

911.gov

Advancing 911 Across the Nation

2021 SUMMARY



The National 911 Program

is housed within the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Office of Emergency Medical Services at the U.S. Department of Transportation.



U.S. Department of Transportation
**National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration**



Emerging From COVID-19

If 2020 was a year unlike any other, 2021 is shaping up to be a year when, finally, we can all begin to breathe a little easier. Tremendous progress has been made against the COVID-19 pandemic, and telecommunicators and 911 professionals in the U.S. and abroad have played an essential role in supporting this effort.

We are profoundly grateful for the 911 professionals who have helped create and promote the resources developed in collaboration with all of our partners in supporting 911 and emergency response. We'll continue to keep our COVID-19 resources on 911.gov updated as long as they are needed. And as we emerge from this pandemic together, we will continue work on the many initiatives — developed for the 911 community and with the 911 community — to enable optimal 911 services around the nation.

Thank you,

The National 911 Program

ABOUT THE NATIONAL 911 PROGRAM

As the federal home for 911-related issues for the past 16 years, the National 911 Program plays a critical role in facilitating initiatives and information-sharing for the advancement of all aspects of the country's 911 system. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration continues to invest federal funds and dedicate staff to support the 911 community, allowing the Program to further its work in both leading and collaborating on numerous projects to help 911 leaders advance emergency communications across the U.S. This annual summary provides a snapshot of this work.

Current & Ongoing Projects and Resources for the 911 Community

FUNDING 911'S FUTURE

Funding the transition to Next Generation 911 (NG911) and optimal 911 service nationwide continues to be a focus for public safety and emergency communication leaders and national, state and local legislators. A number of initiatives are underway to fund technical and operational upgrades and drive improvements in the nation's local, regional and state 911 systems.

911 Grant Program

- ▶ NHTSA's National 911 Program, in conjunction with the National Telecommunication and Information Administration, continues to administer more than \$109 million in grant funds to 36 grantees (33 states, the District of Columbia and two tribal nations) to help 911 call centers upgrade and operate NG911 services and applications. Even throughout 2020 and the distractions of the pandemic, recipients continue to make progress acquiring the hardware, software, services and training needed for NG911 and a more informed, resilient emergency response. The period of performance for the grant program ends March 31, 2022.

Federal Funding for 911

- ▶ As a conduit for information between the 911 community and federal entities that support public safety and emergency communications, the Program collaborates with other agencies to compile an annually updated list of federal financial assistance programs of all kinds that support improvements to local, regional and state emergency communications operations. This detailed list includes all available federal funds for emergency communications, as well as 911-specific funding.

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LEGISLATION & POLICY

Legislative and policy modifications are often needed as 911 systems strive to implement new technologies and collaborate with public safety and other government stakeholders at the city, county and state level. The National 911 Program creates and promotes resources to help emergency communication leaders prepare for and navigate legislative and governance changes.

Resources to Support MLTS and Dispatchable Location Requirements at 911.gov

- ▶ Two statutes — Kari's Law and RAY BAUM'S Act — currently being implemented by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will make it easier for callers dialing 911 from a multi-line telephone system (MLTS) to reach 911 and for emergency services to locate those callers.

The National 911 Program, in conjunction with the FCC, developed user-friendly tools for emergency communications center (ECC)/PSAP administrators, manufacturers, vendors, service providers, and others interested in understanding MLTS and dispatchable location requirements, as well as the consequences of non-compliance.

National Database of State 911 Legislation

- ▶ This resource identifies and shares 911 legislation passed in each state, including bills about 911 administration, fees, funding, privacy and NG911. Updated bi-weekly, it can be searched by topic, state, keyword, status, year or author and is a great resource for learning from the success of others.

Legislative highlights from 2020 include states that enacted legislation establishing or enhancing penalties for false 911 calls, and legislation authorizing phone companies to provide real-time cell phone location information to PSAPs in emergent situations.

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Telecommunicator Reclassification

- ▶ The duties of public safety telecommunicators have changed significantly over the years, and the role will continue to evolve as Next Generation 911 is fully implemented across the nation. With this in mind, the National 911 Program continues to collaborate with stakeholders to create resources to help the 911 community actively and constructively support the effort to reclassify the 911 Telecommunicator from its current classification of “Office and Administrative Support” to a “Protective Service Occupation.”

In addition to reclassification by the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Standard Occupational Classification system, reclassification can take place with the introduction of a state statute or regulation. Legislative efforts are underway and have already been implemented in some states to reclassify telecommunicator positions via statute or regulation.

COLLECTING & UTILIZING 911 DATA

The continuous evolution toward optimal 911 services is best informed by data analysis. Several initiatives conducted in collaboration with 911 stakeholders are underway to support the availability and use of consistent 911 data nationwide.

911 DataPath

- ▶ While several state and local organizations regularly collect and share 911 data, challenges exist in comparing non-standardized data. Adoption of nationally uniform 911 data definitions and sharing mechanisms would provide essential, accurate information to assist in strategic planning, governance decisions and operational improvements in both the private and public sectors.

911 DataPath is a long-term effort with many phases that will require collaboration and coordination from the 911 community, and additional work by the community is expected in the coming years.

- ▶ **911 Data & Information Sharing: A Strategic Plan**, released in 2019 as the first step in the effort, describes the characteristics of an ideal future environment where data can be easily exchanged and identifies five strategic goals in creating a nationally uniform 911 data system.

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- ▶ **911 Data Uniformity – Administrative Data for 911 Decision-Making**, released in 2020, addresses the first of the five strategic goals and aims to create a “dictionary” of defined administrative data elements collected by the 911 community.
- ▶ The remaining four strategic goals to be undertaken in future phases of the effort are:
 1. Automated Data Handling
 2. Role-Based Information-Sharing
 3. Sustainable Vital Support Mechanisms
 4. Data-Savvy 911 Professionals

Profile Database & Annual Report

- ▶ The collection and use of data help 911 systems plan for the future, benchmark against other states, measure progress on updating 911, and share important information with non-911 stakeholders such as legislators and elected officials.

The Program works with the National Association of State 911 Administrators (NASNA) to collect voluntarily submitted data from states and territories each year about their 911 system and compiles the data in the annual Profile Database Report. Collection for 2020 data takes place from April to July 2021, and a report of the most recent data will be available by December 2021. New this year, the release will include a web-based, interactive version of the database and annual report.

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NG911 RESOURCES

NG911 for Public Safety

- ▶ A variety of interactive online resources are available to help 911 advocates within EMS, fire, and law enforcement agencies explore the benefits of the transition to NG911 specific for their discipline, and illustrate the impact an IP-based 911 system will have on the emergency communications ecosystem. The newest publication, “NG911 for Telecommunicators,” focuses on helping PSAP staff understand how NG911 will affect their job and how they can prepare for the transition.

NG911 Self-Assessment Tool

- ▶ To help PSAPs assess progress toward full Next Generation 911 implementation, the SAFECOM/ NCSWIC NG911 Working Group converted the TFOPA’s NG911 Self-Assessment Tool to an easy-to-use, dynamic checklist that helps managers, administrators, and oversight personnel evaluate a system’s NG911 state of maturity and understand the next steps to continue deployment.

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NG911 Roadmap & Progress Report

- ▶ The National 911 Program sought public input and engagement with 911 stakeholders to identify the tasks needed to ensure that NG911 — which is implemented at a state and local level — can interoperate cohesively at a national level. The resulting NG911 Roadmap addresses five primary goals of both technical and non-technical activities that must be accomplished to achieve a nationwide, interconnected system

(NG911 Roadmap & Progress Report cont.)

of 911 systems. The Progress Report, updated annually with the next one due at the end of 2021, shares progress by the 911 community in achieving activities listed for each goal and highlights opportunities where contribution is still needed.

NG911 Interstate Playbook – Chapter 4

- ▶ State 911 administrators have collaborated in recent years to provide a pragmatic guide to help connect multiple neighboring 911 jurisdictions in the NG911 environment. The result is the iterative release of “chapters” of an NG911 Interstate Playbook. Chapter 4 — the latest in the series — provides guidance and best practice from four mid-central states, each at a different stage of implementation and approaching their transition in their own way. Chapter 5 will be published soon.

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Standards for Enhanced NG911

- ▶ Standards development for NG911 plays a vital role in helping 911 industry stakeholders and leaders make informed decisions towards an efficient, seamless and successful NG911 system. Sharing and compiling important standards developments into one comprehensive report has consistently proved helpful in these efforts. While the National 911 Program does not create standards, it aggregates the standards developed by other organizations, vets the aggregate list with standards organizations, and compiles them into this annually updated national resource.

ADVANCING EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Telecommunicator Job Reclassification

- ▶ The 911 community continues to push for telecommunicators to be classified as a Protective Service Occupation. The Program collaborates with stakeholders to create resources to help the 911 community in this effort, including minimum training guidelines and model job descriptions, and continues to work on sample standard operating procedures. A Telecommunicator Job Reclassification toolkit is coming in fall 2021.

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State 911 Assessment Program

- ▶ The State 911 Assessment Program was established to provide peer feedback on the many diverse aspects and operational capabilities of a 911 system. It is an excellent opportunity for states to receive a non-biased assessment of a 911 system that can be used to make a strong case for NG911 transition considerations and 911 system enhancement. Iowa, which recently participated in an assessment, is now using the findings as a road map in their upgrade to NG911.

If you’re interested in participating in the State 911 Assessment Program as a state or assessor, please reach out to the National 911 Program.

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911 Telecommunicator Tree of Life

- ▶ In honor of National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week in April 2021, the National 911 Program, in collaboration with the NG911 Institute, Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO), NASNA, and National Emergency Number Association

(NENA), launched the 911 Telecommunicator Tree of Life to celebrate the individuals who answer the call to assist those in need. By visiting www.911treeoflife.org, anyone can share an inspiring story of a telecommunicator and honor the impact they make every day in the lives of those in their community.

911 SYSTEM RESOURCES FOR THE COMMUNITY

The Program strives to collate valuable knowledge and information into resources to help 911 and policy leaders tackle challenges and issues experienced in 911 systems across the country. Following is a list of resources, tools, documents and webinars available now:

Docs & Tools

- ▶ Regularly updated, these helpful resources generated by the 911 community, associations, federal and non-federal entities, and the National 911 Program are available under “Documents & Tools” at 911.gov.

to improve nationwide emergency communications. Visit 911.gov and sign up to receive news and updates from the National 911 Program.

SIGN UP

“State of 911” Webinars

- ▶ Every other month, this webinar series hosts federal and state leaders who offer best practices, new resources, NG911 “early adopter” lessons, and valuable emergency communications insights for PSAPs or call centers. Recent topics have included NG911 implementation and regulation in Canada and NG911 interoperability across the U.S.

SIGN UP

NG911/Public Safety Broadband Interconnection Needs Analysis Project

The technical means for the interconnection of NG911 and Public Safety Broadband Networks (PSBN) — like the one managed by the FirstNet Authority — is not well understood, established or widely deployed.

The National 911 Program is collaborating with a group of public and private sector representatives to determine how to accomplish this connection uniformly and to identify how public safety applications will utilize this environment.

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“911.gov Connects” Newsletter

- ▶ “911.gov Connects” is a quarterly newsletter that serves to update the 911 community on local, state, national and federal efforts

911 AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

In addition to creating new resources for 911 and serving as a convener bringing 911 stakeholders together to tackle important tasks, the National 911 Program continues to represent the interests of 911 stakeholders at the federal level and engage with federal agencies to ensure coordinated activities and information-sharing across agencies.

The Program works closely with national associations and the 911 community so the perspectives of states, regions and PSAPs are incorporated into nationwide initiatives. The Program also interacts with organizations such as the European Emergency Number Association and the Organization of American States to share information and resources.

Over the course of this year, National 911 Program representatives have:

- ▶ Served as member of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) formal advisory group, the Communications Security, Reliability and Interoperability Council (CSRIC)
- ▶ Served as member of the FCC's 911 Fee Diversion Strike Force
- ▶ Continued a formal liaison with the Emergency Communications Division of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- ▶ Served as co-chair of the 911 Working Group of the federal Emergency Communications Preparedness Center (ECPC) and member of the ECPC Grants Focus Group
- ▶ Served as member of SAFECOM/NCSWIC NG911 Working Group
- ▶ Continued to facilitate a relationship among federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to enable interconnection and upgrade of federally operated 911 PSAPs
- ▶ Liaised with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system to understand the SOC and what data are included in the classification process
- ▶ Continued to collaborate with the Science and Technology Directorate at DHS on 911-related projects

