



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600

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AL TSA: CCRSS #2024-022
AL TSA: ESF #2024-022
AL TSA: ICF/IID #2024-016
AL TSA: NH #2024-032
GUIDANCE FOR 911 OUTAGES

Dear Administrator/Provider/Superintendent:

In the event of a 911 outage, it is crucial to know alternative ways to seek emergency assistance. While 911 systems are reliable, outages have occurred due to technical glitches, network errors, damage to infrastructure, or overwhelming call volumes.

The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance on alternative strategies of seeking emergency assistance during a 911 outage that you may incorporate into emergency communication plans. Consider the following strategies:

- Non-emergency lines: Non-emergency lines may remain operational during an outage. Verify your local dispatch non-emergency lines into your contact list.
- Text to 911: If your area supports Text-to-911 services, it may be operational when standard services are facing a disruption.
- Call your police, fire, or emergency medical services directly. Maintain your most local police, fire, and emergency medical services stations/substations in your contact list. It may be possible to directly contact the station during an outage.
- Maintain an out-of-state contact that can call 911. An out-of-area contact may be on a different system that can reach 911 services.

Ensure that your facility opts in to emergency alerts and follows local emergency services on social media. During an outage alternative communication methods and status updates may be broadcasted through these channels.

Thank you for your continued commitment to resident health and safety. If you have any questions, please contact Richard Freed, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Richard.Freed@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

M. Toruquist for

Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: "Transforming Lives"