

RECOMMENDED MINIMUM TRAINING GUIDELINES FOR TELECOMMUNICATORS HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

Project Background

The *Recommended Minimum Training Guidelines for Telecommunicators Project* is a 9-1-1 community-wide effort to identify nationally recognized, universally accepted minimum training topics that can be used to train aspiring and current telecommunicators—call-takers and dispatchers—and to provide the foundation for their ongoing professional development. The effort is driven by the belief that it is vital that Americans receive a consistent level of 9-1-1 service, no matter where they live or where they travel.

A parallel goal is to develop Model Legislation for any state that does not currently have legislation concerning minimum training for telecommunicators. For those that do, the Model Legislation is intended as a baseline to ensure that the recommended training topics are being covered.

Representatives of the following organizations have participated in the Project:

- Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO)
- Connecticut Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection
- Denise Amber Lee Foundation
- Fairfax County (Virginia) Department of Public Safety
- Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network
- Hamilton County (Indiana) Public Safety Communications
- International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED)
- National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrators (NASNA)
- National Emergency Number Association (NENA)
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)
- North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)
- PowerPhone
- Priority Dispatch
- RedSky Technologies
- Rochester/Monroe County (New York) Emergency Communications Department
- Stafford County (Virginia) Sheriff's Office
- Vail (Colorado) Public Safety Communications Center
- Weakley County (Tenn.) Emergency 9-1-1

While the National 9-1-1 Program has facilitated the Project by providing a forum for discussion and development, the Guidelines are not federally owned or mandated—rather they are the joint product of members of the Working Group listed above.

The first key milestone of the Project was the development of a Recommended Minimum Guideline that identified the minimum topics to be included in any telecommunicator training program. These topics were identified by the Working Group, with input from other key stakeholders representing the 9-1-1 community. The topics are as follows:

- Telecommunicator roles and responsibilities

- 9-1-1 call processing
- Radio communications
- Emergency management
- Emergency communications technology
- Legal concepts
- Interpersonal communications
- Stress management
- Quality assurance
- On-the-job training guidelines

PLEASE NOTE: *The training topics listed above provide minimum-level understanding. In order to field emergency calls in a live environment, telecommunicators must receive supplemental training that will enable them to process the emergency calls that are specific to their respective Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), aka 9-1-1 Center, or Emergency Services Provider.*

Vetting of the Guidelines

The Working Group and the National 9-1-1 Program both felt that it was vital to provide the 9-1-1 community with an opportunity to offer input into the Guidelines. The first phase of this initiative was to invite the leadership of the aforementioned organizations to vet the Working Document. Their comments were fully vetted and resolved by an adjudication subcommittee that was formed specifically for this purpose; the subcommittee was comprised of Working Group members who had volunteered for the task.

The second phase was to enable the 9-1-1 community at large to do the same, which was accomplished via the NENA Workspace platform. The result of this collaborative effort is Recommended Minimum Training Guidelines that truly represent a consensus amongst the participating organizations and the 9-1-1 community at large.

How to Use the Recommended Minimum Training Guidelines Document

The Guidelines are intended to identify nationally recognized, universally accepted, minimum topics and subtopics that can be used to train aspiring and current 9-1-1 telecommunicators—call-takers and dispatchers—and which provide the foundation for their ongoing professional development. The topics and subtopics represent agreed-upon common elements that ensure the person who answers a 9-1-1 call has met baseline core competencies, and that the public, when placing a 9-1-1 call, will receive a more consistent, effective and professional standard of care from telecommunicators across the United States.

These Guidelines are intended to enable PSAPs/9-1-1 Centers and Emergency Service Providers to do the following:

- Establish training programs where none previously existed
- Build upon previously established training programs
- Assess outside training programs that currently are being utilized

It is important to note that how each 9-1-1 Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) carries out the specifics of its training program—including how agency-specific protocols will be implemented and/or integrated and the amount of time that is spent on each topic—is solely a decision of the AHJ. The Guidelines represent

the *minimum* level of training that should be provided to any telecommunicators. The Guidelines are also meant to support the adoption of many existing training standards and curricula as ways to meet the minimum education criteria.

How to Use the Model Legislation Advocacy Packet

As a corollary to the Guidelines, the Working Group also developed Model Legislation and a supporting advocacy packet to be used by 9-1-1 agencies, AHJs, APCO and NENA chapters, and other professional associations. The intention was to provide a toolbox that such entities can use to pursue legislation in states that currently do not have statutes that ensure minimum training for telecommunicators. In those states that do have such statutes, the Model Legislation package can be used as a baseline to ensure that the recommended minimum training topics are being covered.

Specifically, the Model Legislation provides an example model that can be used as the starting point for crafting individual state legislation.

The advocacy packet includes supporting materials, messaging tools, At-A-Glance talking points, a PowerPoint presentation, and other references to help promote the mission of minimum training for telecommunicators. These supplementary resources have been developed to provide assistance and background information for the advocacy effort.

Questions regarding the Recommended Minimum Training Guidelines or the Model Legislation Advocacy Packet can be sent to questions@911minimumtraining.com.