

TEXT TO 9-1-1 FAQs

1. WHAT IS TEXT TO 9-1-1?

Text to 9-1-1 service allows you to send a text to reach emergency call-takers from your wireless phone or device for help.

2. WHERE IS TEXT TO 9-1-1 AVAILABLE?

Text to 9-1-1 is available only in certain counties. If text to 9-1-1 is available in your area, you will receive a text from a call-taker requesting your location and your emergency. If text to 9-1-1 is not available in your area, you will receive a bounce-back message requesting that you please call 9-1-1 for help.

3. HOW DO I KNOW THAT 9-1-1 HAS RECEIVED MY TEXT?

If text to 9-1-1 is available in your area, you will receive a text from a call-taker requesting your location and your emergency. If text to 9-1-1 is not available in your area, you will receive a bounce-back message requesting that you please call 9-1-1 for help.

4. SHOULD I CALL 9-1-1 INSTEAD OF TEXT 911?

In an emergency, help can respond the quickest by making a voice call to 9-1-1. When you text to 9-1-1 there can be delays in response time. Texting is a good option if you are deaf or hard of hearing, or if your safety will be compromised if you speak out loud.

5. HOW DO I TEXT TO 9-1-1?

Texting 9-1-1 is no different than sending a normal text message. Simply enter 911 into the recipient field, compose your message, and then press send.

6. DOES 9-1-1 KNOW MY LOCATION WITH TEXT TO 9-1-1?

9-1-1 does not know your exact location when calling for help. That is why it is important to know your exact location when contacting 9-1-1. Use street signs, mile markers, cross roads and land marks to help identify your location.

7. CAN I SEND VIDEOS?

At this time 9-1-1 is not able to accept video via text message. If you are in an emergency call or text 9-1-1 for help.

8. CAN I TEXT 9-1-1 FROM WHATSAPP, VIBER OR SKYPE?

9-1-1 cannot receive text messages from any other applications. That includes WhatsApp, Viber, or Skype. Use regular text messaging when texting 9-1-1 or simply call 9-1-1 for help in an emergency.

9. HOW QUICK WILL THE RESPONSE TAKE WHEN TEXTING TO 9-1-1?

Just like with other text messages, delays are possible, which is why it is always best to call 9-1-1 if you are able.

10. WILL I RECEIVE A FASTER RESPONSE VIA TEXT VS CALLING?

Texting is a good option if you are deaf or hard of hearing, or if your safety will be compromised if you speak out loud. This might include domestic violence, home invasions, abductions, or school shootings. Otherwise, it is always best to call 9-1-1 for help.

11. HOW MANY CALL-TAKERS ARE ASSIGNED TO ANSWER TEXT TO 9-1-1?

The same amount of call-takers that answer 9-1-1 phone calls have the ability to answer 9-1-1 texts in your area.

12. DO ALL THE CARRIERS OFFER THE SERVICE IN MY AREA?

Not all carriers offer text to 9-1-1. If your carrier does not provide text to 9-1-1, you will receive a bounce back message requesting that you please call 9-1-1 for help.

13. CAN 9-1-1 RESPOND TO TEXTS IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE?

At this time, text to 9-1-1 is only available in English. Therefore, please do not text in any other language as you will not receive a response. Call 9-1-1 instead for help.