

## COVID-19 Update from the Massachusetts State 911 Department

Please be informed that State 911 Department (Department), in coordination with the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS), is actively engaged in discussions on the monitoring and mitigation strategies regarding COVID-19.

The Department has been advised that the three approved Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) vendors for Massachusetts have communicated with the PSAPs and RECCs regarding the COVID-19 virus. Each PSAP and RECC has been advised of the appropriate EMD protocols pertaining to the COVID-19 virus. If your EMD vendor has not already provided you with information for handling calls that may be flu related, please use this link <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html> for assistance or contact your EMD vendor directly for guidance.

**The State 911 Department strongly recommends that when dispatching first responders to calls for flu like symptoms, that the dispatcher follow local dispatch policies but to include advising first responders (Police, Fire, EMS) to respond using PPE (Personal Protection Equipment), a known term to first responders.**

If you have reason to believe that your PSAP or RECC is infected with the virus and find it necessary to vacate your call center, our service provider Comtech can route your calls to an Alternate. Please contact Shahri Moin at 508-821-7306 or [shahri.moin@mass.gov](mailto:shahri.moin@mass.gov), or Charlie Ashworth at 508-821-7301 or [Charles.ashworth@mass.gov](mailto:Charles.ashworth@mass.gov), of the State 911 Department if you are looking for operational guidance or need to know what PSAP or RECC is currently assigned as your Alternate. Please contact these same people at the State 911 Department or the COMTECH HELP DESK at 855-626-4911 to begin the process if this situation occurs.

**The State 911 Department strongly recommends that all PSAPs and RECCs communicate with their assigned Alternate now to discuss an increased call volume and a plan for radio communications for dispatching first responders (Police, Fire & EMS) in the event that an evacuation becomes necessary.**

The Department strongly recommends all PSAPs and RECCs that have not already done so review their COOP plans in case their operations are affected by COVID-19. This includes communicating with your current Alternate to explore a process to dispatch (radio) in the event you cannot answer 911 calls. We also recommend that you research if another PSAP or RECC would be suitable to receive your 911 calls in the unlikely event both your PSAP and Alternate operations are negatively affected by COVID-19. Suitability would include among other factors, being able to handle the additional 911 call load and radio communications for dispatch.

The Department has posted the latest information to our web site, [mass.gov/e911](https://mass.gov/e911), which we have vetted through EOPSS and the Department of Public Health. We recommend you review this information.

The Department will update our website when new relevant information is approved to be communicated to our PSAP community.