

# Massachusetts State 911 Department Monthly Newsletter



Issue 5

Volume 8

May 2020



## MEMORIAL DAY

### To Remember and To Honor

The State 911 Department would like to remember and honor the brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces whom while serving paid the ultimate sacrifice.

We call to mind their life and the tragic loss left behind. We send positive thoughts and warm wishes to their family members, and we thank them wholeheartedly for their service. ***Rest In Peace.***

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**To learn about the  
latest Text-to-911  
update visit page  
four for details!**

**LATEST**

**NEWS**

## Updates from our Programs Division

### Compliance Deadline Change

The State 911 Department recognizes that COVID-19 has had a significant impact on PSAPs ability to train and certify and re-certify its telecommunicators. Please note, due to this PSAPs have until August 31, 2020 to complete their sixteen (16) hours of continuing education and until September 14, 2020 to submit the Annual Certification of Compliance Form for the Year 2020.

PSAPs that have completed the FY20 Annual Certification of Compliance form can email the form to [Monna.Wallace@mass.gov](mailto:Monna.Wallace@mass.gov) and then mail the original to the State 911 Department. Because of COVID-19, forms are being accepted and approved via email.

### In House Next Generation 9-1-1 Equipment Training Program

In an effort to support PSAPs that are experiencing staffing issues due to COVID-19, the State 911 Department has developed a 4 hour, in-house Next Generation 9-1-1 equipment training using an in-house trainer selected by the PSAP. The trainer selected must be a certified 911 telecommunicator that has experience and a good understanding of how the Next Generation 9-1-1 system operates. The in-house program allows a PSAP to temporarily waive the EMD certification, instead advising staff to ask the 5 questions that are recommended by the CDC. Additionally, the State 911 Department is **TEMPORARILY** waiving the 40-hour Basic Telecommunicator certification. At some point in FY2021, each PSAP that has participated in the in-house training will be required to fulfill ALL minimum training requirements that were waived under this temporary training program.

**Effective immediately, PSAPs can now use training material provided by the State 911 Department to train and certify staff in-house.**

#### **Examples of eligible candidates for training are:**

- . Trainees that were not able to complete the training due to cancelled new hire classes.
- . Police Officers, Firefighters and EMD/Paramedic that work for the town/city.
- . Administrative staff from town/city offices.
- . Vetted potential new hires.

A new application for the in-house training can be located on our website at [www.mass.gov/e911](http://www.mass.gov/e911) under the "Information for Call Centers" tab.

PSAPs wishing to participate in the training should follow the same process in place now, which is to fill out the application and indicate the dates that you intend to conduct the in-house training. When the Programs Division receives the application they will send back the training packet along with an email offering further instruction.

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## Updates from our Programs Division (continued)

(continued from page 2)

### **The training packet includes:**

#### **1. Instructor materials that includes:**

- Lesson plan and reference training materials
- EMD Advisement notice
- Job aids for CallStation, ResponseAssist, Equature ViewPoint, and Text-to-911 (for both Ring-all PSAPs and ACD PSAPs)
- Training roster
- Instructions for administering practical and written exams
- Written exam and answer sheet
- Practical exam sheet

#### **2. Student materials which includes:**

- EMD Advisement notice
- Job aids for CallStation, ResponseAssist, Equature ViewPoint, and Text-to-911 (for both Ring-all PSAPs and ACD PSAPs)

**Please contact Programs Director Monna Wallace at [monna.wallace@mass.gov](mailto:monna.wallace@mass.gov) if you have questions about the program.**

## Updates from our Systems Division

### **Test Calls**

PSAPs should be aware that Communication Service Providers (carriers), Multiline Telephone System Operators (local businesses), and Comtech (911 System Provider) need to make test calls for a variety of reasons. The State 911 Department is not always informed of test calls in advance and we do not need to give “permission”.

#### **It is recommended that Test Callers:**

- Provide prior notification to the PSAP.
- Schedule test calls during the following times; Monday – Friday 10AM – 2PM or Monday – Friday 2AM -5AM. (Calls outside of these timeframes may be required in urgent situations).
- When calling 911, immediately communicate that they are performing a test call and there is no emergency.

#### **PSAPs should:**

- Support test calls as needed by the carriers.
- Verify the caller’s phone number (ANI) and location (ALI) displayed appropriately.
- Notify the Comtech Next Generation 9-1-1 NOC at 855-626-4911 about any calls that did not provide ANI/ALI.



## Updates from our Systems Division (continued)

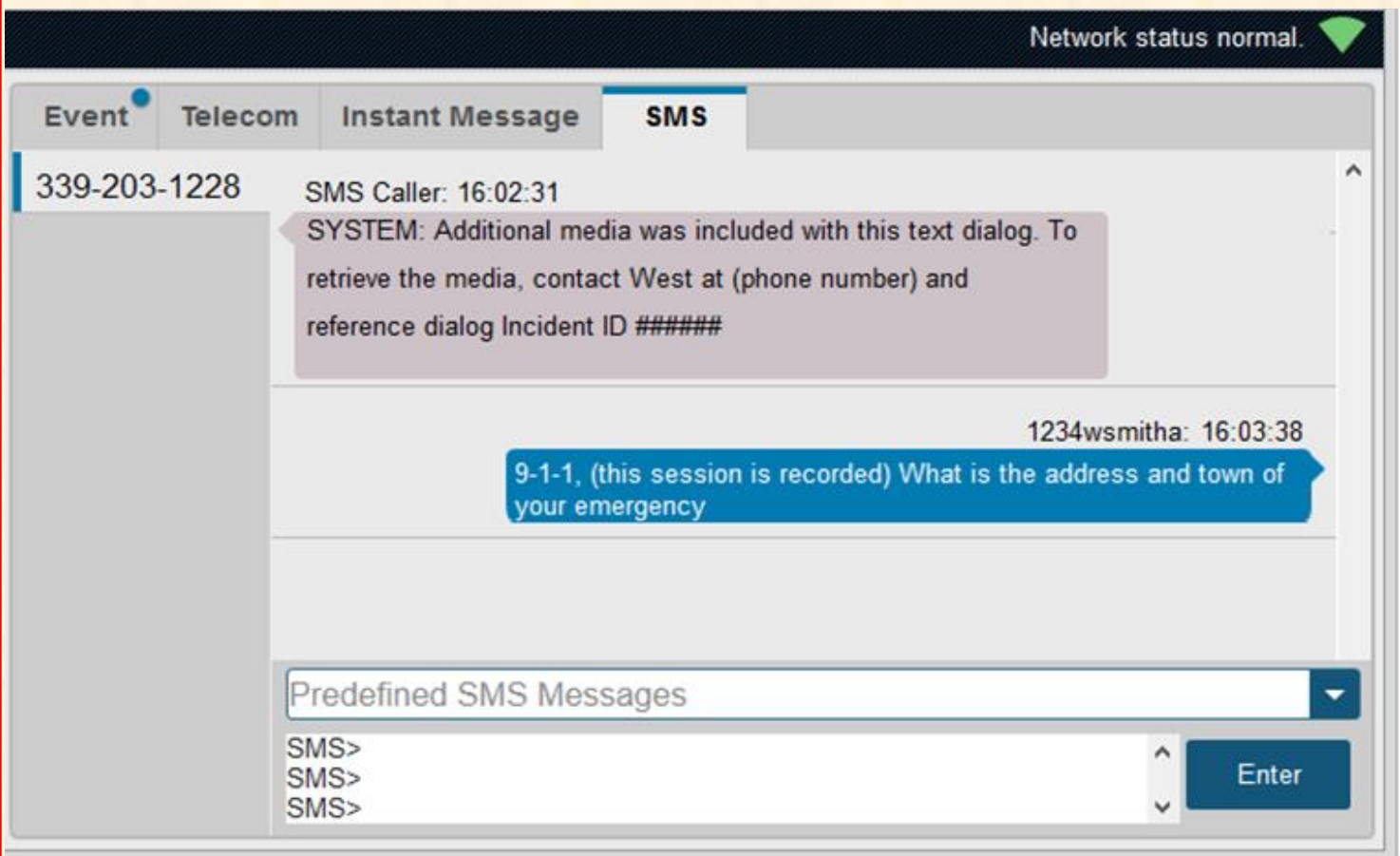
### Wireless Calls from a Non-US Phone Number

Wireless Callers using GSM phones that have a phone number from outside of the US cause issues with carriers. Since the phone has a number that is longer than ten digit (usually due to a country code), the legacy carrier systems are not able to handle the extra digits. Calls tend to “default” route and when received do not provide ALI.

### Text-to-911 Update

Attempts to send media, such as pictures and video, are being made by texters to our Next Generation 9-1-1 system. Many times, the attempt is blocked by the carrier’s Text Control Center (TCC) prior to it ever being received by a PSAP. However, on occasion, a PSAP may receive notification that media of some kind was attempted and is available to be retrieved by the PSAP.

For example, Sprint and T-Mobile use West Safety (West) services as their TCC to deliver texts to the Next Generation 9-1-1 system. If the texter sends a picture or short video to 911, West will automatically send the following message displayed in this image to the PSAP as notification.



**When calling the number, the PSAP should be prepared to provide an email address that will be used by West to send the media. West does not have the ability to view the media.**

## Updates from our Fiscal Division



# May



The Covid-19 Pandemic has presented all of us with many new challenges. The close of the fiscal year and grant cycle shouldn't be one of them. In an effort to assist, we have noted a number of reminders:

- **New Personnel:** add them to your grants
- **Continuing Education:** newly certified individuals do not have a continuing education requirement in FY20
- **Extensions:** return executed originals of the contract amendment form back to the State 911 Department immediately
- **Mark-Up: Don't** make notations/mark-ups on the payroll registers. Please note the payroll register/report does not need to segregate the "grant" costs, it simply needs to show payment to the individual for at least the amount of the requested reimbursement.
- **Documentation:** Please be sure to include all supporting documentation with each reimbursement submission, including but not limited to a detailed invoice. Quotes or reference to a quote on the invoice are not acceptable when seeking reimbursement.
- **Originals:** Original signed documents are required.



The State 911 Department's fiscal staff continues to work diligently to process all reimbursement requests within the thirty business days allotted in the grant guidelines. However, there may be a delay in payment as fiscal staff is working remotely and the "passing" of documents cannot happen daily. The adjustments needed to address the pandemic may impact our ability to meet this target.



The State 911 Department's fiscal staff remains ready to assist with your questions and inquiries. Staff is working remotely with limited time in the office. It is therefore recommended that you e-mail staff for a more immediate response. E-mail addresses are noted below for your reference.

- **Applications:** Cindy Reynolds: [911DeptGrants@mass.gov](mailto:911DeptGrants@mass.gov)
- **Reimbursements:** Michelle Hallahan: [Michelle.Hallahan@mass.gov](mailto:Michelle.Hallahan@mass.gov)
- Angela Pilling: [Angela.Pilling@mass.gov](mailto:Angela.Pilling@mass.gov)
- Vicki Goetz: [Vicki.Goetz@mass.gov](mailto:Vicki.Goetz@mass.gov)
- **All Matters:** [Karen.Robitaille@mass.gov](mailto:Karen.Robitaille@mass.gov)



The FY21 Grant applications are now available on our website ([www.mass.gov/e911](http://www.mass.gov/e911)). Given the pandemic, the Department is unable to host grant camps at this time. We can, however, conduct remote sessions. Please e-mail [Karen.Robitaille@mass.gov](mailto:Karen.Robitaille@mass.gov) should you wish to schedule a session.

## Updates from Mass EDP

The Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program (Mass EDP), remains in operation under a limited capacity as a result of the COVID-19 virus. Home visits have been suspended as well as all outreach events until further notice. We are still communicating with our clients by telephone and email, and are processing applications as they are received. When possible we are drop shipping telephones to our clients to better assist them.

This process will remain in place until we are able to resume normal operations.

If you have questions or concerns, please call MassEDP Manager Grant Harrison at 508-821-7234 or email him at [grant.harrison@mass.gov](mailto:grant.harrison@mass.gov).



To speak with a customer service representative, call **1-800-300-5658 Voice/TTY**.



### 911 Spotlight:

### **THANK YOU Massachusetts Dispatchers!**

The State 911 Department would like to extend our sincere gratitude and say **THANK YOU** wholeheartedly to each and every dispatcher in the Commonwealth. During this challenging COVID-19 pandemic each of you have stepped up to the plate and continued to perform your duties effectively, proficiently, and excellently. As a Department, we understand times may be tough right now. However, as always we appreciate and we thank you for your dedicated service to the world of 911. None of your hard work day in and day out goes unnoticed. On behalf of Executive Director Frank Pozniak and the entire State 911 Department Staff **THANK YOU** and stay well!

***WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER. WE WILL GET THROUGH THIS TOGETHER.***

***THANK YOU! Job Well Done!***