

# Enhanced 911 Legislation in Massachusetts

What Your Organization Needs to Know to Be Compliant



## Background

Did you know that the level of 911 protection millions of Americans have in their homes is far better than what they receive at their nearby office, campus, hospital, or government building?

This is because the phone systems of many multi-building or multi-floor facilities transmit only a main billing address to the 911 answering point – not a 911 caller's exact location. To give an example in a campus setting, a 911 answering point would see a caller's location as the university's main address, 300 Main St., instead of the caller's actual location one street over, "123 Oak Street, Smith Dorm, Room 234." The ability to pinpoint a caller's exact location is known as enhanced 911 (E911).

In situations where a caller's precise whereabouts could not be determined, emergency response teams have been unable to help until it was too late. Several 911-related wrongful death cases have gone to trial, and juries have not been sympathetic to organizations that didn't take precautionary measures to protect the people on their premises.

## Changes in Legislation Are Sweeping the Country Regarding Enhanced 911 Services

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) have led the charge to encourage legislators to create more strict E911 regulations and protection. Many states have implemented laws requiring organizations to be responsible for taking measures in support of E911. As an example, non-compliant businesses in Illinois and Minnesota could face thousands of dollars in fines for neglecting to carry out E911 safety measures.

## Massachusetts E911 Legislation (Effective July 1, 2009)

The state of Massachusetts has enacted legislation which specifically addresses the issue of PBX phone systems and 911 call handling. According to Chapter 6A, Section 18J of the Massachusetts General Laws: "Beginning July 1, 2009, any new or substantially renovated MLTS (multi-line telephone system) shall provide the same level of enhanced 911 service that is provided to others in the commonwealth." For the purposes of this section, an "MLTS" shall mean a system comprised of telephones and control hardware and

## Why E911?

### It is the law in Massachusetts.

Owners of new or renovated multi-line telephone systems (PBXs) must use E911 so that emergency callers can be located.

### Safety is key.

Keeping employees, students, visitors, and the reputation of your facility safe is a priority for any campus or business. E911 is an extension of this objective.

### Liability and fines can be avoided.

Failure to provide E911 protection could result in regulatory fines and expose your organization to large damages from civil and criminal litigation. Viewed in the context of a potential liability, the cost of deploying an E911 system is much easier to justify. Also, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) may consider failing to adopt E911 as evidence that an institution did not maintain a hazard-free workplace for employees. That could also result in regulatory fines.

software providing local telephone service to multiple end-use customers in businesses, apartments, townhouses, condominiums, schools, dormitories, hotels, motels, resorts, extended care facilities, or similar entities, facilities, or structures. “Multi-line telephone system” shall include: (1) network and premises based systems such as Centrex, PBX and hybrid key telephone systems; and (2) systems owned or leased by governmental agencies, nonprofit entities and for-profit businesses. [View source](#)

### **How Amcom Software Can Help You Achieve E911 Compliance**

As a solution provider, Amcom Software can help educate you about this critical issue, as well as provide you with a range of solutions for E911 compliance.

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