

# TEXT-TO-911 SERVICE



## What is Text-to-911?

Text-to-911 is the ability to send text messages to local 911 dispatch centers during an emergency.

Your wireless carrier sends your text messages to a "Text Control Center," which forwards them to the 911 center, who receives them via an internet-based application. If for some reason the internet is down, you will receive a message telling you that text-to-911 is not currently available in your area

## When is it appropriate to text instead of calling 911?

Text-to-911 is intended primarily for use in three scenarios:

- ▶ By an individual who is deaf, hard-of-hearing or has a speech disability
- ▶ A situation in which speaking out loud would be unsafe for a caller
- ▶ A medical emergency rendering a person incapable of speech

## Common Questions

### Can I text 911 from a disconnected cell phone?

You must have text messaging included on your wireless plan with a participating carrier to use text-to-911 service.

### What does the service cost?

Standard messaging rates may apply; however, text-to-911 service itself does not raise your wireless bill. It is funded by an existing fee that is already included in your phone service fees.

## Instructions

- **DO NOT TEXT AND DRIVE**
- Know your location
- Open your text messaging screen
- In the TO field, enter: 911 (with no dashes or spaces)
- **Your first text should be short**, with the location and brief description of the emergency
- Push SEND
- Answer questions and follow instructions from the 911 text-taker

**EMERGENCY USE ONLY**  
Prank texts to 911 can be identified and could result in prosecution

## Things to Remember

**No group texts:** Do not send your 911 message in a group text to multiple people. That will stop the message from reaching the 911 dispatcher.

**Plain Text only:** Text-to-911 can only receive words, numbers and punctuation. 911 *cannot* receive emoticons, emoji, pictures or videos. Do not use "text speak" or abbreviations (such as TTYL or LOL) since your message could be interpreted incorrectly.

**English only:** Interpretation services are only available for voice calls, not text-to-911.

**Will the 911 dispatcher know my location when I text?** *Not automatically. It's important that you ALWAYS know your location to provide to 911 dispatch.*

**Call If You Can:** A voice call is still the quickest and most reliable way to communicate an emergency to 911