



## COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICY

**Policy No. 4416** Date Issued: October 31, 2005  
Section: 4400 – Telephone Procedures Date Revised: February 13, 2023

**SUBJECT: PROCESSING WIRELESS 9-1-1 CALLS**

APPROVED: <signed copy on file>  
Chairperson, Law Enforcement Users Subcommittee  
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### 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide uniform guidelines for the consistent and appropriate processing of wireless 9-1-1 calls.
- 1.2 To ensure a CAD incident type is defined and used for all wireless 9-1-1 calls.

### 2.0 Receiving Wireless 9-1-1 Calls

- 2.1 When wireless 9-1-1 calls are received, dispatchers will make every reasonable effort to determine if an emergency exists by questioning callers and listening carefully to background noise, tone and word choice of callers for sounds that may indicate duress. Sounds of duress may include, but are not limited to, sounds of a struggle, screaming, arguing, or callers who speak softly because they do not want others to know they are calling 9-1-1.
  - 2.1.1 When callers are unable to directly answer dispatchers' questions, dispatchers will be creative in their method of questioning, for example, asking 'yes' and 'no' questions or instructing callers to tap once for 'yes' and twice for 'no'.

### **3.0 Wireless 9-1-1 Calls – Determining Location**

- 3.1 Dispatchers will verbally query all wireless 9-1-1 callers to determine their location.
  - 3.1.1 If callers know their location, a CAD incident will be created in accordance with Policy No. 3005 (Creating and Dispatching a CAD System Incident).
  - 3.1.2 If callers do not know their location and need public safety assistance, dispatchers will “re-bid” the 9-1-1 system for the geographical coordinates.
    - 3.1.2.1 In addition to re-bidding the 9-1-1 system dispatchers should attempt to locate the caller by utilizing the Rapid Deploy system in accordance with Policy 7402 – Use of Rapid Deploy.
  - 3.1.3 Dispatchers will gather as much information as possible to validate the geographical coordinates of callers, such as landmarks, business names, passer-by who can help identify the callers’ location, a description of how they got to their current location, etc.
  - 3.1.4 If the above methods fail, dispatchers may direct callers to a nearby landline phone. Dispatchers will instruct callers to dial 9-1-1 from that phone, but **not to disconnect** the wireless 9-1-1 call until contact has been made on the other phone. (The call may route to another PSAP.)

### **4.0 Wireless 9-1-1 – Misdials or Unintentional Calls**

- 4.1 When callers admit to misdialing or accidentally calling 9-1-1 and there is no indication of duress or any other public safety need, dispatchers will attempt to confirm the caller’s location, gather their complete name and create an incident using the incident type 911W with modifying circumstance M (which will create a closed incident).

### **5.0 Wireless 9-1-1 Calls – Open Line or Abandoned Lines (Hang Up)**

- 5.1 If a wireless 9-1-1 call is received and there is no indication of duress or need for a public safety response, dispatchers will attempt to call back the wireless telephone number to determine if assistance is needed.
  - 5.1.1 When dispatchers drop the open line to call back, the wireless service provider will disconnect the call and close the circuit, allowing the call back to be completed.

- 5.1.2 If contact is made, dispatchers will handle the call as appropriate for the situation.
- 5.2 If voice mail is reached, dispatchers will disconnect prior to leaving a message and will create a closed CAD incident using the incident type 911W with modifying circumstance O and/or HU documenting all actions taken when handling 9-1-1 wireless hang-up or abandoned calls. If the 9-1-1 abandoned call is from an “uninitiated” cell phone, dispatchers will create a CAD incident using the address on the ALI screen (cell tower) and the incident type 911W with modifying circumstance U which will create a closed incident.

## **6.0 Wireless 9-1-1 Calls – Indicated Emergency**

- 6.1 In the event a wireless 9-1-1 call is received and an emergency is indicated but there is no voice contact with the caller, dispatchers will create a CAD incident using the incident type 911W with modifying circumstance E using the approximate location.
- 6.1.1 If necessary, dispatchers will “re-bid” the 9-1-1 system for location coordinates and dispatch an officer(s) to visually check the area.
- 6.1.1.1 In addition to re-bidding the 9-1-1 system dispatchers should attempt to locate the caller by utilizing the Rapid Deploy system in accordance with Policy 7402 – Use of Rapid Deploy.
- 6.2 Dispatchers may take additional steps in an attempt to locate calling parties, such as:
- ◆ Checking for prior contacts with the phone number in CAD to see if there is an associated address.
  - ◆ Check agency Records Management Systems (ie: Alliance) for contact history to locate associated address or name.
  - ◆ Contacting the wireless service provider to obtain the home phone number and address of the service subscriber.
  - ◆ Calling the residence of the cell phone subscriber. If contact is made, explain the situation to callers and try to determine the whereabouts of the user of the cell phone.
  - ◆ If an alternative phone number is provided, dispatchers will attempt to contact callers using that phone number.
  - ◆ If contact is made, dispatchers will clarify the situation and dispatch or cancel the call as appropriate.

- ◆ Dispatchers will document all steps taken to locate callers as comments in the CAD incident.

6.3 Contacting a wireless service provider is recommended only when exigent circumstances exist. Exigent circumstance is defined as a “specially pressing or urgent law enforcement need” and a “compelling need for official action and no time to secure a warrant.” Examples of exigent circumstances but not limited to are:

- Imminent threat to life
- Imminent and serious threat to property
- Imminent escape of a suspect
- Imminent destruction of evidence

6.3.1 It is up to the requesting agency to provide any legal documents to the wireless provider if requested.

## **7.0 Wireless 9-1-1 Calls – Transfers**

7.1 Dispatchers will transfer misdirected wireless 9-1-1 calls to the appropriate agency promptly and as soon as they determine the calls are better served by routing it to another agency.

7.2 Dispatchers will transfer wireless 9-1-1 calls in accordance with Policy No. 9020.80 (Procedure for Announcing 9-1-1 Transfers).

7.3 Dispatchers will create a closed CAD incident for all transferred wireless 9-1-1 calls.

7.3.1 Dispatchers will close transferred wireless call incidents with appropriate jurisdictions agency disposition code (i.e. CHP, MOCO, etc.)

## **8.0 Wireless 9-1-1 Calls – Uninitialized**

8.1 Uninitialized wireless cell phone calls, as described in Policy No. 7490 (Wireless 9-1-1 Calls), are recognizable by the use of “911” in the area code or prefix portion of the Automatic Number Index (ANI).

8.2 If voice contact is made, the call will be handled as appropriate to the situation.

8.3 If voice contact cannot be made, a closed incident will be created using the incident type 911W with modifying circumstance U and the cell tower location from the 9-1-1 screen as the incident location.

8.3.1 Uninitialized wireless cell phone calls do not have a phone number assigned to them and cannot be called back. Without a wireless service provider, the location often cannot be “re-bid” and limited location coordinates are provided.