

Massachusetts State 911 Department

May 2024 Newsletter



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9-1-1 Spotlight Supervisor Tammy Piechota Palmer Public Safety



The State 911 Department is saddened by the news that long-time Palmer Police Department Dispatcher Tammy Piechota recently passed away. Tammy served Palmer as a front-line dispatcher for nearly 20 years before being promoted to Administrative Assistant to the Palmer Chief of Police, totaling 39 years of tireless dedication to the service of her town. For that, we spotlight her legacy and impressive career with 9-1-1. We send our most sincere sympathy to her family and friends during this very difficult time.

~ Rest in Peace Ma'am ~
We've got the watch from here.



Changes to the State 911 Department Approved List

Effective July 1, 2024, two of the required sixteen (16) hours of continuing education training, **MUST be on the topic of Behavioral Health**. We have created a new column for the already approved Behavioral Health Courses to make them easier to find. The column is located towards the bottom of the approved list located on our website at www.mass.gov/e911 and is titled “Behavioral Health Approved Courses”. The courses listed in this section are approved to fulfill the 2-hour behavioral health educational requirement (even if class hours are more than 2 hours). The approved list is updated frequently.

NOTE: We have moved several of the already approved Behavioral Health Courses down to the new column. If you see a course that you feel should be reclassified to this section, please email Monna.Wallace@mass.gov with the course information and request to the section change.

To get a course approved that is not yet on the list, please email 911DeptGrants@mass.gov with all of the course information requesting approval.

It's Compliance Time Again!

The FY2024 Annual Certification of Compliance Form is now available on our website at www.mass.gov/e911 under “Information for Call Centers” - “FY2024 Annual Certification of Compliance Forms.”

The Form is Due on or before July 31, 2024. As soon as your PSAP has completed all of the compliance requirements, submit your form to expedite processing.



REMINDERS:

- Annual Certification of Compliance Forms are **NO LONGER** accepted electronically.
- Proof of CPR and Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) **must be included with the FY 2024 submissions for PSAPs that are providing EMD in-house and also for all certified EMD resources.**
- For PSAPs who provide EMD, **a detailed explanation and SAMPLE of documents used for EMD quality assurance must be included.**

For questions about the FY2024 Annual Certification of Compliance process, email Monna.Wallace@mass.gov.

Community Outreach Events

Do you have an upcoming outreach event in your community? The State 911 Department and its MassEDP team would love to join forces with you!

For more information or to schedule an outreach event, please contact State 911 Department Public Education Coordinator, **Erica Adams** by email at Erica.L.Adams@mass.gov





As a friendly reminder, all training inquiries including, but not limited to class applications, log in requests, and general questions, should be emailed to 911training@mass.gov.



Spotlight Your Dispatchers!

Do you have a dispatcher who has gone above and beyond? One that was able to save a life? We want to feature their story! Each month our newsletter highlights the work that telecommunicators do every day. We want to spotlight a job well done, and also recognize important events such as dispatcher retirements or other major events. The newsletter also highlights our Lifesaver Award that is given to telecommunicators that successfully saved a life. If submitting for our Lifesaver Award and EMD procedures are applicable, please include a recording with your submission.

All submissions can be sent to Public Education Coordinator,
Erica Adams at Erica.L.Adams@mass.gov



Attention All 9-1-1 Telecommunicators

USB ports located within the NG9-1-1 equipment present a security risk or damage to the 9-1-1 system if outside devices such as cellphone chargers and other devices are plugged into them. Telecommunicators staffing NG9-1-1 positions **are strictly prohibited** from plugging outside devices into the USB ports located within each 9-1-1 position.

57th Public Safety Communications Academy

The 57th Public Safety Communications Academy is underway! Students reported to our Milford location on May 6, 2024, and will spend the next five weeks learning and training for their new careers. Students have been able to learn the NG9-1-1 system and have had the opportunity to take the APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator course. Academy students gain hands on experience throughout the program. Recently, Sergeant Rodriguez of the Massachusetts State Police Special Emergency Response Team (SERT) team came into the academy to teach the class about the SERT team and how they attempt to locate missing persons. He educated the students on the unseen side of search and rescue, and the role a dispatcher would have should a situation arise. Thank you to Sergeant Rodriguez for educating our future dispatchers!



9-1-1 Spotlight: Communications Officer Liam O'Malley Southeastern Massachusetts Regional 911



On April 8, 2024, Communications Officer (CO) Liam O'Malley took a call reporting a man had fallen outside his home and was having difficulty breathing. CO O'Malley quickly recognized that the patient was in critical condition, unconscious, and breathing ineffectively. The call was dispatched, and CO O'Malley began giving lifesaving CPR instructions. CO O'Malley took immediate action directing the bystanders to act and ensuring high quality compressions were being delivered. This collective effort played a crucial role in the swift response that ultimately saved the man's life. Great job CO O'Malley!

Job Well Done!





Maybe it seems to be helpful but modifying payroll documents in an attempt to clarify costs being requested more often than not causes issues with the reconciliation of expenses. Please be sure to submit unaltered documentation when submitting for reimbursement under the grant program. Should Department staff have a question or need clarification when reconciling they will reach out.



Maybe assistance is needed with grant applications or preparing reimbursements. Sign-up for our next application workshop (June 17) and/or the reimbursement workshop (June 26). All workshops are virtual and begin at 11:00 am. Workshops run approximately an hour and a half. E-mail 911DeptGrants@mass.gov to sign up.



Maybe you haven't heard about what's new for the FY 2025 grant cycle.

- Elimination of signatures on budget modifications and reimbursements.
- Requirement for a minimum of 2 hours of Behavioral Health Crisis training.
- Reimbursement of mileage under the training grant has been reintroduced.
- Electronic submission of reimbursements via Commbuys is allowed.



The State 911 Department is pleased to announce the FY25 Recipients of the PSAP Leadership Scholarship Program. This year's winners are:

Paul Bowler – Holbrook Regional
Chris Carleton - Northboro
Nicholas Goyette - SEMRECC
Jeffrey Hasting – WestCOMM
Dorothy Mucciaronne – Westwood

Congratulations to all of this year's recipients!

The NG9-1-1 system is incredibly redundant. The system has many automatic protections to prevent a call from not being delivered to a PSAP. Network failures that occur during a call have other protections to ensure that the caller is not hung up on. The acceptance testing that is done for every major change has dozens of tests in order to prove there is no single point of failure. Each tests a different point in the call flow.

It is important to note that PSAP connectivity has nothing to do with the ability of the system to ingress calls. Calls are ingressed into the NG9-1-1 system at the data centers not the PSAP. As above, there is redundancy between the Communication Service Providers and the Massachusetts three data centers aggregation points.

The only way for a PSAP to know the entire system's status would be to call the help desk. We encourage you to do so, as we will be implementing a new phone message that will help relay the status of the system if it is having problems.

What does the Red Screen actually mean?

When an answering position receives a red screen it indicates that the Motorola Callworks (MCW) software has lost connectivity. The system is set to trigger the red screen even if the loss of connectivity is temporary. The physical phone and Response Assist software may not have lost connectivity even though the MCW has. In many situations, the phone will still ring and when answered the map will still plot the caller's location. Testing has shown that reconnecting by logging in restores full functionality of MCW for the dispatcher.

Restore your position...

MCW can be reconnected in many cases by logging back in. It is best practice to close the Firefox browser, then log back in first using the primary icon. Note, you should only use the backup icon if and when the primary icon does not connect. The primary icon is the preferred icon to be used.

If that doesn't work...

Move to another available position. If no positions are able to connect, the NG9-1-1 system will automatically send your calls to the alternate PSAP. It is important to work out plans for your operation before you have a failure.



Stevens Senior Housing - Ludlow, MA



On Monday, April 22, 2024, Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program (MassEDP) Field Service Advisor (FSA) Marguerite Szczawinski attended an outreach event at Stevens Senior Housing located in Ludlow.

Marguerite educated the event attendees on MassEDP's available equipment, application process, and requirements. An afternoon well spent.

Thank you for having us!



Taunton Senior Safety Summit - Taunton, MA

On Tuesday, April 30, 2024, FSA Chris Plant, Public Education Coordinator Erica Adams, and State 911 Department Intern Myesha Auguste attended the Taunton Senior Safety Summit held at the Taunton Council on Aging (COA). Seniors learned about the adaptive telephones available through MassEDP and how they could qualify for one. Seniors were also educated on the Silent Call Procedure and Text-to-911. Thank you to the staff at the Taunton COA for hosting this event!



Hubert Place - South Hadley, MA



On Thursday, April 25, 2024, MassEDP FSA Marguerite Szczawinski visited Hubert Place located in South Hadley where she set up an information table on MassEDP and distributed applications to the residents. Thank you to Hubert Place for having us!



Holyoke Senior Center - Holyoke, MA

On Wednesday, May 15, 2024, MassEDP FSA Marguerite Szczawinski spent the afternoon at the Skyview Drive Apartments in Springfield. Marguerite set up an information table, and was able to educate the seniors on MassEDP, the Silent Call Procedure, and Text-to-911. She was able to give out over 50 applications to the residents. Marguerite worked with Skyview's Resident Service Coordinator Ashley Betancourt, who was able to serve as a translator for the residents. Thank you for having us at your facility!



Eastham Annual Health, Wellness, and Safety Fair - Eastham, MA

On Friday, May 10, 2024, MassEDP Manager Grant Harrison and Intern Myesha Auguste traveled to the Eastham Senior Center for their annual Health, Wellness and Safety Fair. While there, Grant and Myesha set up an informational table and were able to distribute material, applications, and educate the seniors on MassEDP, and 9-1-1 procedures including the Silent Call Procedure, and Text to 9-1-1. Thank you to the Eastham Senior Center for inviting us to this event. We look forward to attending again next year!



Marshfield Health Fair - Marshfield, MA



On Tuesday, May 14, 2024, MassEDP field Service Advisor Chris Plant, Public Education Coordinator Erica Adams, and Intern Myesha Auguste attended the Marshfield Health Fair. This fair is put on annually by the Marshfield Senior Center, and brings in vendors to educate the seniors on resources available to help them in their daily lives. The State 911 Department team educated the Marshfield seniors on MassEDP, the Silent Call Procedure, and Text-to-911. The team also got to chat with Plymouth County District Attorney Tim Cruz about MassEDP. Thank you to the Marshfield Senior Center for hosting this event, and inviting us to join. A number of connections were made, and a great day was had by all!

Barre/Hardwick Senior Center Luncheon, Barre MA

On Friday, May 17, 2024, MassEDP FSA Chris Plant, Public Education Coordinator Erica Adams, and State 911 Department Intern Chris Flynn attended the Barre/ Hardwick Senior Center Luncheon. This event was put on by the Worcester County District Attorney and the Barre/Hardwick COA. The State 911 Department team talked to the seniors about MassEDP, the different types of phones available, and handed out applications. Seniors were also educated on the Silent Call Procedure, and Text-to-911. It was a wonderful afternoon!

