



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

GOV. MALLOY ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF STATEWIDE TEXT-TO-911 CAPABILITY

New Service Provides Ability to Send a Text Message in an Emergency When Absolutely Necessary, Including for Those with Disabilities and in Situations When a Voice Call is Not Safe

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Daniel P. Malloy today announced that the State of Connecticut has launched a new Text-to-911 capability as part of the state’s new Next Generation 9-1-1 Emergency Telecommunications System. Text-to-911 provides residents with the ability to send a text message to 9-1-1 from a handheld device in emergency situations when it is either unsafe or they are unable to place a voice call. The system, which is available statewide, is now in effect.

“The safety and security of our residents is a top priority and this is an important innovation that will indubitably save lives,” **said Governor Malloy**. “There are emergency situations where a voice call to 9-1-1 is neither possible nor safe. This technology provides increased protection for residents, including victims of domestic violence and those who are deaf or hard of hearing, by increasing access to emergency responders in such scenarios.”

Officials are cautioning residents that voice calls to 9-1-1 remain the best and fastest way to contact emergency services whenever it is feasible to do so. Text-to-911 is only intended to be used when absolutely necessary or needed, which is why the new system’s theme is: *Call if you can, text if you can’t*.

Text-to-911 is specifically intended for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability. It is also intended to be used when people are in certain situations that would be unsafe or impractical to place an audible voice call, such as during a home invasion, an act of domestic violence, or active mass shooting, and also during medical emergencies that render a person incapable of speech.

Connecticut is one of only several states in the nation to roll out the Text-to-911 feature statewide.

“The Text-to-911 feature is a new alternative to calling 9-1-1 and designed for people who are in danger and are unable to speak,” **said Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman**. “Residents in need of

assistance now have a new tool to communicate with emergency services to get the help that they need. This will certainly help save lives and I'm glad this technology is currently available in Connecticut."

"It is critical that everyone is able to contact 9-1-1 to summon help in an emergency and that is why Connecticut created Text-to-911 capability," said **Commissioner Dora Schriro of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP)**. "The Text-to-911 feature was added to enhance the public's safety and wellbeing and it could save lives, especially for those with hearing and speech impairments and anyone in a situation where silence is essential to their safety when summoning help. Soon, public service announcements will air on TV and radio showing you how to use this feature, but for additional information any time, go to www.Text911CT.org."

"This is a great step forward in the communication options for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have another disability that makes texting in an emergency their best or possibly only method to contact emergency services," said **Commissioner Amy Porter of the Department of Rehabilitation Services**, which is responsible for promoting equal access and self-sufficiency for people with disabilities.

"I want to thank the Governor and his administration for the ever present vigilance on behalf of victims of domestic violence," said **Mary-Jane Foster, President and CEO of Hartford's Interval House**, the state's largest and oldest domestic violence agency. "The ability to use this very important tool in the most dangerous of situations gives a voice to victims when they otherwise would not have one. We know for a fact that the ability to text 9-1-1 will save lives."

"The new Text-to-911 technology will provide an important lifeline for many victims of domestic violence in Connecticut," said **Karen Jarmoc, CEO of Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence**. "Victims may find themselves in situations where violence is escalating quickly and it is not safe for them to call the police in front of the person abusing them. This new technology will provide them with a discreet way to seek police help. We thank Governor Malloy and Commissioner Schriro for their leadership."

To use Text-to-911, enter the numbers "911" in the "to" or "recipient" field on a mobile phone or other handheld device. Text a brief message that includes the location of the emergency and what services are needed (police, fire, ambulance). After that, answer questions and follow instructions from the 9-1-1 call center.

Connecticut's 9-1-1 Emergency Telecommunications System is maintained and operated by DESPP's Division of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications. To make residents aware of the new capability and educate on the proper uses, DESPP has launched a public education campaign that will include television and radio spots, online and cinema advertising, social media alerts, and outreach to targeted populations.

For more information on the Text-to-911 system and to see a demonstration of the capability, visit www.Text911CT.org.

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Contact: Leigh Appleby
Office of Governor Dannel P. Malloy
Leigh.Appleby@ct.gov
860-524-7337 (office)
860-818-1824 (cell)

Contact: Scott DeVico
Dept. of Emergency Services and Public
Protection
Scott.Devico@ct.gov
203-525-6959 (cell)

www.ct.gov/governor

