

Massachusetts State 911 Department

July 2026 Newsletter



Issue 13

Volume 7



From Independence to Instant Connection:
Progress, Innovation and Advancing the Future of 9-1-1... One Call at a Time.

Since the nation's first 9-1-1 call was placed in Haleyville, Alabama, in 1968, emergency telecommunications has undergone a remarkable transformation. Over the decades, the Massachusetts 9-1-1 system has continually evolved, embracing new technologies to improve emergency response and better serve the public.

Massachusetts began with a simple yet effective system of color-coded rotary desk phones: a red phone for fire and ambulance calls, a blue phone for police, and a white phone for routine local business. As technology advanced, the Commonwealth implemented the Modular ANI/ALI Retrieval System (MAARS), a significant milestone that provided telecommunicators with a caller's telephone number and address. MAARS also introduced Dual-Tone Multi-Frequency (DTMF) signaling, making it possible to develop the Silent Call Procedure—a lifesaving protocol that remains an essential part of the Massachusetts 9-1-1 system today. The next major advancement came with the implementation of the VESTA Pallas system, which expanded the tools available to telecommunicators by adding enhanced call management capabilities and integrated mapping technology. These improvements provided greater situational awareness and helped dispatchers coordinate emergency responses more efficiently. Today, Massachusetts operates a state-of-the-art Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) system. This technology offers more accurate caller location information, increased system reliability, and innovative features such as Text-to-911, providing another critical lifeline for individuals who cannot safely place a voice call during an emergency.

While the technology behind 9-1-1 has changed dramatically over the years, one constant has remained: the dedicated professionals who answer every call for help. The Massachusetts State 911 Department is proud of the generations of telecommunicators who have adapted to each new era of technology while continuing to provide calm, compassionate, and lifesaving service to the residents and visitors of the Commonwealth.

Congratulations to the Fiscal Year 27 PSAP Leadership Scholarship Recipients!

The State 911 Department is proud to announce the recipients of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 PSAP Leadership Scholarship. This year, five dedicated telecommunicators have been selected to receive the scholarship as they continue to advance their careers in public safety communications.

The Department received several applications, making the selection process exceptionally competitive. We sincerely thank everyone who applied and commend each applicant for their commitment to professional growth and excellence in the field and encourage all interested telecommunicators to apply next year.

Congratulations to the recipients! We look forward to seeing the positive impact your continued education and leadership will have on the future of emergency communications.

FY27 PSAP Leadership Scholarship Recipients

Jason Rushford - Amherst Public Safety

Haley Hollander - Barnstable Police Department

Jenna DeGrace - Holbrook Regional Emergency Communications

Hannah Stevens—Medway Public Safety Communications

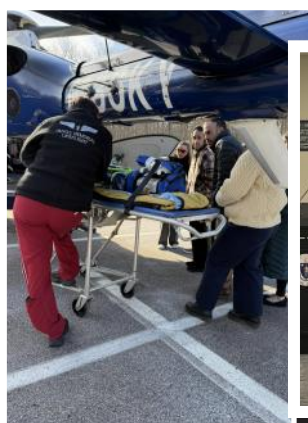
Jillian Madison-Wilson - Springfield Emergency Communications



It's Time to Apply for the 65th Public Safety Communications Academy!

The 65th Public Safety Communications Academy will be held from September 21, 2026, through October 23, 2026, at our Milford Training Facility. The Public Safety Communications Academy provides newly hired dispatchers with all mandatory certification trainings while offering a comprehensive introduction to the challenges and responsibilities they will encounter throughout their careers in emergency communications. In addition to meeting certification requirements, the academy combines classroom instruction with hands-on learning experiences that provide students with a broader understanding of the public safety profession.

Applications for the 65th Public Safety Communications Academy are available now [on our website!](#) For more information, please Email Program Coordinator Lauri Lemaire at Lauri.J.Lemaire@mass.gov.



The FY2026 Annual Certification of Compliance Form is due on or before July 31, 2026.

The form is available on our website at www.mass.gov/e911 under "Information for Call Centers" -> "FY2026 Annual Certification of Compliance Forms."

As soon as your PSAP has completed all of the compliance requirements, please submit your form. Please contact Monna.Wallace@mass.gov if you have questions or concerns.

REMINDERS:

- Annual Certification of Compliance Forms are **NO LONGER** accepted electronically.
- Proof of CPR and Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) **must be included with the FY 2026 submissions for PSAPs that are providing EMD in-house and also for all certified EMD resources.**
- For PSAPs who provide EMD, **a detailed explanation and SAMPLE of documents used for EMD quality assurance must be included.**

Please note that Compliance Forms do not need to be approved in order for a PSAP to submit their Grant Applications.



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 Emergency Medical Dispatch procedures are applicable, please include a recording with your submission.

All submissions can be sent to Public Education Coordinator
Erica Crawford at Erica.Crawford@mass.gov

Find us on Facebook!
**Massachusetts State
911**
@MAState911
Visit our website!



Know Before You Transfer: Finding the Right PSAP

From time to time, every PSAP receives a call that needs to be transferred outside of Massachusetts, or even across the country. While transferring the caller may seem straightforward, taking a moment to verify you're contacting the correct PSAP can save valuable time and prevent the caller from having to repeat critical information.

There are a handful of communities with the same name in other states (such as Manchester, CT or Manchester, NH, Florida MA vs the State of Florida) being transferred to a Massachusetts PSAP without an introduction. These calls ultimately have to be re-interviewed and transferred again, delaying emergency response and creating unnecessary frustration for both callers and telecommunicators.

Resources Available to Every Massachusetts PSAP

CallWorks Directory

The CallWorks directory contains contact information for out-of-state PSAPs, organized by state. These listings are regularly verified as 24-hour points of contact. While they may not always be the exact PSAP responsible for the incident location, they can quickly connect you with the appropriate agency within that state.

NENA Enhanced PSAP Registry and Census (EPRC)

Another excellent resource is the NENA Enhanced PSAP Registry and Census (EPRC) 2.0.

The EPRC is a free, secure, nationwide database available to PSAP personnel that allows users to locate the appropriate PSAP by:

- Street address.
- Intersection.
- Community name.
- Point of interest.
- Latitude/Longitude.
- PSAP name.

Because it's map-based, the EPRC is especially helpful when handling incidents outside your jurisdiction or in unfamiliar parts of the country. Once you've identified the correct PSAP, the system provides contact information to facilitate a warm transfer.

Best Practice

- ✓ Verify you're contacting the correct PSAP before transferring.
- ✓ Make a warm transfer by introducing yourself and providing a brief summary of the emergency.
- ✓ Stay on the line until the receiving PSAP confirms they have the information they need.

A few extra seconds can eliminate unnecessary transfers, reduce caller frustration, and help ensure emergency services are dispatched as quickly as possible.



Schedule Your Outreach!



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 Crawford** by Email at Erica.Crawford@mass.gov.

The outreach request form can be found [HERE](#). Please send completed forms to Public Education Coordinator Erica Crawford at erica.crawford@mass.gov

Life Saving Features of the 9-1-1 System

The 9-1-1 system in Massachusetts has two life saving features for residents and visitors to the Commonwealth; the Silent Call Procedure and Text-to-911. If someone is trying to call 9-1-1 and is unable to speak for any reason, on their phone they can press 1— for police, 2— for fire, or 3 for an ambulance. As the dispatcher asks them questions they can select 4— for yes and 5— for no. The system also features Text-to-911. When someone is trying to reach emergency services, they are able to contact them by Texting 9-1-1. For Emergencies in Massachusetts Call or Text 911. Call if you can—Text if you can't. Public Education Materials on Silent Call Procedure and Text-to-911 are available on our website, under Information for the Public. If you would like to have the materials mailed to you, please contact Public Education Coordinator Erica Crawford at Erica.Crawford@mass.gov.

For Emergencies in Massachusetts:

CALL or TEXT 911

Call if you can – Text if you can't.



Source: MA State 911 Department and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

www.mass.gov/e911

The Silent Call Procedure

If you need to call 9-1-1 and you are unable to speak for any reason, once the call is answered:

Press

#1

If you need police



#2

If you need fire



#3

If you need an ambulance



If the 9-1-1 dispatcher asks questions, press

#4

For YES ✓

#5

For NO ✗

Source: MA State 911 Department and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

www.mass.gov/e911



START FY 2027 off with a bang by securing funding to support your PSAP, Regional PSAP or Regional Emergency Communications Center. The FY 2027 grant program is in full swing. Apply Today!!



Avoid FY 2026 “flops” by filing all reimbursement requests on or before July 31, 2026. This will assist to ensure that your municipality/district can leverage the awarded funding to allow for the successful close of the fiscal year. Please contact Angela Pilling at Angela.Pilling@mass.gov should you need assistance.



Now that you have filed your FY 2027 grant applications and your FY 2026 reimbursements, take a few minutes to “drink” in the sun before we then begin the process of filing your FY 2027 reimbursements. You may also wish to enjoy a “matinee” by attending our workshops. The application workshop is hosted on the third Monday of every month, and the reimbursement workshop is hosted on the third Wednesday of every month. These workshops are held virtually and begin at 11:00 am. Email 911DeptGrants@mass.gov to reserve your spot today.

Updates from our Systems Division

New Call Handling System Coming in 2027

The State 911 Department issued a Request for Information to replace the call handling system. Vendors have submitted responses and are being tested for compatibility with the Next Generation Core Services. What's coming in 2027?

A new Call Handling System...

- Capable of supporting all payload types in addition to voice and Short Message Service (SMS) including Rich Communication Services, Real-Time Text, and video.
- Increased security from a new log on process.
- A simplified transfer process.
- Real-time transcription of all 911 calls.
- Real-time translation of programmed languages.

COMING SOON

An Emergency InciDent eXchange (EIDX)...

- A NENA functional element that allows for the conveyance of call data.
- Replaces the serial Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Spill, allows for CADs to receive a more robust dataset.
- Through the policy store, it allows seamless exchange of data between public safety agencies.

An improved Disability Indicator...

- Residents will be able to provide more detailed information that will appear for dispatchers directly.

Is Your School in Compliance with MLTS?

School will be back in session soon. Don't wait, **now** is the time to test your schools to see if they are Multi-line Telephone System (MLTS) compliant which...

Must Provide:

- Callback number for the "station" calling. A redial will reach the 9-1-1 caller directly.
 - If Room 101 calls, Room 101's phone must ring when called back from the 9-1-1 system.
- **Dispatchable Location:**
 - Validated Street Name and number.
 - Building, Floor, and/or Unit Identifier.
 - Room level identification if sleeping quarters.

All phones must be able to **directly dial 9-1-1** without the use of a prefix, in other words no "6 7".

More information can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/multi-line-telephone-system-mlts-regulations-information-and-resources>.

Questions and compliance issues can be sent to: mlts911@mass.gov.



WE ARE **HIRING**

Director of PSAP Operations Division 1 (POD-1)

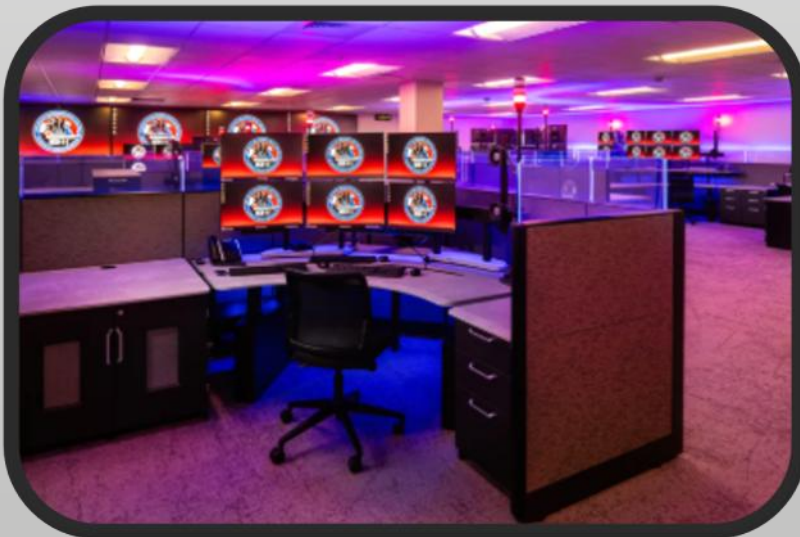


Key Responsibilities:

- ◇ Supervise and evaluate staff.
- ◇ Maintain liaisons with local, state, and federal agencies.
- ◇ Enhance collaboration and resolve issues.
- ◇ Develop and enforce policies.
- ◇ Design and implement training.
- ◇ Guide transition of POD-1 to regional dispatch.

Position Overview:

The Director of PSAP Operations Division 1 will oversee and manage 9-1-1 call taking operations and lead the transition in becoming a Regional Emergency Communications Center (RECC).



Benefits:

- ◇ Generous State Benefit Package.
- ◇ 75% Paid Health Insurance.
- ◇ Optional Vision/ Dental Plans.
- ◇ State Retirement Pension.
- ◇ Paid Time Off.
- ◇ Holiday Pay.

Salary: \$100,839 - \$155,529

Click here [to apply on Mass Careers](#) or by Scanning the QR Code.
Job Posting # : 260002HI





A Message from Customer Service Representative: Paul Gambina

My name is Paulie and I am hard of hearing. Hard of hearing means that I cannot hear very well without my hearing aids. I've been wearing hearing aids most of my life. From my experience, hearing on the telephone has been a lifelong battle, until the iPhone came along.

I got my first hearing aids when I was only 4 years old. They were the old fashion body hearing aids. These hearing aids had a hearing aid component inside of a pouch strapped around my body and part of the hearing aid would go into my ears. At the age of 10, I received my first behind the ears hearing aids, which was much more convenient to wear. It also had a T coil switch as one of the features. The T switch would allow me to communicate with folks on the phone, by decreasing the background noise and increasing the sound of the person's voice. This feature was and still is a vital part of the hearing aid.

Throughout my life, telephones have been a constant battle to use for communication. Growing up there were times that I had to ask either my family members or friends to speak on my behalf. That was the most embarrassing moment for me having to rely on people to speak for me. At one point my parents bought me an amplified phone. It was life changing. I was finally able to talk to my friends, family and relatives. Today, because of my iPhone, I am able to use the phone and communicate effectively. Using the iPhone has given me a big boost in confidence having the ability to communicate with my family and friends. The iPhone is a vital tool for those who are deaf, hard of hearing or late deafened because of the many captioning features that you can download including a TTY or simply texting or emailing the people who you want to communicate with.

I have been working with the Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program (MassEDP) for 17 years, and I can tell you that the phones that are provided by the program make a huge difference in the lives of those with disabilities. The program offers phones for those who are blind, low vision, hard of hearing, deaf, cognitive and motion impaired or have difficulty speaking. I remember when MassEDP first opened, I was working at an independent living program on Cape Cod and we would distribute applications to many people with disabilities. To this day I still give out the applications to people who would benefit from the program in the groups I am involved in across the Commonwealth. MassEDP is a life changing program for the disabled population of Massachusetts giving them adaptive technology that will enhance their day-to-day life and most importantly give them direct access 9-1-1.

