

Massachusetts State 911 Department Monthly Newsletter



Issue 11 | Volume 8 | November 2020



Thank You
and wishing you a
Happy
Thanksgiving!

In recognition of National Gratitude Month, all of us here at the State 911 Department would like to extend our sincere appreciation and say **THANK YOU** to each and every Telecommunicator throughout the Commonwealth. We are forever grateful for your unmatched dedication to the service of 9-1-1. In addition, we would like to wish you and your families a happy and a healthy Thanksgiving - COVID-19 style. Stay safe!

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*The State 911 Virtual Training
environment has kicked off and
continues to run successfully.
See page 2 for more details!*

LATEST

NEWS

Updates from our Programs Division

Important Message to our PSAPs Regarding Changes to the State 911 Department's Training Program

The State 911 Department has deployed a new virtual learning environment, designed to assist PSAPs with certifying personnel remotely, with the APCO PST certification and the NG9-1-1 New Hire Equipment Training certification. The virtual training has been developed to align with the same classroom hours that were in place prior to COVID-19.

This training replaces the 4-hour in-house training that was used to assist our PSAPs with staffing their call centers at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Telecommunicators that were trained in-house using the 4-hour certification, are certified and will not need to go through any further equipment training. However, where it applies, EMD certifications, CPR and the 5-day Basic Telecommunicator certification must be obtained prior to June 30, 2021.

Going forward, all PSAP supervisors and in-house trainers will be asked to participate in a two-hour workshop prior to registering newly hired staff for training. The "PSAP In-house Trainer workshops are held every Monday and Thursday from 9 AM to 11 AM. The PSAP In-house Trainer role is a critical component of the virtual training program and requires a partnership between the State 911 Department and the PSAP in certifying newly hired personnel.

Each PSAP will need to have at least one PSAP In-house Trainer identified to assist with the following:

- In-house learning for new PSAP personnel including hands-on, equipment demonstration and simulation activities related to the NG9-1-1 equipment training;
- Administration of exams for both the equipment courses and the PST course; and
- Submitting necessary paperwork and communicate with State 911 Department Programs Coordinators.

In the workshop, we discuss and give the PSAP In-house Trainers a chance to ask questions related to:

- The platform and composition of the virtual classes, and the technology needed for students to participate;
- What is necessary to become a PSAP In-house Trainer, and the roles and responsibilities the PSAP In-house Trainer plays in the new virtual learning environment;
- Materials the PSAP In-house Trainer will receive and use to conduct the training;
- Testing guidelines and process for administering the written and practical exams; and
- Documentation that will need to be processed for new personnel to be certified.

The available dates and applications for the PSAP In-house Trainer Workshops, as well as both the virtual APCO PST and NG91-1 New Hire Training courses can be found on the State 911 Department website at www.mass.gov/e911.

Updates from our Programs Division (continued)



If your PSAP is experiencing issues with staffing due to COVID-19 or other unforeseen situations, please advise the State 911 Department by emailing Monna Wallace at Monna.Wallace@mass.gov so that we can assist you with determining a solution to insure that the operations of your PSAP remain intact.

Emergency SOS iPhone Feature

Beginning with IOS 11, iPhone devices are equipped with an Emergency SOS Auto Call feature that when activated automatically dials 9-1-1. On an iPhone 8 or later version, the feature is activated when the side button and one of the volume buttons are pressed and held. To activate the feature on an iPhone 7 the user must rapidly press the side (or top) button five times. Once the feature has been activated the Emergency SOS slider screen shown pictured to the right will appear. If the user drags the Emergency SOS slider emergency services will be called. If the user is using an iPhone 8 or later version and instead continues to hold the side and volume buttons a countdown will begin and an alert will sound. If the user continues to hold down the buttons until the end of the countdown emergency services will be called.



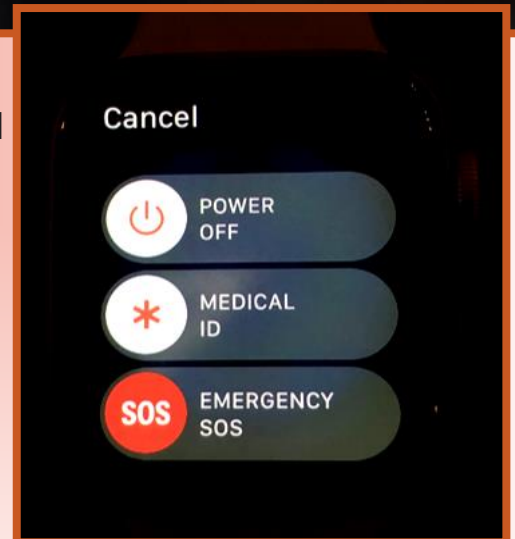
Apple Watches are also equipped with this feature.

To activate the Emergency SOS feature on an Apple Watch the user must press and hold the side button until the Emergency SOS slider pictured to the right appears.

If the user continues to hold the side button a countdown will begin and an alert will sound. Once the countdown is complete emergency services will be called.

While this feature can be beneficial and useful to somebody who is unable to physically dial 9-1-1 but is still able to press the necessary buttons, we are finding it to be a very high contributor to accidental and abandoned 9-1-1 calls. We are asking that as

Telecommunicators if you receive an accidental or abandoned 9-1-1 call due to this feature that you remind Apple users that their devices are equipped with this and to please be more cognizant of accidentally activating it. Pleasantly remind the caller that when a 9-1-1 center handles an accidental call it ties up emergency lines and resources trying to verify whether or not there is an emergency.



Updates from our State 911 Department PSAPs

Massachusetts State 911 PSAP Operations Division (POD-1)

Radio Resources Are As Important As Your Phone and Network Connections

When our State 911 PSAP Operations Division Dispatchers cannot connect with local PSAPs by phone due to technical network issues or other reasons, our dispatchers frequently use different regional and district interoperable radio channels and talk-groups to communicate with other agencies throughout the state during emergencies.

PSAPs need to be able to communicate and interoperate with each other when traditional landline communication networks are interrupted. Radio communication is an excellent resource not just for day to day use, but for situations like this as well.

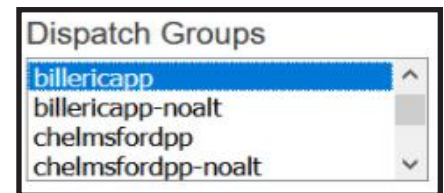
Does your PSAP have these important resources readily available at console positions? Are they monitored and tested? Do you know what resource outside agencies will use to contact you? Winter weather will soon be upon us, and we all know what comes with that. Now is a great time to confirm these resources are in place for use when you need them.

If you would like more information on the resources that State 911 PSAP Operations Division (POD-1) uses to communicate with your PSAP, or with our other partner agencies, please contact Richard Fiske, Director of PSAP Operations, State 911-Framingham, at Richard.Fiske@mass.gov.

Updates from our Systems Division

Call Detail Records (CDR)

If you look at a CDR it can give you a lot of clues as to where the call came from... Calls that are directly routed to a PSAP will be shown under the "pp" dispatch group. Calls that are transferred will be shown under the "no-alt" dispatch group.



| TRUNK TYPE | TYPE | DISPATCH GROUPS | |
|------------|----------|---|-------------------------|
| E911 | Inbound | norfolkrc-noalt | 911 transfers |
| E911 | Inbound | peabodypp | |
| E911 | Inbound | norfolkrc | 911 direct |
| E911 | Inbound | fitchburgpp-noalt | |
| E911 | Inbound | chelmsfordpp | |
| E911 | Inbound | lowellpp-noalt | Outbound Call |
| E911 | Outbound | billericapp , billericapp-noalt | |
| E7DIGIT | Inbound | bellinghampp-noalt | E7 Digit (two-way) Call |

On a call back have you heard “Unable to call back an un-initialized phone”?

Cell phones with no service plan are able to call 9-1-1 but can't be called back. Per FCC regulations all mobile phones are required to be able to dial 9-1-1 regardless of a subscriber plan. Since they do not have a phone number, the area code will show as 9-1-1. There is no need to open a ticket with the Help Desk, as the NG9-1-1 system is working correctly. The service provider that connected the call can be contacted to do a trace under exigent circumstances.

Reduce Pocket Dials

This article does a good job explaining how to reduce the possibility of accidental 9-1-1 calls, especially when kids are using cell phones.

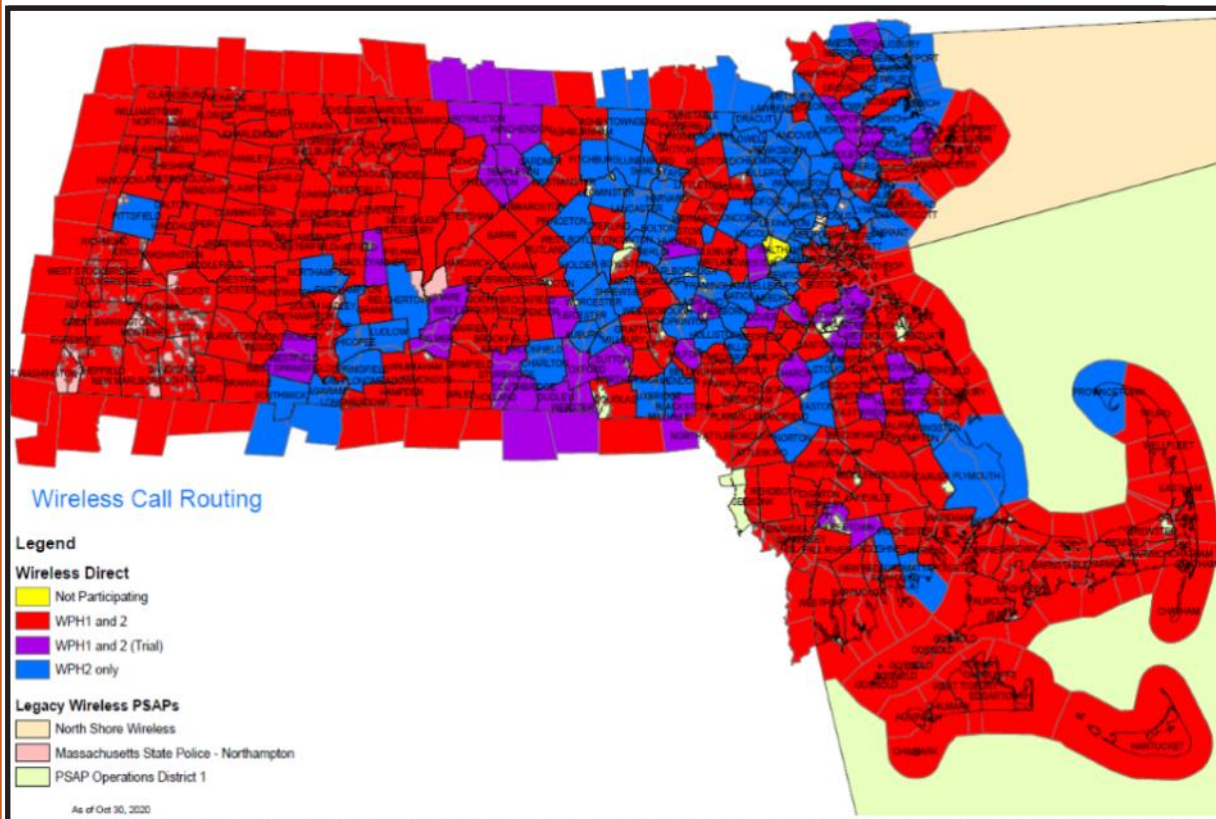
<https://www.howtogeek.com/695807/can-you-disable-911-emergency-calls-on-an-iphone/>.

Updates from our Systems Division (continued)

Callers with non-US telephone numbers

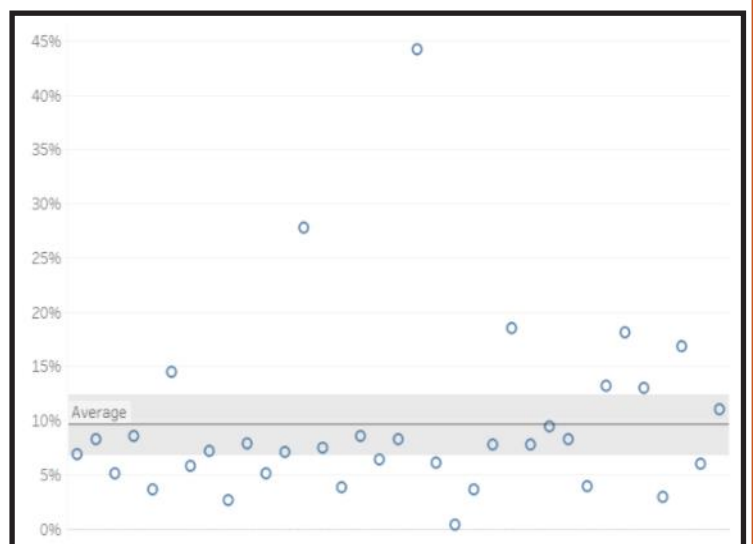
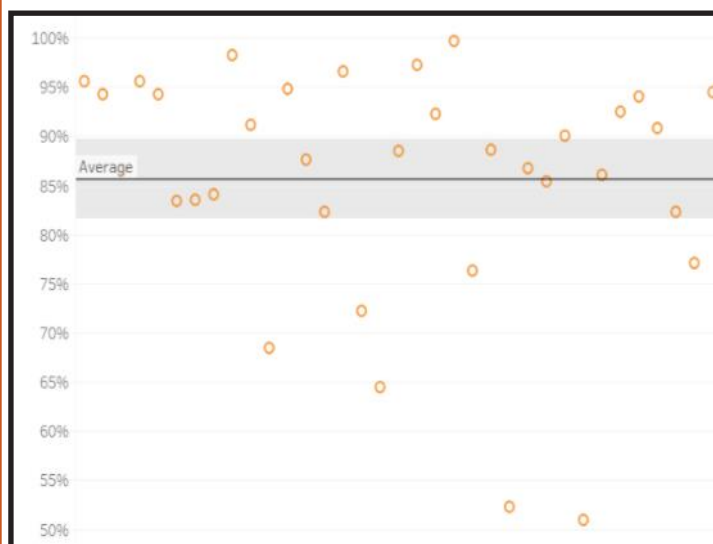
Wireless callers using GSM phones that have a phone number from outside of the US cause issues with carriers. The phone has a number that is longer than ten digit (usually due to a country code), the legacy carrier systems are not able to handle the extra digits. Calls tend to “default” route to our Framingham wireless center (POD-1). Such calls will not have a location associated with them..

Wireless Direct



Update 60% of PSAPs are getting WPH1 calls directly, ~40% are getting WPH2 only, and **only one (1)** PSAP that is not regionalizing is not taking Wireless Direct.

PSAPs accepting WPH1 and 2 for longer than a year have received an average of 85% of their calls directly (shown below in orange). Those PSAPs have had an average of 10% of calls needing to be transferred to other PSAPs (shown below in blue).



Updates from our Fiscal Division



DEADLINE: The deadline for submission of applications under the FY 2021 Support and Incentive, Training and Emergency Medical Dispatch grants is fast approaching. Applications are required on or before **December 30, 2020**. Don't miss out on this funding opportunity. **Apply today!!**



REIMBURSEMENT REMINDERS:

A few reminders as you prepare your reimbursement requests.

- Please remember to utilize the correct Fiscal Year Grant Reimbursement forms.
- Please include supporting documentation, such as schedules, time sheets, when seeking reimbursement for personnel costs where the award date falls in the middle of a payroll period; only costs incurred on or after the contract start date are eligible under the grant program.
- Please check your approved application to ensure the individual for whom you are seeking reimbursement is included on the awarded grant. E-mail 911DeptGrants@mass.gov to add certified telecommunicators to a grant after award.
- Be sure the calculations correctly total; both for an individual line and for the entire page/submission to ensure you are maximizing access to the awarded funding.



The State 911 Department recently introduced on-line training courses. PSAPs will now be required to have an In-house Trainer who is a certified Telecommunicator available to assist its employee through these trainings. PSAPs trainers are required to participate/proctor day 5 of the Department's Public Safety Telecommunicator course and day 2 of the NG9-1-1 equipment class. These trainer hours are eligible for reimbursement under the State 911 Department Training Grant, providing all other grant requirements have been met. In addition, day 1 of the NG9-1-1 equipment training will be eligible for reimbursement for the In-house Trainer once. These hours for day 1 will count as continuing education hours for the trainer and will be eligible under the FY21 Training Grant provided all other grant requirements have been met. In-house Trainers attending multiple session of day 1 of the NG9-1-1 equipment training will not be reimbursed for these additional trainings.

If you have questions or require assistance, please contact Karen Robitaille at 508-821-7221 or email at karen.robaille@mass.gov.

Updates from MassEDP

The Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program (MassEDP) continues to remain in operation during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. While home visits have been temporarily suspended, we are still communicating with and providing customer service for our clients by telephone and email as well as processing new applications as they are received. This process will remain in place until we are able to resume normal operations. In addition, the MassEDP team would like to share that we are working diligently in hopes to provide virtual outreach opportunities through a virtual platform in the near future. We will continue to update you on our progress as we move forward.

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



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

MassEDP Phone Spotlight ~ Clarity Alto Plus



This corded phone is ideal for those with all different levels of hearing loss. This phone amplifies incoming sound up to 53dB, has an oversized and bright visual incoming ringer, and a battery backup.

Features:

- Certified for mild, moderate and severe hearing loss
- Amplifies incoming sounds up to 53 decibels
- Amplifies outgoing speech up to 15 decibels
 - Extra loud ringer volumes
 - Talking keypad & caller ID
 - Built-in speaker phone
 - Soft touch keypad backlight
- 3 one touch speed dial memory buttons
 - Bright & oversized visual ringer
- Works when power goes out due to a battery backup



9-1-1 Spotlight:

North Shore Regional 9-1-1 Center Telecommunicator Jill Diver

On Monday, August 17, 2020, Telecommunicator Jill Diver received an open line wireless 9-1-1 call. Although the caller was not speaking, Ms. Diver listened carefully and recognized the background noise was questionable; it sounded like someone was gasping for air or in pain, all very faintly. Jill kept the call open and transferred it to the Salisbury Police Department, which is where she had the call mapping. When Salisbury answered Ms. Diver explained the situation, and although she had no confirmation of the address she provided the Salisbury dispatcher with the mapping coordinates. Salisbury PD took the information and disconnected.

After further investigation, it was discovered that the call was for three people whom were swept off of a jetty and stranded in the water. The caller was one of the three people and was unable to speak clinging onto rocks in the water. Thank you to North Shore Regional 9-1-1 Center Telecommunicator Jill Diver and Salisbury PD—without your due diligence and close attention to detail that call could have resulted in a different ending. **Job well done!**

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Massachusetts State 911
@MAstate911
Visit our website!
www.mass.gov/e911

