

Massachusetts State 911 Department Monthly Newsletter

Issue 2

Volume 9

February 2021



February is American Heart Month!

This month's offer is the opportunity to reflect on our heart health and learn about different ways to help us stay healthy.



Call taking and dispatching are sedentary jobs, meaning long hours are spent “sitting the desk”, in the most literal of terms. This, paired with the high stress situations faced by telecommunicators daily, make self-awareness about your behaviors, physical health, mental health and ways to invest in yourself extremely important, to both minimize your health risk and care for yourself. On page 2, the State 911 Department highlights ways to help you recognize weaknesses generally observed across the industry, and strive to develop positive habits for yourself to achieve good physical and mental health.

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On February 17, 2021 POD-1 held their 2nd Annual Awards and Recognition Ceremony. See page 6 for details!

LATEST

NEWS



- Food is energy. Take the time to meal plan and eat healthy options whenever available. Throughout your shift, drink water and take a moment to have a healthy snack. Don't let an odd schedule jeopardize your need for good eating habits.
- Combat the "sit" while at work! As time permits, take a walk around your 9-1-1 center or practice in-place exercise options. Even practicing good posture will help your body to feel better. Sitting for long periods and lack of movement can decrease your metabolism and circulation, as well as lead to risk factors for stroke and heart disease.
- Develop an exercise routine which fits your lifestyle and is achievable for your schedule. Daily exercise of some kind is recommended, a simple way to get up and move, to stretch your muscles, even if it's not a full workout each time. There are lots of great resources online!
- Get some sleep. Since there is no "normal" sleep time when you are in the world of emergency communications, work hard to get restful sleep when you can. Even if it switches often, try to go to bed and get up at about the same time each day, even on your days off. And if it's an option, take a nap before your shift!
- Practice self-care. The mental and emotional impacts of the job, paired with those in your own personal life, can cause high levels of stress on you. It is important to recognize the stressors, and work to ward them off, to help improve your overall health.

For more information and resources, visit:

<https://www.apcointl.org/resources/staffing-retention/professional-communications-human-resources-committee/prochrt-toolbox/health-and-wellness/>.

Updates from our Programs Division

NENA's Enhanced Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Registry and Census (EPRC)

Have you ever received a 9-1-1 call from someone in your community reporting an emergency in another city or state? What did you do with the call? If the call was for another city within the Commonwealth you probably just used the PSAP directory to transfer the call to the appropriate PSAP. Hopefully, you introduced the call announcing your PSAP name and the callback number of the 9-1-1 caller so the other PSAP knew you were transferring a call to them. Once transferred, that PSAP would then handle the call according to its policies and procedures. What if the call was reporting an emergency in Spokane, Washington, or New York City, or Land O'Lakes, Florida? *What did you do?*

Did you know that there is a **free** resource that you can use? The EPRC database is a **FREE** and secure web-based tool containing essential information for PSAPs throughout the United States. It is map-based and allows users to locate the PSAP having jurisdiction for any location in the United States, and it is straightforward to navigate. It includes a modern interactive mapping and search tool with expanded data such as back-up phone numbers, PSAP capability information, PSAP service areas, and more. Users can search for PSAP information using a landmark, community name or address, or by merely clicking on the map viewer.

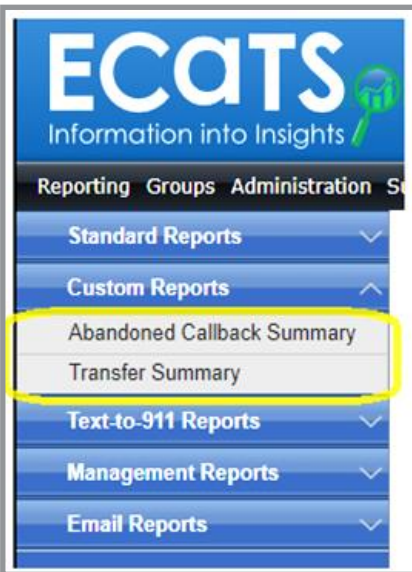
For questions or to access the new EPRC, visit <http://eprc-nena.hub.arcgis.com/>. If this is your first time visiting the site, click **"Request Access to the NENA EPRC"** link and follow the instructions to obtain FREE access to the EPRC. Every employee at your PSAP (e.g., telecommunicator, supervisor, director) is eligible for an account. The process takes about five (5) business days.



After obtaining access to the EPRC site, you can easily search any city and state in the United States and obtain PSAP contact information. This is also a great opportunity for you to audit your PSAPs information in the database and make any corrections if needed.

New Reports Available in ECATS Training

The State 911 Department has released two new customized reports in the ECaTS Portal for the Massachusetts PSAP community.



These reports can be found in the Custom Reports Section of the ECaTS Menu. *Pictured in the image to the left: Report Menu: Custom Reports*

The “Transfer Summary” report provides aggregated transfer summary statistics at both the PSAP level, and the individual agent level. Transfer call volumes are provided, as well as many durations relating call transfer and overall call handling metrics at both the transfer source and transfer destination PSAPs.

The “Abandoned Callback Summary” allows the user to select a configurable timeframe to compare outbound calls with abandoned calls, to determine which abandoned calls have been addressed either by PSAP callback or caller redial.

Training documentation for each report has been included in the Training Manual that can be downloaded by clicking on the link on the right-hand side of the ECATS menu.

Pictured in the image on the right.



ARE YOU VERIFYING ANI/ALI DATA?

The State 911 Department CMR’s in section 5.10 Call Handling Procedures, has standards for call handling that read: *“The enhanced 911 telecommunicator shall verify with each 911 caller the ALI data and shall determine the exact location to which the caller needs emergency personnel dispatched. The need for assistance may not necessarily be at the location of the 911 caller”* (560 CMR 5.10).

To be in compliance with the State 911 Department’s call handling standards it is **mandatory** that you are verifying ANI/ALI data for each and every call that comes into your PSAP. If you are a wireless direct PSAP, which means wireless calls from your community are being delivered directly to your PSAP, please be aware that such calls are pinging off of cell phone towers and are being delivered to the closest PSAP. In areas where city and town lines are in close proximity there is a possibility a call may be misrouted and delivered to the wrong PSAP, which is why it is **critical** to **always** verify ANI/ALI data.



Updates from our Programs Division—continued

JOB SEARCH

PSAP Job Opportunities

If you have a vacancy in your communications center and are looking for a way to share it with the public, we are here to help!

To post a job opening on our website:

1. Go to www.mass.gov/e911.
2. Click on **Information for Call Centers**.
3. Click on the **9-1-1 Communications Job Posting** link (located under all other tasks).
4. Download and complete the form.
5. Email the completed form to our Public Education Coordinator, Katelyn Sylvia at Katelyn.a.sylvia@mass.gov.

The State 911 Department is also happy to share all Commonwealth PSAP job openings to our Facebook page. To advertise your job opening on Facebook, please email the job opening information to Monna Wallace at Monna.Wallace@mass.gov or Katelyn Sylvia at Katelyn.A.Sylvia@mass.gov.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

We are interested in spotlighting 9-1-1 telecommunicators and Massachusetts PSAPs from all over the Commonwealth on our Massachusetts State 911 Facebook page! Do you have a dispatcher that has done an exceptional job on a call and deserves to be recognized? Do you have a dispatcher that is reaching a milestone in number of years of service this year? Do you have new hires that come from interesting backgrounds and are currently training? Do you have a “cool” set up to participate in our new virtual training program that you would like to share a picture of? Or do you have a fun fact about 9-1-1 you’d like to share? How about a 9-1-1 “joke” only a telecommunicator would understand?

If you have something you would like to share, or with any questions, please email, State 911 Department’s Public Education Coordinator, Katelyn Sylvia at Katelyn.A.Sylvia@mass.gov.

We would love to hear from you!



Massachusetts State 911 PSAP Operations Division (POD-1)

On Wednesday, February 17, 2021 POD-1 held their 2nd Annual Awards and Recognition Ceremony—except this year, it was virtual. State 911 Department Executive Director Frank Pozniak, State 911 Department Deputy Executive Director Norm Fournier, POD-1 Director Richard Fiske, POD-1 Deputy Director Kristina Morin, and D-III Supervisor Francisco Gomes recognized the hard work and dedication from their employees throughout 2020, despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, by awarding a number of them with different performance awards.

Award Winners

- ◆ **Perfect Attendance:** Dispatcher I Jeffrey Scafidi
- ◆ **Exemplary Attendance:** Dispatcher I *Kristina Polakoff*, Dispatcher I Lily Taylor, and Dispatcher II Trevor Marchand
- ◆ **Quality Assurance Award:** Dispatcher I Alanna Carroll and Dispatcher II Joseph Fantini
- ◆ **Dedication Award:** Dispatcher I Megan Gentile and Dispatcher II Michael Maxwell
- ◆ **Top Team Player Award:** Dispatcher I Leah Pappalardo
 - ◆ **Division Director's Award:** Dispatcher II Nicholas Waleszczyk
 - ◆ **Special Recognition Award:** Dispatcher I Ellen Konigsberg
 - ◆ **2020 Dispatcher of the Year:** Dispatcher I Jeffrey Scafidi

Congratulations to all of the award winners! The State 911 Department is proud of each and every one of you. And we thank you wholeheartedly for the great work you continue to do for the Commonwealth day in and day out.

Congratulations & Job Well Done!

Updates from our Systems Division

Cell Phone with AREA CODE 9-1-1 : Cannot be called back!

Cell phones with no service plan are able to successfully place a call into 9-1-1 but can not be called back. Per FCC regulations all mobile phones are required to be able to dial 9-1-1 regardless of whether or not they have a subscriber plan. The audio, “unable to call back an un-initialized phone” is what a telecommunicator will hear when they make an attempt to call back a caller that is using this type of phone. When this occurs, there is no need to open a ticket with the Help Desk as the NG9-1-1 system is working correctly. In addition, since the phone does not have a working phone number — the area code for an un-initialized phone will show on the NG9-1-1 system as 9-1-1.

What is a femtocell?

A femtocell is a mini cell tower that can be plugged into a user’s home internet. These devices are typically used in areas with poor wireless coverage, but this is not always the case. Calls being placed into 9-1-1 from a user who has a femtocell will typically have a WPH1 or WPH2 class of service. Please note, this is **NOT** equivalent to a caller dialing into 9-1-1 using “Wi-Fi calling”.

It is important to note, different wireless carriers handle these types of calls differently:

- ATT femtocell owners have an “allowable” list. Meaning only people they grant access can use the femtocell. No other carrier has this as a default setting.
- T-Mobile calls originating from a femtocell will provide a latitude and longitude just like a normal cell call does **AND** the femtocell owner’s name and registered address.

Callers with non–United States telephone numbers



**DID
YOU
KNOW?**

Wireless callers using GSM phones that have a phone number from outside of the United States cause issues with carriers. The phone has a number that is longer than ten digits (usually due to a country code), and the legacy carrier systems are not able to handle the extra digits. Calls tend to “default” route to our Massachusetts State 911 PSAP Operations Division (POD-1) center and once received will not have an ALI associated with them.

Find us on Facebook!
Massachusetts State 911
@MAstate911
Visit our website!
www.mass.gov/e911



FEBRUARY



MARCH 4, 2021 is the filing deadline for submission of an application under the FY 2022 Regional Development Grant program. Applications may be mailed or hand-delivered to 151 Campanelli Drive, Suite A, Middleborough, MA or submitted via e-mail (911DeptGrants@mass.gov) or faxed to 508-947-1452 or Commbuys (www.commbuys.com) bid # BD-21-1044-EPS90-1044E-57069. Applicants are encouraged to confirm receipt of application. All applications must be received on or before 5:00 PM EST on March 4.



The **FY 2022** grant guidelines and applications for the Support and Incentive Grant, the Training Grant, the Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant, and the Wireless State Police Grant have been released. All guidelines and applications can be found on the State 911 Department's website (www.mass.gov/e911). Grant funding period is July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. PSAPs and RECCs are encouraged to file applications early to secure a contract start date of July 1, 2021.



PSAPs and RECCs are reminded **FY 2021** reimbursements requests should be filed within 30 days of costs being incurred. Each reimbursement request must contain the State 911 Department forms and all necessary supporting documentation.

Mark your calendars:

- Deadline for submission of FY 2021 budget modifications and/or contract extensions: **March 26, 2021**
- Filing date for prior year regional development grants requiring a contract extension: **March 31, 2021**
- Regional Development Grant Quarterly Report: **April 15, 2021**
- Deadline for submission of budget modifications under the Regional Development Grants with a contract end date of June 30, 2021: **April 30, 2021**
- Final date for receipt of goods and services under the FY 2021 Grant Programs: **June 30, 2021**.
- Filling deadline of reimbursements under the FY 2021 Grant Programs: **July 31, 2021**



If you have questions or require assistance, please contact
Karen Robitaille at 508-821-7221 or email at karen.robitaille@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 ~ iPhone XR

Features:

- Wireless device, black in color
 - 64GB memory
- 6.1' diagonal all-screen LCD multi-touch display
 - Liquid retina HD display
 - Face ID
 - Long lasting battery
- Wireless Charging Capability



MassEDP is pleased to announce that we now offer the iPhone XR as the Program's first ever wireless device choice for our clients. The cell phone is pre-programmed with applications based on the applicant's disability.

Please note, MassEDP DOES NOT provide the cellular data plan.

9-1-1 Spotlight:

Cambridge Emergency Communications Lifesaving Awards

Dispatcher Melissa Carpenito

On January 4, 2021 Dispatcher Melissa Carpenito from Cambridge Emergency Communications received a call requesting a wellbeing check on a male party who had been making suicidal posts on social media. Units were dispatched and the male party was determined to not live at the address given. She “pinged” his phone and got a location for his cell phone in Bow, New Hampshire. The Bow New Hampshire Police Department was notified, and using the address Dispatcher Carpenito was given when she pinged the phone, they located the male in his vehicle under the influence of several different medications and alcohol. The male also had a shotgun and ammunition with him. It is believed that Dispatcher Carpenito’s actions may have saved his life. Amazing job Melissa, and thank you for your service to 9-1-1!



Dispatcher Katelyn Harrington

On January 12, 2021 Cambridge Emergency Communications received two back to back calls from two different residents of an apartment building who were trapped because of a fire in the building. Dispatcher Katelyn Harrington showed immense compassion towards the two trapped callers and their frightening situation. She reverted back to her training and advised the callers to stay close to the ground and place wet towels over their heads to protect them from the smoke that was filling their apartments. Katelyn stayed on the line with both callers keeping them safe until fire responders could get to them and safely remove them from the burning building. Thank you for your service, Dispatcher Harrington. Your compassion & calm voice on the other end of the phone is crucial and appreciated in the world of 9-1-1.

