

Massachusetts State 911 Department September 2024 Newsletter



Issue 9

Volume 12

9-1-1 Spotlight Dispatchers Jennifer Bein & Juliette Berryman Westfield Regional Public Safety



Pictured from Left to Right: Juliette Berryman & Jennifer Bein

On Tuesday September 10, 2024 just after 9:00 PM Dispatcher Jennifer Bein answered a call for an imminent delivery of a baby. Within the short six minute 9-1-1 call, Dispatcher Bein walked the caller through delivery steps using emergency medical dispatch (EMD) flawlessly. While dispatcher Bein was giving EMD instructions, Dispatcher Juliette Berryman dispatched the Westfield Fire Department, and kept them updated on what was going on. A healthy baby boy was born, and could be heard crying before the paramedics and firefighters arrived. Coincidentally, Mom was a Southwick Police Officer and the paramedic who treated and transported the baby is the son of a Westfield Regional Public Safety Dispatcher! Great work Dispatchers Bein and Berryman, your unwavering teamwork aided in a safe delivery for Mom and baby!

Updates from our Programs Division

State 911 Department Instructors Recognized



Left to Right: Executive Director Frank Pozniak, Undersecretary of Forensic Science and Technology Kerry Collins, Training Specialists Kevin Lewis, Anthony Newell, Mary Martineau, Tim Buckley, Director of Programs Monna Wallace.

On Thursday September 19, 2024 State 911 Department Training Specialists Anthony Newell, Mary Martineau, and Kevin Lewis received commendations from the Governor's Office at the September State 911 Commission Meeting for their lifesaving efforts when a coworker suffered a medical emergency. Each of them responded to this emergency without hesitation, and worked cohesively to provide the best outcome for their coworker. We would like to applaud their composure and confidence in this situation. We are so thankful to have each one of them on our team!



IMPORTANT

Critical Information on the New 9-1-1 Backup System: viiz



The State 911 Department and Comtech, the Department's Next Generation 911 (NG911) service provider, have deployed a "fail over mechanism" that would be in effect if there is another catastrophic failure as the Commonwealth experienced on June 18, 2024. A partnership has been formed amongst the Department, Comtech and a professional call center company called "viiz". Viiz offers an emergency call center solution for public safety answering points (PSAPs), delivering the support and assistance necessary to navigate through even the most challenging situations.

Should the need arise, citizens and visitors of the Commonwealth will still dial 9-1-1 to report an emergency and the process will be seamless to the 9-1-1 caller. If a call fails to route within the Massachusetts NG911 infrastructure, **it will be re-routed outside of the NG911 system to a viiz call center.** It will be answered by an Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) certified 9-1-1 call taker, assessed for callback and location information, as well as the nature of the call, and **transferred to the appropriate Massachusetts PSAP's business lines by viiz.** Viiz will pass along ANI information to the PSAP's business lines **when caller ID is available.**

The State 911 Department has created a job aid that highlights the call handling procedure and important items to know about viiz. The job aid will be available on the State 911 Department's website under "Information for Call Centers". An electronic copy will also be sent through the PSAP distribution list. Training on for this process will be incorporated into the Two-Day Equipment and NG911 Refresher classes beginning in early October 2024.

Please contact Monna Wallace at monna.wallace@mass.gov with any questions.

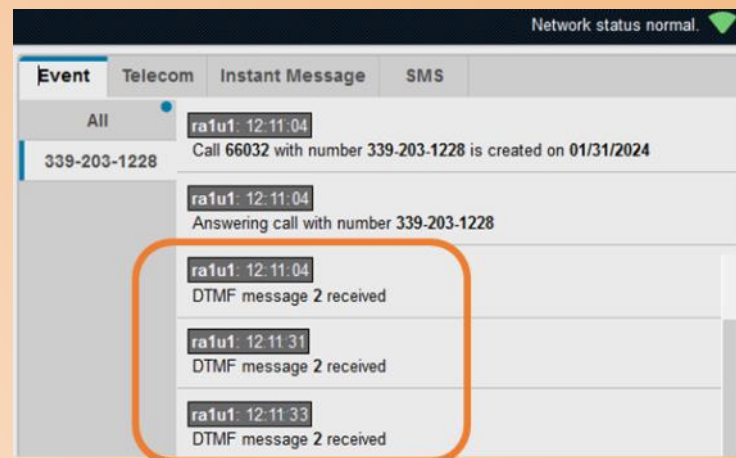
Are you Following the Silent Call Procedure?

When an open line 9-1-1 call is received by a PSAP and it does not result in any productive two-way communication between the caller and telecommunicator, it is a Silent Call.

As a reminder, **ALL SILENT CALLS MUST BE checked for TTY as part of the Silent Call Procedure.**

The State 911 Department has been working diligently to educate the public on the Silent Call Procedure, and how they are able to utilize this life saving feature. The public is aware that if they are unable to communicate the emergency verbally for any reason, the need for help can be indicated by pressing digits on the telephone's keypad (landline or cell phone) once the call is answered. Please ensure that all Telecommunicators are confident in executing the Silent Call Procedure should the need arise. Telecommunicators should be sure to slow down and speak clearly while on the line.

Telecommunicators should ALWAYS check and **continuously monitor the EVENT tab** of CallWorks' CallStation application for a numeric response, as pictured to the right. **When received, the Dual Tone Multi-Frequency (DTMF) will appear in the Event log showing with the digit pressed.** **Important:** There is **NO AUDIBLE SOUNDS HEARD** when any digits are pressed on the phone and DTMF is used.



Remember:

If a caller is **whispering, speaking unintelligibly or making sounds in an attempt to verbally communicate the Silent Call Procedure should be immediately initiated.** This potentially may be due to a physical disability, medical emergency or condition, or when they are in fear or in danger.

You can request the caller **press 1, 2, or 3 immediately to communicate with DTMF.** The **EVENT tab** of the CallStation application will display the numeric response. Questions can then be asked verbally to the caller in a YES/NO format. For example: **"I understand you need fire? Press 4 for YES. Press 5 for NO."**

An emergency response can be initiated to the best-known location available for the call and the telecommunicator can remain on the line to continue attempts to communicate, per local procedures.

If you would like a digital copy of the most recent job aids which includes the Silent Call Procedure for your PSAP, please email 911training@mass.gov.

Silent Call Procedure

All silent calls **MUST BE** checked for TTY, following steps 1 and 2 of the Silent Call Procedure.

1. Advise the caller to **"Stay on the line while I check for TTY. Do not hang up."**
2. From the Event tab, select the **TTY Challenge button**. A greeting message is sent. (No tweedle is heard over the Polycom phone).



3. If no response is received, verbally advise caller:
 - "If you need POLICE, press 1."
 - "If you need FIRE, press 2."
 - "If you need AMBULANCE, press 3."
4. Click the **Event tab** and monitor the Events Log for any digits (DTMF) being sent by caller.



5. If the caller responds, continue to ask questions in a YES/NO format. **After each question, tell the caller to "Press 4 for YES" or "Press 5 for NO".**
6. If there is still no response from the caller, initiate response of emergency services and remain on the line per local procedures.

Friendly Reminder About Reporting issues with “Interpreter Services”

If a PSAP experiences long wait times when using interpreter services or other issues with the Cyracom service, please email monna.wallace@mass.gov. In the email please provide the name of your PSAP, the language that was needed, specifics of the issue, the date and time of the request and attach a copy of the recording.

If you experience an issue with the Cyracom transfer button or the inability to connect to Cyracom, contact the COMTEC Help Desk to report the issue.

All questions regarding interpreter services can be sent to Director of Programs Monna Wallace at monna.wallace@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

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www.mass.gov/e911





30 DAYS

What is the requirement for PSAPs to submit reimbursements under the State 911 Grant Programs?

Grant guidelines state "Reimbursement requests should be submitted to the Department within thirty (30) days of the date on which the cost is incurred."

DECEMBER 30, 2024

What is the application deadline for the FY 2025 Grant Programs?

Don't miss out. Apply today!

THREE BUSINESS DAYS

What is the number of days a PSAP has to respond to an inquiry from the State 911 Department regarding deficiencies with its reimbursement request?

Failure to respond with the needed documentation/clarification within three business days will result in a reduction on or a return of the reimbursement.

591 AND 2,782

What is the number of applications and reimbursements processed under the FY 2024 grant programs?

NOT A MISTAKE

What if the signature line is missing from the FY25 Reimbursement forms?

FY25 reimbursements and budget modifications do not require a signature from an authorized signatory. PSAPs are still required to mail in reimbursements and budget modifications.

IT'S VIRTUAL & FREE

What is the State 911 Department workshops?

The State 911 Department hosts monthly workshops on its application and reimbursement processes. Application Workshops are hosted virtually on the third Monday of each month and the Reimbursement Workshops are hosted virtually on the third Wednesday of each month.

Updates from our Systems Division

Did you know house/building numbers are required to be posted?

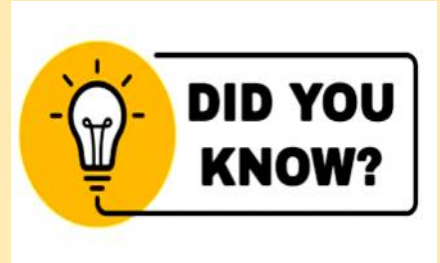
Massachusetts General Laws C. 148, S. 59. specifies that every building in the state must have clearly visible address numbers posted.

“Section 59. Every building in the commonwealth, including, but not limited to, dwellings, apartment buildings, condominiums, and business establishments shall have affixed thereto a number representing the address of such building. Said number shall be of a nature and size and shall be situated on the building so that, to the extent practicable, it is visible from the nearest street or road providing vehicular access to such building.

The State 911 Department shall cause such number and the address of such building to be entered into the electronic data base for use in enhanced 9-1-1 service as defined in section eighteen A of chapter six A.”

System Survey

A survey will be emailed to all PSAP Supervisors. Please take the time to participate in this important process.



Updates from MassEDP

Did you know the Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program offers the iPhone 13?

Features

- *Wireless device—black in color*
- *Otter Box protective case*
- *128 GB Memory*
- *6.1’ diagonal all-screen LCD multi-touch display*
- *Face ID unlocking*
- *Siri-voice commands*
- *Charging block as well as wireless capabilities*



*Please note, MassEDP **DOES NOT** provide the cellular service plan.*





State 911 Department Public Education Coordinator Erica Adams, Program Coordinator Chris Flynn, and Equipment Distribution Program (EDP) Field Service Advisor Chris Plant attended Hingham National Night Out and Bourne National Night Out. These events gave people the opportunity to learn more about the Silent Call Procedure and Text-to-911. It also gave the attendees the opportunity to explore the Mobile PSAP, and learn about the 9-1-1 system. Both of these events were great, and we look forward to attending again next year!



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

A Deep Dive into NENA's CMCP class

The Center Manager Certification Program (CMCP) was more than just a class; it was an immersive journey into the intricacies of 9-1-1 leadership. From the moment participants stepped into the classroom, they were engaged in thought-provoking discussions, practical exercises, and real-world case studies.

Key Takeaways:

- **Leadership Styles and Their Impact:** We explored various leadership styles and their effectiveness in different 9-1-1 environments. We learned how to adapt our approach to meet the unique needs of our teams.
- **Effective Communication Strategies:** Communication is the cornerstone of 9-1-1 operations. We honed our written and verbal communication skills, focusing on clarity, empathy, and active listening.
- **Technology and Innovation:** The 9-1-1 landscape is constantly evolving. We explored emerging technologies and their potential impact on our operations, from next-generation 9-1-1 (NG911) to artificial intelligence.
- **Peer Networking and Collaboration:** One of the most valuable aspects of the CMCP was the opportunity to connect with other 9-1-1 professionals. We shared experiences, learned from each other's successes and challenges, and built lasting relationships.

Beyond the Classroom: The CMCP didn't end when the class was over. We left with a renewed sense of purpose and a toolkit of strategies to apply in our daily work. The connections we made continue to be a valuable resource as we navigate the complexities of 9-1-1 leadership.



Pictured from left to right: Jessica Fellows , James Riccio, Joseph Pagnotta, Erin Hastings, Brian O’Neill, Jennifer Hill, Michael Gethin, Paul Hicks, Stacy Foley, Khristy Lord, Donald Tryon, Thomas Scanlon, Tom O’Brien, Peter Kinnas

Dispelling Myths about Regionalization



MYTH: Public Safety agencies cannot build rapport with Regional Emergency Communications Center (RECC) staff.



TRUTH: While public safety agencies may occasionally interact with regional dispatch staff in person, efforts are made to bridge the gap and foster rapport. Regional centers often invite public safety agencies to training sessions, conduct group quality assurance and improvement discussions, and establish an "open door" policy for agency visits. Moreover, ride-along programs enable staff from member agencies to spend time with center staff, promoting mutual understanding. Building rapport is a two-way street; regional centers and member agencies must actively communicate and build relationships.



MYTH: RECCs will not hire the dispatch staff of the city/town joining.



TRUTH: Often times regional centers consider hiring the dispatch staff of the city/town transitioning into the center. Some centers even offer these staff members the first opportunity to interview. Some staff members may choose not to interview or join the regional center for personal reasons. Each regional center is different depending on staffing levels, however the goal is to strengthen the transition by incorporating existing staff with institutional knowledge.



MYTH: "We've always done it this way; if it ain't broke..."



TRUTH: The belief that "we've always done it this way" can hinder the progress of public safety agencies. A single dispatcher handling police, fire, and EMS dispatching and other responsibilities like EMD is not ideal for providing efficient solutions to public safety services. Embracing change and exploring regionalization options can improve emergency response capabilities and serve the public better.

Looking for more information? If your department is considering branching out into a regional dispatch center but are unsure of where to start, contact Peter Kinnas at Peter.S.Kinnas@mass.gov or (508)821-7213. Our team is ready to meet with you, discuss all possibilities, and provide guidance as you explore your options.