



Text-to-9-1-1 Frequently Asked Questions

What is “Text-to-9-1-1” technology?

- Text-to-9-1-1 is the ability to send a text message to 9-1-1 from your mobile phone or handheld device.

Can I Text to 9-1-1?

- Text-to-9-1-1 is not available everywhere and is not available when roaming.
- You must subscribe to your wireless carrier’s text or data plan to make or receive a text message.
- If Text-to-9-1-1 is not available in your area, or is temporarily unavailable, you should receive a message indicating that Text-to-9-1-1 is not available and to contact 9-1-1 by voice call.

When should I text 9-1-1?

- Text-to-9-1-1 is intended primarily for use in three emergency scenarios:
 - For an individual who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, or has a speech disability.
 - For someone who is in a situation where it is not safe to place a voice call to 9-1-1.
 - A medical emergency that renders the person incapable of speech.

What are the challenges with Text-to-9-1-1 service?

- As will all text messages, Texts-to-9-1-1 may take longer to receive and respond to than a voice call, does not provide the location of the texter and could be received out of order, or may not be received at all.
- Text GPS location information is not equal to current wireless location technology.
- Voice calls are real-time communication and Text-to-9-1-1 is not.
- Pictures or videos cannot be received by 9-1-1 at this time. Acronyms, short codes and emojis will not be accepted or received.
- If you include anyone else on your Text-to-9-1-1 it may not be received by 9-1-1.
- Currently translation services to Text-to-9-1-1 are not available; please text in English only or make a voice call.

How do I text to 9-1-1?

- Enter the numbers, “9-1-1” in the “To” or “Recipient” field;
- The first text to 9-1-1 should be short, include the location of the emergency, and ask for police, fire, or ambulance.
- Push the “Send” button.
- Answer questions and follow instructions from the 9-1-1 call taker.
- Text in simple words, no abbreviations or slang.
- Keep text messages short.

How will I know if 9-1-1 received my text?

- A 9-1-1 call center should respond to the text.
- If Text-to-9-1-1 is not available, you should receive a message from the wireless carrier stating that the Text-to-9-1-1 is not available and that you must place a voice or relay call to 9-1-1.

Is there a charge to Text-to-9-1-1?

- Standard text messaging rates apply.

When will I be able to text to 9-1-1 from my cell phone?

- Beginning October 17, 2018.

