston Police Department.



The evening began with an impressive parade made up of public safety vehicles from several nearby agencies. Throughout the night, attendees had the opportunity to learn about the Silent Call Procedure, Text-to-911, and MassEDP. Katie and Melanie answered questions and provided a number of educational handouts.



Thank you to the Kingston Police Department for inviting us to attend your event!

Whitman Council on Aging (COA)

On Tuesday, August 9, 2022, the Whitman COA hosted MassEDP Field Service Advisor, Chris Plant for an outreach presentation. During the presentation Chris educated the fifteen attendees on the equipment MassEDP has to offer, the Program's requirements, the application process, the Silent Call Procedure, and Text-to-911. The seniors in attendance were very excited to learn about the Program and showed high interest in the Program's first ever wireless device. The COA staff took notes and were eager to share it with members of their center that could not attend. Thank you to the Whitman COA for inviting us to your center!



Linden Ponds Low Vision Group

On Tuesday, July 26, 2022, Linden Ponds Low Vision Group located in Hingham, Massachusetts hosted MassEDP for an outreach event presentation. Field Service Advisor Chris Plant attended the center and presented to a group of fifteen low vision residents. The event's attendees were excited to learn about the inclusion of wireless devices in the Program. Thank you to Linden Ponds for having us!



Baystate Place — Elderly Housing Complex

On Thursday, August 18, 2022, MassEDP Field Service Advisor Marguerite Szczawinski attended an outreach presentation at the elderly housing complex Baystate Place located in Springfield, Massachusetts.



Marguerite educated the event's twenty attendees on MassEDP as well as Text-to-911. In addition, Marguerite provided the building staff with educational handouts to be given to those residents who were not able to attend. Thank you Baystate Place!

The Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program (MassEDP) provides adaptive telephone equipment to people who have difficulty using a landline or wireless telephone due to issues such as hearing loss or vision loss. The telephones that are part of the Program can assist with providing a more clear, independent phone communication and the ability to contact 9-1-1 in the event of an emergency. The specialized telephone equipment is offered to people with a permanent disability for little or no cost, depending on income level.

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 'MassEDP Application Part 1 - Applicant's Personal Information' form. The form includes fields for Applicant's Name, Home Address, City, State, Zip Code, Home Telephone Number, Email, and Daytime Telephone Number. It also has checkboxes for 'Preferred Contact Method' (Phone, Email) and 'Person authorized to act on your behalf (optional)'. There are sections for 'Applicant's Signature' and 'For Commission Use Only' with checkboxes for 'MCDRH' (Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Speech, Vision, Hearing, Deafblind, Other) and 'MCB' (Legally Blind, Other). A brochure titled 'MassEDP Specialized Telephones for People with Disabilities' is also visible, showing the program's logo and contact information.

In addition, **MassEDP would like to remind you that Program participation at in-person outreach events have resumed.** 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.

Meet our MassEDP Field Service Advisors

A MassEDP Field Service Advisor (FSA) is a technician that travels to an applicants' home to install or troubleshoot the adaptive telephone equipment that was provided to an applicant of the Mass EDP Program. FSAs educate our Massachusetts residents at outreach events that promote the Mass EDP program throughout the Commonwealth. There are five FSAs in our Program.

Meet them below!



Marguerite Szczawinski



Melanie DaRosa



Chris Plant



Chris Murphy



Glen Schultz

