

# Massachusetts State 911 Department January 2025 Newsletter



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On December 5, 2024, Nashoba Valley Regional Emergency Communication Center (Nashoba RECC) Dispatcher Charles Myers received a call from a female reporting that her husband was choking on a piece of candy. Dispatcher Myers immediately identified the gravity of the situation, as he could hear the caller's husband struggling audibly in the background. Thanks to the quick coordination of Nashoba RECC dispatchers, emergency responders were dispatched within 40 seconds. Meanwhile, Dispatcher Myers provided clear and effective instructions to the caller on administering abdominal thrusts, as the patient was unable to stand up from his chair. Following one swift motion, the caller successfully dislodged the candy, clearing her husband's airway. In less than two minutes, the patient was able to breathe and communicate with his wife. Responders arrived on scene shortly afterward to provide further care. Dispatcher Myers' calm demeanor, quick thinking, and precise guidance were instrumental in saving this gentleman's life.

Thank you Dispatcher Myers for your outstanding service and dedication to 9-1-1.

## *Job Well Done!*

## Community Outreach Events

Do you have an upcoming outreach event in your community? The State 911 Department and its Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program (MassEDP) team would love to join forces with you! From National Night Out to your Local Citizens Academies, we want to join!

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](mailto:Erica.L.Adams@mass.gov)



## Calling on all 9-1-1 PSAPs: Share Your Photos!

We plan to honor our Massachusetts dispatchers from across the Commonwealth. As part of this celebration, we are looking for photos of your 9-1-1 dispatchers, whether they're hard at work or gathered for a group shot.

How to Participate:

- Submit photos of your team in action or as a group.
- Please include names of everyone in the photo.

Your contributions will help us showcase the vital role dispatchers play everyday.

Please send your submissions to Erica Adams at [erica.l.adams@mass.gov](mailto:erica.l.adams@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](mailto:Erica.L.Adams@mass.gov)



## What's in your 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Toolbox?

### Rapid SOS



#### ***How Does RapidSOS Integrate with Next Generation 911 (NG911)?***

The Massachusetts NG911 system integrates RapidSOS to provide a supplemental location source in addition to the location information provided by carriers. This technology leverages alternative data sources such as GPS, WiFi, Bluetooth, and Internet of Things (IoT) devices to deliver enhanced location details for non-fixed devices.

When supplemental location data is available, it appears alongside the carrier location in CallStation and ResponseAssist as soon as the call or text is answered. A mapped location is displayed for better situational awareness. Look for the RapidSOS map icon (a red bullseye) in ResponseAssist and review the location details provided on both the map and the Incident Tile. RapidSOS location data can often be more accurate than carrier-provided details. When supplemental location details are available, the location data will appear with the carrier location in CallStation and ResponseAssist once the call or text is answered. A mapped location will be displayed.



**To toggle between different incident location data sources,** use the **map icon buttons** at the top of the Incident Tile. Pictured here are the options to view Wireless Phase 2 (WPH2), Wireless Phase 1 (WPH1), and RapidSOS supplemental location details.



#### ***Additional Tools for PSAPs using RapidSOS***

For PSAPs subscribing to the platforms provided by RapidSOS, several additional tools may be available to enhance situational awareness. One of these tools is the location "breadcrumbs" feature. This allows for continuous tracking of 9-1-1 callers. When a 9-1-1 call is made, the RapidSOS platform, in addition to the integrated location on NG911, displays the device's location as long it falls within the PSAPs designated jurisdiction. The platform can then continue to display a trail of locations, even showing if the caller moves outside the jurisdiction.

RapidSOS can also identify clusters of calls by displaying the location details for calls within the PSAPs jurisdiction, even if the call is not directly connected to the PSAP. Real-time location data for the device can be displayed for up to thirty minutes after a 9-1-1 call has ended, offering critical support in scenarios where the device is no longer actively connected. This feature is particularly useful in situations where maintaining a connection to the device is not possible.

Lastly, another valuable tool is RapidSOS Ready, which allows the public the option to create an Emergency Health Profile free of charge. When available, RapidSOS capable 9-1-1 centers can securely view the profile and access critical medical information, proving potentially life-saving data to enhance situational awareness and improved response capabilities for PSAPs. For more information on RapidSOS platforms and public safety tools available, please visit [www.rapidsos.com/emergency-communications-centers](http://www.rapidsos.com/emergency-communications-centers). For more information on RapidSOS Ready, please visit [www.emergencyprofile.org](http://www.emergencyprofile.org).

**If you would like refresher training or training resources on the NG911 system and RapidSOS,**

**please email [911training@mass.gov](mailto:911training@mass.gov).**





# JANUARY



Attention all Regional PSAPs and RECCS. The application deadline for the submission of the FY 2026 Regional Development Grant is **5:00 PM on Thursday, March 6, 2025**. Begin your review of the guidelines, application, and workshop presentation early to allow sufficient time for completion of the application process as well as obtaining all needed documentation, i.e., quotes, IMAs, letters of attestations. Please note all documentation should be current; expired quotes, IMAs, letters of attestations should be updated. All information is available on our website at <http://www.mass.gov/e911>.



File your FY 2025 grant reimbursement early and often. The grant guidelines require submission of reimbursement requests within 30 days of incurring the expense. Filing timely not only ensures compliance with the grant guidelines but will allow for a smooth close of the fiscal year without any surprises. A PSAP may add a certified enhanced 911 telecommunicator following the award of the grant by submitting a request to [911DeptGrants@mass.gov](mailto:911DeptGrants@mass.gov). Any adjustments needed on the grant can be made on or before June 30, 2025. Adjustments after that date are not allowed.



The State 911 Department has, as a courtesy, been reaching out to PSAPs to correct deficient reimbursement submissions. PSAPs are afforded three business days to provide the needed documentation. As we experience an influx in reimbursement submissions, the Department may not be able to continue this practice. To the extent that this practice hampers the Department's ability to process payments within the thirty business days afforded the Department in the grant guidelines, this practice may be suspended during this period. Please review reimbursement requests to ensure all supporting documentation is provided with the submission.



# Myths and Fears Of Regionalization

**Reduced  
Service  
Quality**

**Loss of  
Local Control**

**Delayed  
Services**

**Job  
Loss**

**Loss of  
Community Identity**

# Facts and Opportunities

**Interoperability**

**Response  
Standardization**

**911**

**Local  
Representation**

**Equipment & Technology  
Enhancements**

**Career Growth**

**911**

**Cost Savings &  
Improved Service**

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](mailto: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.



## What is the MassEDP Program?

The Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program (MassEDP) distributes equipment that enables people to use the telephone accessibly. Whether clients are on the phone multiple times a day, or just a couple of times a week, when they need to access emergency services, make doctors' appointments, talk to friends and family, or get rides, they can be sure that they have access thanks to the equipment provided by MassEDP.

One of the accessible phones distributed is the photo phone which is designed for people that have different cognitive difficulties. Often these people live with a caretaker who may handle most of the telephone calls for them. However, if the caretaker needs to be away from home for a period of time, it is vital that the person at home has access to the telephone in case of an emergency. By using the memory dial buttons that correspond to photographs or symbols they can do just that, providing peace of mind to both the user and the caretaker.

A large demographic of our clients are hearing aids users, and people with low vision. Hearing aid users can hear well while wearing their hearing aids. However, many users do not wear their hearing aids all the time. Whether they are home alone and not wearing their device or have taken them out at the end of the day their hearing is drastically reduced. The amplified phones provided by MassEDP can be adjusted so the caller can be heard even without the addition of hearing aids. Whether hearing aids are in or out, the amplified phones can assist hearing impaired people allowing them to use the phone more easily. Similarly, many low vision clients can see better at different times of day, in different light settings, or with different color patterns. Because these difficulties are rarely static, users with low vision may be able to use non assistive devices in most situations. But in those circumstances where the light is low, or they aren't wearing corrective lenses, our program can provide phones with larger numbers to assist the user in all circumstances.

Our phones work for people with hearing and vision loss, cognitive, speech and mobility impairments. Our efforts to provide accessible telecommunication equipment to the disabled population is bolstered by the numerous accolades we receive from the recipients of our residential telephones, iPhones and electrolarynx devices. Most recently, a woman who is confined to a wheelchair and has a service dog to help her with daily tasks received a hands-free device from MassEDP, which she says was "a lifesaver." She states "I now have a phone that provides me with the great ease that I had for so many years. I wanted to thank you, even though words seem so inadequate, because you made such a difference." Another client states "My heartfelt thanks and gratitude for providing phones for my 90-year-old mom and I to stay in communication. My mom is unable to drive, and I have no transportation, so our phones are our only means of communication"... "we really needed these phones, and the expense was an obstacle. Thank you for making this blessing a reality." While the focus of this program is to provide equipment for the disabled community to have unfettered access to 9-1-1, these anecdotes prove that our equipment enriches peoples' lives in many ways.

**For information on MassEDP or for an application, please email MassEDP Program Manager  
Grant Harrison at [Grant.Harrison@mass.gov](mailto:Grant.Harrison@mass.gov)**

