



# Calvert County News

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Date:** Aug. 20, 2020

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### **Text to 911 Service Now Available in Calvert County** *Citizens encouraged to call if you can; text if you can't*

**PRINCE FREDERICK, Md. – Aug. 20, 2020** – The Calvert County Department of Public Safety announces that the Calvert County 911 call center is now accepting text messages through text-to-911 service.

Customers of the three major wireless carriers – AT&T, T-Mobile (including former Sprint customers) and Verizon – who are enrolled in a text messaging plan can send text messages to 911 in an emergency when they are unable to place a phone call. This includes those who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech impaired, those who may find themselves in a situation where placing a voice call could put them in danger, or those who are experiencing a medical emergency and are unable to speak.

“We are thrilled to launch text-to-911 service in Calvert County,” said Public Safety Director Jackie Vaughan. “While a phone call is still the preferred way to contact 911, the ability to send a text message to 911 gives residents and visitors better access to emergency services, particularly for those who may have difficulty placing a voice call.”

The procedure is simple to send a text message to 911, when in need of emergency services and unable to place a phone call:

- Enter 911 in the “To” line of a new text message.
- Begin the message with the location of the emergency and the type of help needed – police, fire or emergency medical services (EMS).

Once the message has been received at the 911 call center, a 911 specialist will respond. Users should be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions.

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Citizens are urged to place a voice call to 911 if possible; text if you can't. Public Safety offers the following additional tips for using text-to-911:

- Keep text messages short and simple; avoid using slang or abbreviations.
- Photos and videos cannot be viewed by 911 call centers.
- English is the preferred language for text messaging, though some limited translation services may be available.
- Including an additional contact on your text message may prevent it from being received by 911.
- As with all text messages, messages to 911 may take longer to receive, may be received out of order or may not be received at all.
- If text-to-911 service is not available in an area, users will receive a bounce back message from their carrier telling them to place a phone or relay call instead.
- **Do not text and drive.**

Learn more about text-to-911 service in Calvert County at [www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/Text911](http://www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/Text911). Citizens with questions may contact Emergency Communications Assistant Division Chief Stanley Harris at [Stanley.Harris@calvertcountymd.gov](mailto:Stanley.Harris@calvertcountymd.gov) or 410-535-1600, ext. 2942.

Find information on Calvert County Government services online at [www.CalvertCountyMd.gov](http://www.CalvertCountyMd.gov). Stay up to date with Calvert County Government on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CalvertCountyMd](https://www.facebook.com/CalvertCountyMd).

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