 How do you call 911? 

Do you know how to call 911? Sounds like a simple question, but in state agencies we have different ways of accessing emergency services. Is it 9-911 (outside line)? Do you need to call your local security office first and let them call 911? In an emergency, seconds matter, so being knowledgeable and prepared can make all the difference. Knowing how to call and what to expect when you phone 9-1-1 can help reduce fear and feelings of helplessness in an emergency. If you do not know- ask your agency safety office- every office has one! Remember: An emergency is not the ideal time to learn how to reach 911 from your workplace.

9-1-1 is for emergency use only

* **Call 9-1-1 for emergencies only.** It is appropriate to call 9-1-1 when you need to save a life, stop a crime or report a fire.

Be 9-1-1 Ready

* **Know How to call 911 from your location:** Do you need to dial 9 for an outside line?
* **Where You Are:** Where are you right now?  Could you tell 9-1-1 exactly where to find you?
* **Don’t Text to 9-1-1:**  Your local 9-1-1 may not be able to accept text messages, photos and video.  A voice call continues to be the best way to reach 9-1-1.
* **Use a Landline:**  Whenever possible, use a landline to call 9-1-1.   Cell phone calls aren’t always routed to the closest call center and it takes time to transfer your call to the call center.
* **Stay Calm & Ready to Listen:**  9-1-1 is here to help you through until help arrives.  Be ready to listen and follow directions.

Remain calm, be prepared

**When you call 911, be prepared to answer questions, which may include:**

* The location of the emergency, including the street address.
* The phone number from which you are calling.
* The nature of the emergency.
* Details about the emergency, such as a physical description of a person who may have committed a crime, a description of any fire, or a description of injuries or symptoms being experienced by a person having a medical emergency.
* Do not hang up until the instructed.

Remember, the call-taker’s questions are important to get the right kind of help to you quickly. Be prepared to follow any instructions the dispatcher gives you. Many 911 centers can tell you exactly what to do to help in an emergency until help arrives, such as providing step-by-step instructions to aid someone who is choking or needs first aid or CPR.

Please do not give old phones to children as toys. A wireless phone with no active service can still call 9-1-1.

If you accidentally call 9-1-1, stay on the line and tell the receiver that you do not have an emergency. Do not hang up—that could make 911 officials think that an emergency exists, and possibly send responders to your location. Instead, simply explain to the call-taker what happened. It will not be the first time it has happened.

Article Information : <http://www.know911.org/message-guidelines> <http://www.911.gov/whencall.html>

[www.commonhealth.virginia.gov](http://www.commonhealth.virginia.gov)

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