

Massachusetts State 911 Department

March 2025 Newsletter



Issue 12

Volume 3

Congratulations!



Auburn Police Department

Ryan Restuccia

Bedford Police Department

Brian Vitale

Cambridge ECC

Shane Donnelly

Dukes County Sheriff

Ronald Holt

New Bedford Police Department

Veda Edwards
Benjamin Grimes

Norfolk County ECC

Grace Flynn
Courtney Dotoli
Jessica Geldres

Palmer Police Department

Austin Kinsley
Lauren Lomax

South Shore ECC

Crystal Mattia

Waltham Communications

Nicholas Taylor



Left: Public Education Coordinator Erica Adams
Right: Nancy Ferris

Dispatcher Nancy Ferris Holbrook Regional Emergency Communications Center

On Saturday, January 11, 2025, around 7:30 PM, Holbrook Regional Emergency Communications Center Dispatcher Nancy Ferris answered a call from a frantic father reporting that his 7-week-old son had RSV and was turning blue. Dispatcher Ferris quickly realized that the baby was not breathing and began providing EMD instructions to the caller. After a few minutes, the baby could be heard crying over the phone, and paramedics arrived on scene. Dispatcher Ferris' quick thinking and excellent communication skills played a crucial role in delivering immediate help. Without Dispatcher Ferris' decisive actions, the outcome could have been far more serious



Holbrook Regional Emergency Communications Center

Holbrook Regional Emergency Communications Center (Holbrook RECC) had three students graduate from our 60th Public Safety Communications Academy. Holbrook RECC came out in full force to show their support for their graduates, with eleven members coming to the ceremony! Their emphasis on **teamwork**, and **camaraderie** is exemplary! Congratulations to the three graduates, and best of luck on your new career!



Left: Deputy Director Khristy Lord Right: Anna Florczak

Westcomm Regional Dispatch

On March 5, 2025 at 5:35 PM, Dispatcher Florczak answered a 9-1-1 call reporting an elderly man who had been missing since 2:00 PM after leaving his home on foot. Despite exhaustive efforts by law enforcement, the man remained missing as her shift came to an end. Dispatcher Florczak's commitment to public safety did not stop when she clocked out. She took it upon herself to continue the search on her own time, driving through the area on the off chance she might spot him. Thanks to her keen awareness and dedication, she successfully located the missing man, immediately notified dispatch to coordinate officers to the scene, and stayed with him until they arrived. Great job Dispatcher Florczak!



State 911 Department

Myesha Auguste

Intern Myesha Auguste has been with the State 911 Department since June of 2023, and recently accepted a job at the Office of Grants and Research as a Program Coordinator. Myesha came to the State 911 Department as an intern, while studying Criminal Justice and Sociology at Bristol Community College. Throughout her entire time with us, she has been an integral part of our team. Myesha has worked with our Programs Division at outreach events, National Nights Out, and attended numerous community health fairs educating folks of all ages about Text-to-911 and Silent Call Procedures. Myesha has worked on special projects with our Fiscal Division, and was always a smiling face greeting students and staff alike at the front desk. Myesha has truly been an asset to our team, and will be sorely missed by everyone here. We know she is going to be successful, in whatever she does! Thank you Myesha for your commitment to the State 911 Department over the last two years.



Left: Commissioner Calvi Right: Beth Joffe

Beth Joffe

Springfield Emergency Communications

Beth Joffe of Springfield Emergency Communications retired on March 3, 2025 after an amazing 37 - year career as a dispatcher. Amongst the celebrations, Commissioner Calvi presented a proclamation from Springfield Mayor Sarno, declaring the day "Beth Joffe Day" in the City of Springfield. Over a nearly four decade career, Beth has witnessed the evolution of dispatch from a paper card system to today's state of the art communications center. Beth has mentored and trained countless dispatchers, leaving behind a legacy that will echo through the headset for years to come.

Congratulations Beth on your retirement!



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

Come join us!

The State 911 Department has an opening for a new instructor to join our training team!
For more details and to view the full job description click the link [HERE](#)

Interested applicants must apply through MassCareers



**HELP
WANTED**

Send us your Job Openings

Our Telecommunicator Certification Program (TCP) continues to certify civilians interested in becoming a dispatcher. Once these civilians are certified in APCO PST and Next Generation 911 (NG911), many find themselves looking for job openings within a PSAP. If you are looking to fill a vacancy at your PSAP please send the job posting to Public Education Coordinator, Erica Adams at Erica.L.Adams@mass.gov. Jobs will be posted on our website, and sent to all TCP students via email blast.

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





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

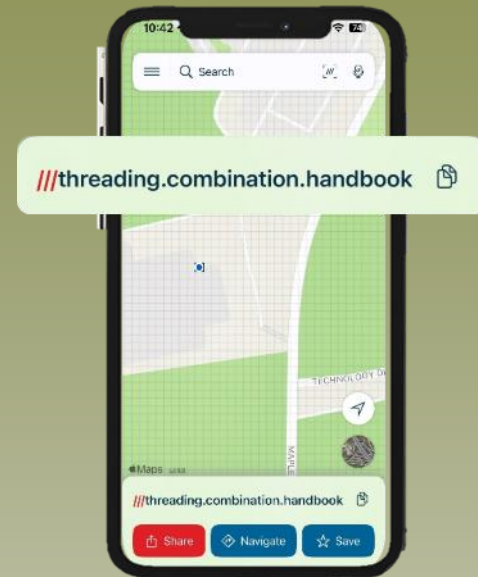
what3words

what3words is an available application that can be downloaded to smart devices or through a web browser. The what3words technology uses digital geocoding to identify a location, but in a way much different than a traditional street address and in an easier format than latitude and longitude coordinates.

what3words has created an overlay for the entire globe and designed a 10-foot by 10-foot grid system, where every square of the grid is assigned a unique location, identified by a combination of three sequenced words.

The what3words address is accessible to users through the app by doing one or more of the following:

- Using the compass (arrow) for the current location.
- Clicking any square grid on the map to find the word sequence.
- Entering a street address into the search feature, then zooming the map until the grid displays and clicking the square needed.
- Entering a word sequence into the search feature to map an address.



How what3words Can Supplement Location Data in an Emergency

Since callers are not trained to know where they are or how to precisely explain that location to 9-1-1 in an emergency, this tool could supplement the location data provided by the carriers. It can help to narrow down a dispatchable location for an incident or to find a caller/texter. The app can also assist when the location is obscure, such as on bike or hiking trails, beaches or on bodies of water, as well as in extremely dense city limits.

To obtain a what3words address from the caller: If available, ask the caller to open the app. After waiting for the location locator (blue dot) to stop on a location, ask the caller/texter to use the arrow/compass tool. The app will adjust the GPS locator and the ***what3words address appears at the bottom. This could be verbalized to 9-1-1 and entered into a smart device app or the free desktop application at <https://what3words.com>.***

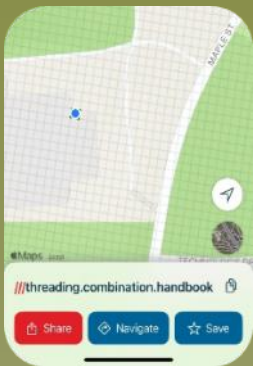
If the caller/texter has adjusted the app settings, other location references (such as lat/long coordinates) may be displayed as well, along with the what3words address. ***It can also be useful in situations where location data is unavailable or unreliable because the app can work offline, without a cellular or WiFi data connection.***

Using what3words in the Field

When first responders in the field also utilize what3words technology, the ability to locate parties involved in an incident can be expanded beyond what can be verbally communicated. PSAPs have the potential to provide field personnel with the what3words address of the caller/texter or incident location – and assist with faster or more accurate response in situations. This can include where you have someone unfamiliar with an area, the area is hard to access or dense (such as woodlands) or when the parties are lost or injured. For more information on what3words platforms and public safety tools available, please visit <https://what3words.com/how-to-use-the-what3words-app>.

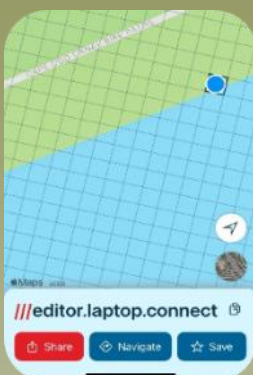
If you would like refresher training or training resources on the NG911 system, please email 911training@mass.gov.

Updates from our Programs Division - Continued

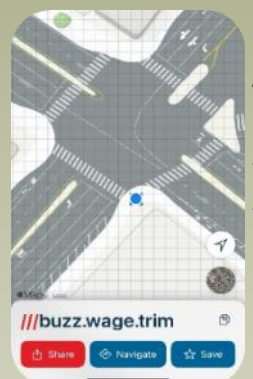


Situational Example 1: A 9-1-1 caller reports a funny smell in the building. The caller provides the street address of 31 Maple Street and tries to explain that there are two main entrances to the building. A telecommunicator can suggest to the caller to use the app to provide the what3words address for the desired main entrance.

The location pictured in the sample images of the what3words app is for the State 911 Department's Milford Training Facility.



Situational Example 2: A 9-1-1 caller reports they have been injured. They are somewhere along the Cape Cod Canal, off the bike trail. A telecommunicator can suggest to the caller to use the app to provide the what3words address for their location, and that address can be relayed to first responders, so they know the best point of access for the injured party.



Situational Example 3: A 91-1 caller reports a serious accident with an injured pedestrian. The carrier location is WPH2, and the caller cannot explain which block they are on or an intersecting road. A telecommunicator can suggest to the caller to use the app to provide the what3words address for their location with the injured pedestrian, in the busy Seaport District of Boston, and that address can be relayed to first responders, so they know the best point of access for the injured party.

Updates from our Systems Division

Did you know that Dish Wireless has a growing call volume?

Dish Wireless is a new cell phone provider and operates their own cell towers. Any exigent-circumstances requests for subscriber records or other information should be directed 24x7 to:

Subsentio, LLC

Attn: Records Production

14900 Bogle Drive, Suite 101

Chantilly, VA 20151

Main: 877-510-4357 (Opt. 1)

Fax: 703-953-3661

The telephone number has been added to the MCW Special Services tab.

DISHW is the company ID for Dish Wireless.



Flying by with a training opportunity.... Applications are now being accepted for the FY 2026 PSAP Leadership Scholarship Program. All certified telecommunicators from primary PSAPs, Regional PSAPs and Regional Emergency Communications Centers meeting program guidelines are encouraged to apply. Please visit the Massachusetts Communications Supervisors Association website at <https://ma911.org> to apply.



The close of the fiscal year (June 30) is fast approaching. Do your part to ensure that you receive your “pot of gold” by filing FY 2025 grant reimbursements requests timely. Grant guidelines require submission within 30 days from when the costs were incurred. Please be sure all submissions include the proper documentation to avoid reductions or returns. Unsure of what is needed? Attend the next virtual reimbursement workshop on April 16, 2025. Email 911DeptGrants@mass.gov to register.



Marching on....The FY 2026 Support and Incentive, Training, Emergency Medical Dispatch, and Wireless State Police Grant Guidelines and Applications have been released and are available on the Department’s website (www.mass.gov/911). Need assistance with the application process? Attend the next virtual application workshop on April 28, 2025. Email 911DeptGrants@mass.gov to register. All applicants seeking a July 1 start date should ensure submission and approval of its annual certificate of compliance and ensure applications are submitted timely so as to allow sufficient time for the application process as noted in the grant guidelines.



MYTHS OF REGIONALIZING 911 DISPATCH



Service Quality Will Decline

Some believe regionalizing means slower response times and less local knowledge. However, well-designed regional centers use advanced CAD and mapping systems to maintain or improve service.

Shared resources allow agencies to afford state-of-the-art CAD, radio, and telephony systems that might be cost-prohibitive for smaller, standalone centers.



Local Agencies Lose Control

Many regional centers establish governance models that ensure participating agencies have a voice in operations, policies and decision-making. The key to success is that all parties must collaborate and communicate effectively.



Lack of Local Knowledge

With modern mapping and data systems, dispatchers can access real-time location information, street-level details, and jurisdictional boundaries.

Local knowledge is often included in the training programs for dispatch staff and is no different than a standalone center hiring a non-resident.



It's Only About Cost Savings

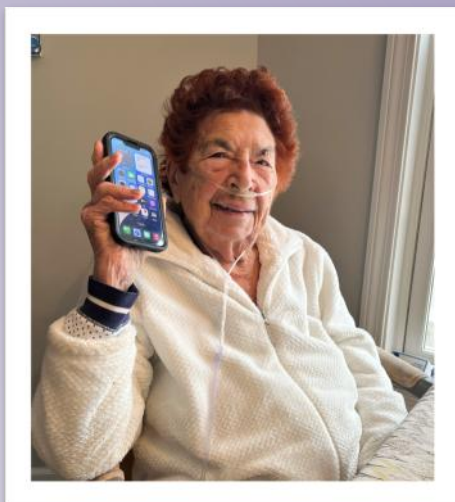
While financial considerations play a role, regionalization is more about improving service delivery, resilience, interoperability, and emergency response coordination.

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.

Notes from the Field Service Advisor

I had the pleasure of meeting 102 year old Marsha Kahn back in January to deliver her iPhone through the Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program (MassEDP). I met with her again in February to teach her about the iPhone and the features it offers, including the use of Siri to help her use her phone by simply talking to it. Marsha is an amazing example of how the MassEDP program helps people of all ages and stages improve their life through our Smart Phone Program. Our program allows Marsha the ability to call 9-1-1 in an emergency, but also gives her the ability to call her family, friends and access the internet in ways that she wouldn't be able to do without the equipment that we provided. Marsha is delighted to be a client of MassEDP, and have the connectivity that is so vital in the world today.

- Marguerite Szczawinski, Field Service Advisor



Did you know the Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program offers the iPhone 14?

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*

