

USING THE 9-1-1 SYSTEM

WHAT IS 9-1-1?

9-1-1 is a three digit number anyone can dial on the telephone to get help when there is a life-threatening or in-progress emergency. You can call 9-1-1 anytime there is an emergency such as a fire, serious accident, medical emergency, someone's life is in danger, or a dangerous crime is taking place.

When you call 9-1-1, a professionally-trained first responder (Dispatcher) answers the phone. The Dispatcher asks what the emergency is and sends help to you, such as the police, fire department, ambulance, or highway patrol. If you are not sure whether there is a real emergency, it is better to be safe and call 9-1-1.

WHY USE 9-1-1?

Responding quickly and accurately is important. A large number of arrests are made as a result of information that was provided by members of the public who called 9-1-1. The apprehension of one criminal, especially a burglar, may be the key to other crimes already committed and will definitely reduce any future crimes. Others in your community will greatly appreciate your efforts.

The time it takes to respond to a crime-in-progress is a determining factor in the apprehension of a criminal. A delay in reporting a crime by a couple of minutes greatly reduces law enforcement's effectiveness. Commit to calling in ALL suspicious activity without delay. Better to call in a few mistakes than to have one person become the victim of a crime.

NEED HELP? DIAL 9-1-1

Should you find yourself in a situation where emergency services are necessary, you should dial 9-1-1. Emergency situations where the 9-1-1 system should be used are, for example: ☐

- Life threatening medical emergencies. ☐
- Crimes where a culprit is still at the scene or has just fled. ☐

- Crimes where a threat to life or safety exists and which is still in progress.
- Traffic accidents where injuries are known or suspected.
- Fires or explosions.
- Airplane crashes.

Answer each question briefly but thoroughly and then be silent and wait for the next question. Answer all questions, no matter how ridiculous they may seem. Follow the direction of the Dispatcher; he or she is trained for emergency situations and will guide you through the entire process.

When you dial 9-1-1, your call will be answered by a Dispatcher staffing the 9-1-1 public safety answering point (PSAP), located within the Communications Unit of the Buena Park Police Department.

HOW TO PROPERLY USE 9-1-1

Dial 9-1-1 on a landline or cellular telephone.

Remain calm and speak clearly.

Be brief but thorough.

State clearly what kind of assistance you need: Police, Fire, or Medical.

Give your specific location. Use a map to give a neighbor's address if necessary.

DO NOT HANG UP!

The Dispatcher will obtain information about the emergency in a specific order. This allows the Dispatcher to make quick decisions necessary to provide an immediate response by the police department or other agency best equipped to handle the emergency.

QUESTIONS THE DISPATCHER MAY ASK:

- Is this a Police or Fire emergency?
- What is the emergency?
- Is it occurring now?
- Where is it occurring?
- Can you see what is happening right now?

IF IT IS A CRIME, HE/SHE MAY ASK FOR:

- A description of the suspect.
- A description of the suspect's vehicle - make, model, color.
- The vehicle's license number.
- The direction the vehicle was last seen traveling.

If possible, use a map to give exact addresses and directions. Emergency calls are prioritized according to the degree that persons or property are being threatened. A crime in progress receives a quicker response than one that was committed in the past.

If your call requires a rapid response but is not an emergency, the Dispatcher will probably still take your call on 9-1-1 if you use that line. But if your call is a non-emergency, the Dispatcher will ask you to call back on a non-emergency line.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CALL 9-1-1?

When you dial 9-1-1 in California from a landline telephone, the Dispatcher can, in most cases, see the address and number of the phone you are calling from on a special viewing screen. The Dispatcher will still ask for your location, in case you are calling from a different place than the emergency. By looking at the address on the viewing screen, the Dispatcher can begin to send help to you while you are answering questions.

WHAT IF I AM USING A CELL PHONE?

When you dial 9-1-1 from a cell phone, the location of your call will be unknown. The Dispatcher will have the address of the cell site and depending on your phone carrier and other factors, the Dispatcher may be provided with an approximate address or cross streets where your call may be coming from. This location may

in actuality be anywhere from a few houses away to several miles from where you may actually be calling from. It is extremely important that you immediately advise the Dispatcher of the location where emergency services are needed.

When your cell phone is not in use, it is important that your keypad is locked since a high volume of 9-1-1 calls are made unintentionally from cell phones that are in a pocket or purse.

WHAT IF I CALL 9-1-1 BY ACCIDENT?

DO NOT HANG UP!

Stay on the line and tell the Dispatcher that everything is all right. If you don't, the Dispatcher may think that something is wrong and send a police officer.

WHAT IF I USE A TTY MACHINE?

If you use a text telephone (TDD/TTY), make sure you know the correct way to dial 9-1-1 on your machine. After dialing 9-1-1, tap several letter keys on the keyboard to alert the Dispatcher, and then wait several moments. Repeat this procedure until the Dispatcher answers. There may be a short delay while a TTY is added to the call. Do not hang up.

When the Dispatcher answers, provide the address and nature of the emergency. If you do not have access to a TTY or a hearing person available to call, dial 9-1-1 and leave the phone off the hook. If you can talk, say your problem over and over, or make frantic sounds. In most cases, the Dispatcher will see your location on the viewing screen and send help.

WHAT IF I SPEAK LIMITED ENGLISH?

In California, the 9-1-1 Dispatcher is able to connect you with an interpreter. Depending on the language spoken, it may take a few moments for the translation service to locate an interpreter. If you speak limited English or none at all, tell the Dispatcher that there is an emergency and which language you speak. For example, say, "Emergency, I speak Spanish." There may be a short delay while the Dispatcher connects the caller with an interpreter. *Do not hang up.*

If your language is not translated, stay on the line and explain the emergency as best as you can. The Dispatcher will see the address of the phone on the viewing screen and send help. Learning how to say a few English words, such as “Emergency”, “Fire”, “Ambulance,” “I live at (your address)” and “I speak (your native language),” could save your life or the life of someone you care about.

SHOULD CHILDREN KNOW HOW TO CALL 9-1-1?

Children should definitely know how to dial 9-1-1 and should understand that it is important to call when something very serious is happening and an adult is not able to take care of the situation.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO USE 9-1-1 CORRECTLY?

Sometimes it is difficult to reach the 9-1-1 Dispatcher. One reason this happens is because many people call 9-1-1 when there is not an emergency. The Dispatcher must spend time talking to these people instead of helping others who have real emergencies. That is why it is important to call 9-1-1 only when there is a life threatening emergency.

WHAT IF I NEED HELP, BUT IT IS NOT AN EMERGENCY?

Call the regular seven-digit phone number of the Police Department, Doctor, Hospital or health clinic. These numbers can be found in the phone book.

NON-EMERGENCY CALLS FOR SERVICE

If your call is not an emergency, but requires a police response, a Dispatcher will obtain information from you and determine what police action must be taken. The Dispatcher will enter the information into the police department’s Computer Aided Dispatch System (CAD). This system assigns priority to requests for police services by severity of the incident; records information as to how the call is handled by the police department; and assists the Dispatcher and officers in providing efficient and effective service. Your request for service

will be dispatched by radio to available police officers as soon as possible.

Calls that are routine in nature, such as requests for information or calls requiring a report but no police response, will be transferred to that area of the police department best able to provide assistance.

CAN I TEXT 9-1-1?

Text-to-9-1-1 is a valuable service to be used in an emergency situation when it is not possible to make a voice call. Only subscribers with an active text or data plan can send a text to 9-1-1. Voice calls are still the best and fastest way to contact 9-1-1.

Texting is recommended ONLY when you cannot make a voice call.

- If you are Deaf/Hard-of-hearing or speech impaired.
- A medical emergency that affects your speech.
- It is not safe to talk.

HOW DO I TEXT 9-1-1?

- Enter the numbers “911” in the “To” or “Recipient” field.
- The first text to 9-1-1 should be short, include the location of the emergency, and ask for police, fire or medical help.
- Push the “Send” button.
- Answer questions and follow instructions from the 9-1-1 Dispatcher.
- Text in simple words – no abbreviations, slang, or emojis.

If texting to 9-1-1 is not available in your area, or is temporarily unavailable, you will get a reply to contact 9-1-1 by voice or relay services.

**VICTIM OF A CRIME?
NON-EMERGENCY?
NO SUSPECTS?
CALL THE FRONT DESK 714-562-3902**